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07 May 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

RE: Parent guidance regarding the Teacher Assessed Grade Process

As you will be aware, government guidance released earlier this year stated that students will be awarded grades that are determined by teachers based on a range of evidence including students completing questions provided by the exam boards. We will be submitting grades based on evidence to exam boards by **18 June 2021**.

For this process there are some key elements which I feel would be beneficial to share with you and therefore I am wanted to bring to your attention some key elements of this process and provide further guidance to ensure that you and your child are fully informed. All of our policies and procedures are in line with guidance and training released from the Department for Education, Ofqual, the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) and awarding organisations. More details on this guidance, including a guide for students and parents can be found on the JCQ website <https://www.jcq.org.uk/summer-2021-arrangements/>.

Centre Policy

All schools are required to submit a centre policy outlining the process in detail to the awarding organisations so to support parental communication you can find Grace Academy Solihull's Centre Policy on the "Awarding Grades 2021" page under the parent section of our website. Please note that all school's centre policies are externally moderated by exam boards.

How will students be assessed?

Teachers will determine students' grades based on what they have been taught and teachers can use a range of evidence from across the course of study to make their decision. Teachers can assess students based on:

- records of performance on the content that they have been taught over the entire course of their studies.
- non-exam assessment, often referred to as coursework or internal assessments, even if they have not fully completed it.
- work they have produced for tasks set by the school that reflects the specification, format and marking of exam boards.

In most cases the range of evidence that teachers will use to inform students' grades will be consistent across a class or cohort for each qualification. Teachers have been briefed on the principles of fairness, objectivity, and equalities and disabilities legislation. It is important to note that no single piece of evidence will necessarily be more important than another, as teachers will be completing the assessment process based on a range of evidence that can give an overall picture of each students' performance.

What evidence will be used?

As previously communicated, following the students return to school earlier this year, they have been engaging in evidence collection activities to provide their teachers with recent evidence which will be used as part of the grading process in line with JCQ guidance. Students have been informed that this evidence will form the basis of their grades and teachers have endeavoured to ensure that the evidence is consistent for all students studying a particular subject. This evidence covers areas of the specification that has been taught and gives all students an opportunity to demonstrate their skills, knowledge and understanding.

Part of our role is to inform each student of the evidence we are using to support the grading process and students have been informed that the recent evidence collection activities will form part of the grading process. At the end of this half term we will be publishing a full list of the evidence used for each subject on our website under the heading "Awarding Grades 2021". In the rare chance your child's evidence differs from the rest of the cohort they and you will be informed directly regarding the variations.

Reasonable adjustments and access arrangements

If your child has special educational needs, and/or is disabled, and requires reasonable adjustments, the academy will make every effort to ensure that these were in place when evidence was gathered and that students are informed of this adjustment. If for some reason appropriate reasonable adjustments were not in place when your child took an assessment that is being used as evidence, the teacher will take that into account when determining your child's grade. In all evidence collection activities that have taken place since the students return, all students who required reasonable adjustments were given these.

Mitigating Circumstances and Special Considerations

Special consideration requests will not apply in the usual way this summer because your child will not be taking exams. In line with government guidance we will be providing each student with an opportunity to raise any mitigating circumstances regarding a specific piece of evidence. If you or your child would like to raise a mitigating circumstance around a piece of evidence with us, a guide and submission form can be found on our website under the heading "Awarding Grades 2021".

How will grades be determined?

Teachers will use the evidence to objectively and fairly assign a grade using grading descriptors and exemplars provided by the exam board. Teachers have received training on this process in line with guidance from the Department for Education, Ofqual , the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) and awarding organisations. Teachers have also received training on objectivity and bias with a robust process of moderation and standardisation in place to ensure that grades are awarded fairly. Grading decisions will be holistic judgments, considering all of the evidence as a whole. Once a teacher has determined a student's grade, it will be reviewed by other teachers, so grades are determined consistently and in line with the school policy.

When will grades be released?

Grades will be released on results days this year, dates for which are listed below. Due to the uncertainty regarding Covid regulations we intend to operate remote results days where students/parents can access their results and support/guidance via a secure online site. Details regarding this will be sent to you in due course.

- AS and A Level students will receive their results on Tuesday 10 August 2021.
- GCSE students will receive their results on Thursday 12 August 2021.

Under government guidance we are not allowed to release information regarding these grades before this date and we must also confirm that judgements have not been influenced by pressure from students or parents/carers. I would therefore like to ask you and your child to not enquire or pressure teachers to provide these grades before those dates.

Appeals

Having followed the guidance from the Joint Council for Qualifications as outlined, we are confident that students will be awarded the correct grades based on their knowledge, skills and understanding on the dates outlined above. As a safety net we have put in place an appeals procedure to fix any genuine errors, details of which can be found on our website under the heading "Awarding Grades 2021"

We will continue to work tirelessly to support students and endeavour to ensure they are not disadvantaged by the grading processes in place this year. With your continued support and the outstanding effort we have seen from students during these challenging times I am confident that students will be incredibly successful once again this year.

If you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to contact the academy.

Yours sincerely



Mr Darren Gelder
Principal
For and on behalf of Tove Learning Trust