

Dear parent/carer and student in Year 11 and 13,

We understand how unsettling the past weeks have been for you, since the announcement that exams have been cancelled this summer. We have all been urgently waiting for news which arrived last week. The aim of this letter is to let you know what we are doing to award grades this summer for GCSEs, A Levels and the EPQ in line with the official guidance from Ofqual (The Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation). Their over-riding aim of their agreed process for awarding grades is to be fair to students this summer and to make sure no student is disadvantaged in their progress to sixth form, college, university, apprenticeships, training or work because of these unprecedented conditions. I have taken the guidance straight from the official website, so please be reminded that these are Ofqual's words and do not refer to decisions the Academy has made to award grades. In light of this, we cannot do anything to change this process.

**How will grades be calculated?**

The Academy will be asked to send exam boards the grade they believe any given student was most likely to get if teaching, learning and exams had happened as planned within each subject. Schools have been asked to consider a range of things like classwork and homework; results in assignments and any mock exams; any non-exam assessment or coursework students might have done; and general progress during a course. This information will allow Ofqual, with exam boards, to standardise grades across schools and colleges, to make sure that, as far as possible, results are fair and that students are not advantaged or disadvantaged because their schools or colleges are more generous or harsh than others when making those judgements. That means the final grade you get could be different from the one your school or college sends to the exam board.

**Do I need to have completed the course?**

The answer to this is no. The Academy, in line with the official guidance, understands that many courses will not have been completed in March when schools closed. As stated above teachers will submit the grade that reflects what that student was most likely to achieve in their exam if teaching, learning and exams had happened as planned within each subject.

**Can I see the grades St Mark's submits for me?**

No, this information will be confidential. Please don't ask your teachers, or anyone else at the Academy, to tell you the grades they will be sending to the exam boards. We are not allowed to share this with you.

**When will I get my results?**

Ofqual are working hard to get results out as soon as is possible – results won't be delayed after the dates they were expected in August, and ideally they will be issued a little earlier, so you can have the certainty you need.

**Can I take my exams another time?**

It is clear from the guidance that students who feel that their grades do not reflect their ability will have the opportunity to take their exams in the autumn or in summer 2021. If they choose to do this, both grades will stand. Ofqual are working with exam boards to offer additional exams in the autumn term as soon as it is possible to do so. The Academy will let you know about these in the coming weeks when more information is released.

**What about BTECs and Tech Awards?**

Ofqual have stated that they will share details about vocational and technical qualifications as soon as they can, so please keep an eye on their website (<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofqual>) for this or wait for a similar letter to this one from the Academy once the information has been released.

Please be reassured that the grades you get this summer will look exactly the same as in previous years, and they will have equal status with universities, colleges and employers, to help you move forward in your lives as planned.

With every best wish,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. P. P. P. P.' followed by a stylized flourish.

