



# WOODBIDGE HIGH SCHOOL

*Pride In Achievement*

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Dear Students, Parents and Carers,

I write with a brief update about the grading process for GCSE, A Level, BTEC and Cambridge qualifications this summer. I have set this out as a series of questions and answers.

## How will Teacher Assessed Grades work?

You will know by now that following the Department for Education (DfE) and Ofqual consultation, it was determined that all qualifications this summer will be graded using Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGs). These TAGs will be decided by teachers using the range of evidence available to them, moderated within departments and then by the senior team, and the submitted to the exam boards.

Please see my letter to all students and parents from 3rd March (available [HERE](#)) which sets out all the details of the process. I will not repeat most of that information here, but rather just add anything that is new that we believe you should be aware of.

## What guidance and materials have now been published?

At the start of last week, Ofqual published guidance to schools. You can read this guidance [HERE](#). They also published a document for schools about making objective judgements, which you can read [HERE](#).

At the end of last week, further detailed technical guidance was issued to schools by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ). JCQ is the organisation that works to ensure consistency across all different the exam boards. The full guidance is 55-pages long, and you can read it [HERE](#) if you wish.

JCQ also issued summary information for parents and students, which I believe is useful to help you understand the process. You can read this guidance [HERE](#), and I have also attached it for you.

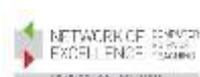
We are required to write and submit a Centre Policy to JCQ which sets out how we will conduct the assessment process in school. We will complete this in the coming weeks and then publish it to parents and students after the Easter holidays.

As well as this guidance, JCQ also issued grade descriptors for GCSE and A Level subjects to support teachers, worked examples and other information. You can find all of this information on the JCQ website if you wish to look at it.

Before the end of term, we have also been told that we will receive additional support materials for each subject from the exam boards, including additional assessment materials for us to use in class with students.

## What assessment materials and evidence will be used for grading at Woodbridge?

As I set out in my letter of 3rd March, we are required to have evidence for the grading decisions that we make. This evidence will come in a variety of forms, such as formal mock exams, class tests or assessed work, assessment material provided by the exam boards and Non-Examination Assessment (NEA), where relevant.



Students have already begun completing some assessments that we will use for the grading process. This has included year 11 assessments in English and year 13 mock exams, for example. No one piece of assessment will be the only evidence used.

The assessment materials provided by the exam boards will consist of questions, mark schemes and model answers that teachers can use if they wish. They will not be compulsory. We will use these materials where appropriate after the Easter holidays. They will be completed in lessons and woven into the cycle of teaching.

Each Head of Department is currently working with Talvinder Bhullar, Deputy Headteacher, to define the specific evidence that will be used for each subject. Once this has been finalised immediately after Easter, this information will be given to each student so that they are aware of the evidence that will be used in each of their subjects.

We must retain all evidence used in grading produced by students after 24th March. All students will therefore be issued with evidence folders which we will retain in school and in which they will need to store all their assessed work. We may need to submit this evidence to the exam boards as part of a moderation or appeals process.

If students are entitled to exam access arrangements (EAAs), then teachers will endeavour to ensure that students have these EAAs for any assessments taking place in class from after the holidays. Where this is not possible, or where the work being used as evidence was undertaken in the past without EAAs in place, teachers will use their knowledge of the student to make a judgement that takes into account the EAA to which they are entitled. This will mean no student should be disadvantaged.

All staff have been issued with training materials that we have put together to support the grading process. This has included detailed guidance and exemplification.

### **When will the assessments begin and finish?**

Assessments have already begun and will continue over the six-week period after the Easter holidays. Students will complete these assessments in class as part of their normal programme of teaching and assessment.

The number and type of assessments will vary by subject. There will be more assessment activities in lessons than would usually take place, but the whole half term will not consist solely of assessments. Teachers will need to complete the teaching of the course where not already done so, and support students with revision. Each teacher will set out when and how assessments will take place.

Assessment activities will be completed by Friday 28th May. Students must be available to come in for any additional assessments that might be required from 7th-18th June, although we only anticipate using this contingency period in specific circumstances such as student absence for other assessments or if there are problems with the existing assessed material.

The final TAGs will be moderated and checked and then submitted to the exam boards no later than Friday 18th June.

### **Will assessments and evidence be returned to students?**

Students will be given back their marked assessments as far as possible, but they will then be retained in school as evidence for grading. Work can be used as part of an ongoing improvement process in lessons.

Students will not be told the final grade that will be submitted for them, but information about the grade boundaries used and the specific pieces of work that will be used for evidence will be shared with all students in lessons.

### **When will be the last day of school attendance?**

All students in years 11 and 13 must attend school until Friday 28th May. They must then be available to attend if requested from 7th-18th June.

For students in year 11 who want to join us in the Sixth Form, there will be onsite transition activities from Monday 28th June onwards. Students will be informed of the days and times they will need to attend in due course. These transition activities will be over by Friday 9th July.

### **Will there be leavers days and proms?**

There will be no assessments on Friday 28th May and this will be the last day of attendance for all students in years 11 and 13 and we will use this day for our in-school farewell activities.

We have provisionally booked prom dates for both year 11 and year 13, but it remains to be seen whether these activities will be permitted under the law. If they are, then we will do our best to go ahead with them. We will let parents and students know in due course.

### **When will results be issued?**

For year 13, results will be issued on Tuesday 10th August. Support with UCAS applications and clearing will be available on this day.

For year 11, results will be issued on Thursday 12th August. This will also be the day when students will need to enrol for the Sixth Form if they wish to attend it, so all students should ensure that they are available on this day if possible.

We will provide further details about results and enrolment in due course.

### **How will the appeals process work?**

If a student believes there has been an administration or procedural error in their grading, then they can ask us to check this. We will check that all the appropriate evidence has been taken into account, that we followed our Centre Policy, and took account of any access arrangements or mitigating circumstances. We can ask the exam board to amend the grade if there is found to be an error of administration or procedure. Students cannot appeal to the school to ask us to review how we have exercised our academic judgement.

If the student is still not happy with their grade, they can ask the school to appeal to the exam board on their behalf. This can be on the grounds that the student believes that we have not followed our own procedures as set out in our Centre Policy, or that we have made an unreasonable exercise of academic judgement in the choice of evidence from which we determined the grade and / or in the determination of the grade from that evidence. The school will need to submit all the evidence that has been used in the grading process and the exam board will determine whether the final grade is in line with the evidence, reasonable academic judgement having been employed. The grade may or may not be changed by the exam board as a result of this process.

### **Will there be an Autumn exam series?**

Ofqual is still consulting on the Autumn exam series for students who are not happy and may wish to sit an exam to try to improve their grades. As soon as we have further information about this, we will let you know.

### **What should students do if they are worried or anxious?**

Students should feel confident that we have their best interests at heart. If they are worried about a particular subject, students should speak to the teacher first. They will be able to give advice on how they can improve.

Parents and students can contact form tutors and year co-ordinators if they have more general worries about how students may cope with the process, or if there are wider personal concerns that might impact on a student's performance. Teachers can then be informed.

If a student is feeling very anxious or worried, they can contact our Wellbeing Team by emailing [askforhelp@woodbridgehigh.co.uk](mailto:askforhelp@woodbridgehigh.co.uk). The team will be running a range of support provision and workshops as we return to school and as we go through the assessment process.

## And Finally

Once again, please rest assured that the school will do all we can to undertake the qualification grading process with fairness and integrity. We have a clear understanding of what we need to do and how we will do it. We know the students well, we know what they are capable of doing and we will target the assessment process at allowing them to demonstrate this.

I have every confidence that our students will do their best and show us what they can do. I wish them all the luck in the world, safe in the knowledge that this is not really about 'luck' but about the hard work that I know they have done.

I send my best wishes to all of you. I will write to you again after the holidays with any further updates that I have at that time.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Hogan', with a horizontal line drawn through it.

Steven Hogan  
Headteacher