

Dear Parent/Carer,

11 March 2021

All the staff at St Mark's Academy have been thrilled this week to welcome your child back into school so that they are able to resume their face to face learning in what has been an incredibly challenging period. We look forward to working closely with them in the coming months to secure their best outcomes to enable them to move on successfully to their next stage of education

When we last wrote to you about the changes to GCSE/A-Level and BTEC exams, we were awaiting the outcome of the Qfqual Exams and Awarding Grades Consultation. The final outcomes of this process have now been released and we are now writing to outline how your child will be assessed in Year 11 and 13.

The Department for Education have decided that instead of formal exams, students' grades will be given by their teachers based on the work that they have completed throughout their GCSE course rather than after sitting a final exam in the summer term.

The key message from the consultation are:

1. **Students will only be assessed on the content that their teachers have taught them both in the classroom and remotely** throughout the GCSE/A-Level and BTEC Course. This may include work from previous years learning.
2. Teachers will be asked to use a **broad range of evidence to determine student grades**. It will not be based on one assessment or exam. This is a real opportunity for your child to work hard in school, at home and in their intervention lessons to get the grades that they deserve.
3. **Teachers will not make a final judgement on a teacher assessed grade until later in the summer term**. This means that your child will still have lots of opportunities to progress and get support in the run up to assessments.
4. **Students will continue to work your coursework in GCEs/A-Levels and BTECs** where there is a coursework element and this will contribute to their final teacher assessed grade.
5. **Students should know the ways in which they are being assessed** before teacher assessed grades are submitted to the exam boards, although they will not be told at any point their full teacher assessed grade as this will be released on results days in August.

### How St Mark's will assess students in Year 11 and 13

We have been working hard since the government announced the changes to assessments to make sure that your child has as many opportunities as possible to demonstrate their skills, knowledge and ability in each of their GCSE, A-Level and BTEC subjects and this week we have shared our model of assessment with your child so that they are prepared for the coming months.

Interim Principal Hannah Fahey

**In order to support your child and spread out the assessments that they will be doing, we will be gathering the main evidence to determine your child's grade between now and the beginning of June.**

- They will have a minimum of 4 opportunities in each subject to complete a piece of work that they will use to create a portfolio of evidence. Teachers will use these portfolios to decide your child's grade in their subject.
- All the work that they complete on TEAMS, in lessons and during their intervention sessions, will help them build towards and prepare for these pieces of work.
- The windows for each evidence gathering opportunity will be as follows:
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Piece will be completed by 31 March 2021
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Piece by 10 May 2021
  - Final Piece towards end of May/beginning of June

Teachers will be able to give students grades for individual pieces of work that they will use for their portfolio of evidence once these have been marked and moderated. This will help your child know how they are progressing so that they can know what they need to do to improve. **However, it is important for you and your child to understand that any grades that are given are only for that individual piece of work. These grades are not the same as your child's Teacher Assessed Final Grade (TAG) and teachers will not be able to share these final grades with parents or students.**

We know that these changes are significant and that there are many reports in the media about what this might mean for your child's future. In order to support you as parents, we will be hosting a **Virtual Parents Information Evening** focusing on **Year 11 and Year 13 Assessment and Grading on Thursday 18 March at 6:00pm via Zoom**. This event will talk you through our assessment plans in more detail and give you a chance to ask questions that you may have about the assessment and how grades will be awarded. To join the meeting please use the link below:

**Year 11 and Year 13 Assessment and Grading Parent's Information Evening**

**Date: Thursday 18 March 2021**

**Time: 6:00pm to 6:45pm**

**Link:** Join Zoom Meeting <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87629426295>

**Meeting ID:** 876 2942 6295

**Support for Year 11 and 13.**

We appreciate that this year has been very tough for everyone including our year 11 and 13 students in particular. We know they may feel that they missed important learning due to the lockdown. As we now have the coming months to prepare your child for their new assessment opportunities, we are determined to provide them with bespoke learning intervention to support them, develop their skills and knowledge and get them ready for their next steps in education.

Interventions will take a variety of formats:

- Morning Sessions from 8:30am to 9:20am
- Afternoon Sessions from 3:30pm to 4:30 pm
- Saturday Sessions
- Easter Sessions

**Every student targeted for intervention will be given their intervention timetable showing the subjects, date and times of their intervention. Please talk through this timetable with your child so that they know which support sessions they are attending and support your child take up this important opportunity.**

This is an exceptionally important year for your child, and we expect that you will engage with the different opportunities available for both students and parents. This will help us all reach a shared goal to get our young people the best possible outcomes.

Thank you so much in advance for your ongoing support during this time.

With Love, Hope and Trust

Ms J Khan

Ms S Bhadare

**Vice Principal: Curriculum Intent & Simran Bhadare - Director of Science and Sixth Form**

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Interim Principal Hannah Fahey

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The Diocese of  
**Southwark**



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