

Dear Parent and Carers,

Thank you for supporting the return to school of your children. Students across the consortium have come back eager to learn and complete their studies.

As you know, on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2021 the DfE and Ofqual confirmed the alternative arrangements schools need to implement for the awarding of GCSE, A level and Vocational Qualifications (VTQ). This communication is to appraise you of the process by which the Welwyn Hatfield Consortium will allocate centre assessed grades (CAGs) to our students. Senior colleagues across the Consortium have been working together over the last few weeks to ensure a robust and fair Quality Assurance process is in place for the students: one that will mean all may be confident in the knowledge that the right grades have been awarded.

The details below outline the 'next steps' in this Quality Assurance process which all Welwyn and Hatfield Consortium schools have agreed to abide by. This will enable all students, guided by their teachers, to plan for a purposeful revision programme. For all qualifications undertaken at Bishop's Hatfield Girls' School, the school will be responsible for determining the grade each student should receive. These will be known as Centre Assessed Grades.

For students that study qualifications at another school site, it is the home site that will submit the CAG, but the evidence will be collected and provided by the teaching site.

#### **The Welwyn Hatfield Consortium Quality Assurance Process: next steps**

- **From 15<sup>th</sup> March 2021**, all schools will commence collection of appropriate evidence which may inform the final portfolio for each student. Once detailed guidance has been received from each of the examination boards (promised no later than 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021), schools will finalise what will be included within each student portfolio. The Consortium Quality Assurance group, drawn from senior leaders across the Consortium will oversee this process.
- **Between 22<sup>nd</sup> March and 26<sup>th</sup> May 2021**, schools will carry out informal and formal assessments of students (see below for more information). The purpose of this assessment period is to provide a final opportunity for students to improve on the grades reported in January. For each subject students will undertake assessment ranging from an hour to two hours, this may be split across two assessments.
- **By 28<sup>th</sup> May 2021**, the Consortium QA group will have completed all marking and moderation.
- **By 18<sup>th</sup> June 2021**, Consortium Headteachers will sign and submit a declaration, confirming that the requirements for internal QA have been met. **From 18<sup>th</sup> June 2021**, Examination boards will process the grades submitted by centres.

Each individual subject and centre will have different requirements with regard to the assessment data they require in order to provide a holistic CAG. Thus individual class teachers will be informing their students about any upcoming assessments that they should prepare for. Most assessments will be completed in class, however where there are two teaching groups in a subject we will ensure that both groups take assessments at the same time. We will also ensure that appropriate access arrangements are in place.

The procedures put in place at school-level will be subject to a validation check by Examination Boards. They will put in place arrangements for external QA to check each centre's internal QA process and, in a sample of centres, to review the evidence for one or more subjects.

### **How grades will be determined:**

- Teachers will assess the standard at which students are performing, based only on what has been taught (providing there has been sufficient coverage of the course content).
- Teacher judgements will be based on a range of evidence. This evidence may include any of the work listed below, but the school will need to be confident that it is the student's own unaided work and they have not been given inappropriate levels of support either at home or from tutors.
- The evidence can be taken from any point in the course, but it is expected that more recent evidence is likely to be more representative of a student's achievement.

The evidence base could include:

- work produced in class or at home (including remote learning, where schools are confident it is the students' own, unaided work).
  - tests and mock exams taken over the course of study
  - work produced in response to the additional assessment materials to be provided by the exam board
  - non-exam assessment (NEA) work even if this has not been fully completed
  - records of a student's capability and performance over the course of study in performance-based subjects such as music, drama and PE
- Teachers will be supported to arrive at grades using exam board guidance and exemplars.
  - Students will know which evidence is being used to assess them but they will not be told the grade in advance of results day.

### **How schools and the exam boards will ensure the grades are fair:**

- Schools will be expected to have internal quality assurance systems (including moderation) and checking of grades before they are submitted.
- We have also built in external moderation across the consortium to check that there is parity of standards across all the school centres.
- Exam boards will review all schools' quality assurance processes before grades are submitted.
- Once grades are submitted, the exam board will conduct various checks to make sure grades submitted are fair and consistent across centres. This will include sampling of evidence.
- If there are concerns with the grades submitted, the exam board will work with the school to address this before results day. (Exam boards will not 'remark' the work).

### **Appeals:**

- Students will have the right to appeal if they are concerned about their grade.
- Grades will not be changed by exam boards if the evidence provided shows the grade is a 'reasonable' assessment.
- In the event of an appeal grades can be both lowered or increased.

Whatever further guidance is forthcoming, we will not be able to enter into conversation with parents or carers about the grades we will submit. Therefore, we would be grateful if you would avoid contacting subject teachers with specific queries about grades, because they will be unable to answer these.

For now, it is essential that students continue to work hard, complete all work set by teachers and respond to feedback so that the final evidence base shows their very best achievements and they can receive the grades they deserve.