

LANCASTER ROYAL GRAMMAR SCHOOL

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25th February 2021

Dear Students and Parents,

Awarding GCSE, A-level and Pre-U grades

I am writing to outline how GCSE, A-level and Pre-U grades will be awarded this summer. The full guidance from the Department for Education is here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/consultation-on-how-gcse-as-and-a-level-grades-should-be-awarded-in-summer-2021>

We are absolutely committed to supporting all our Upper Sixth and Year 11 students to gain the qualifications that they need and deserve. After a long period of uncertainty, I hope that it will be reassuring that clarity is starting to emerge about these next steps.

Key principles

The government has promised that this year's students will not be disadvantaged by the cancellation of A-levels and GCSEs. Cambridge Pre-U have confirmed that their exams are also cancelled.

Schools must use a broad range of evidence to make an overall judgement on each student's performance in each subject. That can include evidence from earlier in the course, as well as work and assessments completed over the coming months. Grades will not be determined by the outcome of one test. Formal assessments in school this term and next will only be part of that evidence.

We are not yet able to spell out the exact evidence that we will include. This is because schools are waiting for further advice. Exam boards are going to provide detailed guidance on grading every subject and on the range of evidence. We will let you know when we have those details.

You must not pressure your teachers about your possible grades. Decisions about grades are the responsibility of the school and not of your teachers.

Mark Chambers (Deputy Head – Director of Studies) will oversee all aspects of the process across all subjects. I will be required to declare formally that all our processes are accurate, consistent and fair. Exam boards will check our processes and carry out sample checks on our evidence.

Details of the process

Although they can use evidence from throughout the course, schools have been told to determine grades as late as possible in the academic year. This is to maximise

teaching time and make sure that students have every chance to show the standard of their work. It is still February – there is plenty of time left.

Students' performance will only be assessed on topics which have been taught to them, if the syllabus has not been completed. Don't worry about those gaps.

Non-exam assessment (coursework) will contribute to the overall grade, whether or not it has been completed. Art and Design will be graded only on the portfolio, whether or not it has been completed

The school must ensure that we have provided reasonable adjustments for students with learning support needs; that we have followed guidance on avoiding bias and discrimination; and that work submitted is the student's own.

It will be possible to appeal grades in the summer. Appeals will go through the school for decision by exam boards. Grades can go up or down on appeal.

Key dates

18th June Deadline for the school to submit grades to exam boards

10th August A-level results day

12th August GCSE results day

We are very much looking forward to welcoming our pupils back in person on Monday 8th March. Teachers and support staff will be focussed on supporting each of them, aware that the past few weeks have not been easy.

Do get in touch if we can help at any time. Please contact form teachers or other pastoral staff if a conversation would be useful or if there is further support that we can offer.

GCSE and A-level students: The advice stays the same as ever! Keep to good routines: sensible sleep, healthy diet, outdoor exercise, and keeping in touch with friends and family. Don't hesitate to ask us at school for help. Trust your teachers, remember that the school is your greatest supporter, and do your best to keep working hard.

Yours faithfully,

Dr C J Pyle
Headmaster