

21st May 2021

Dear parents/carers,

Following on from the information circulated before Easter regarding the process in place for awarding your son/daughter their Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGs) this summer, we write to all parents/carers of Year 11 and Year 13 with an update.

Centre Policy

Our updated Centre Policy for awarding TAGs this summer has been approved by our Governing Body. This policy has been sent to JCQ (Joint Council for Qualifications) and is available for parents and carers to view on our school's website under the 'Policies' section.

JCQ have also produced a handy guide for students and parents for both GCSEs and AS/A-Levels. This can be found on the JCQ website:

<https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/JCQ-Guidance-for-Students-and-Parents-on-Summer-2021.pdf>

Internal Process

Our staff are working tirelessly at the moment, with your son/daughter, to ensure that they have the most up-to-date evidence they can in order to be able to award the best possible grade. As a school we have set staff an internal deadline of 28th May 2021 to input all TAGs onto our system. Following this submission, we will be conducting several forms of internal and external quality assurance which will take place up until the deadline for grades to be submitted to Awarding Organisations on 18th June 2021.

Submission of TAGs on 28th May 2021 are not final, and our staff will remain teaching your son/daughter until 18th June 2021 when the final TAGs are submitted to Awarding Organisations. **Within the time 28th May to 18th June 2021, it is important to note that TAGs can still improve/decline** based on the work students are doing in their lessons. It is essential that students remain focused on their subjects, following advice from their teachers and continue to work hard in class.

Student Official Leaving Date

Your son/daughter officially leaves full-time education whether they are currently in Year 11 or Year 13 on Friday 25th June 2021. In discussion with our Senior Team we have decided that all students in Years 11 and 13 will work remotely at home doing work set for them by their subject teachers, to be accessed via our Student Portal from Monday 7th June 2021 to Friday 25th June 2021. The last day that your son/daughter will be in the building will be Friday 28th May 2021. Students will be leaving early on the day. Should you require IT support whilst your child is working remotely at home then please let us know.

The weeks 7th –18th June 2021 will allow staff to have time in school to make sure that they have everything in place before the final submission date to Awarding Organisations on 18th June 2021. As already mentioned, it is essential that your son/daughter completes the work set by their

teacher when they are working remotely at home. During these weeks, students must be available to be called into the school should a teacher require them.

Although students will not be on site from the 7th June, we will continue to work with students online to support them with all aspects of their progression to further study or employment. Guidance to access their chosen options post 16/18 will be available and we will continue to offer support for their mental health and well-being. Those students joining our Sixth Form in September will be required to access transition work in their chosen subjects and will be invited into school later in the term to attend 'Bridging the Gap' sessions to support them to make the transition from GCSE to Advanced Level.

Students will require a sign off before they finish. Should this not occur, students will be expected in the school up to and including the 25th June 2021.

Appeals Process

There is an 'Appeals' process that will be available to students following publication of the results in August 2021.

Ofqual have recently released a helpful document for you and your child, which provides all the information around appeals and the awarding of grades this summer. It can be found below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/student-guide-to-awarding-summer-2021>

We want to support our students and parents/carers ahead of the final submission date in June and would rather have addressed every concern prior to this date. If there is a concern or query that you wish to make, please contact us via exams@phoenix.sandwell.sch.uk where we will be more than happy to help. We would hope to ensure that no parent/child felt the need to appeal and that they had been treated fairly.

Malpractice

Please remember that teachers must not share TAGs with you or students. If this occurs then we must report the incident to the examination board. Please do not ask teachers for this information and remind your son/daughter not to ask them either.

In current assessments in school, examination conditions must be used and any use of mobile phone/talking/referring to notes etc. must also be reported as malpractice. Any student reported could put their grades at risk not only for that subject but also all other subjects. Please remind your son/daughter about this.

Finally, teachers can share what evidence they intend to use with you but you must not attempt to influence that decision, again this is malpractice and must be reported to the examination boards. Parents/carers have been hugely supportive so far, thank you, we are confident this will continue but I am sure you understand that I must remind you.

Can I thank all parents and carers for the support that you have and are giving your son/daughter during this period. Thank you all for your patience and understanding and please contact us if you need our help.

Yours faithfully,



Mike Smith
Head teacher

