

17th March 2021



Penryn
College

"Achieving through Challenge"

Ref: Year 11 GCSE Grades and Key Dates

Dear Parent/Carer(s)

I am writing to you to outline our plan for the awarding of GCSE grades and the key dates by which we will communicate further information.

Firstly, can I begin by recognising the hard work and resilience that Year 11 demonstrated once again during this lockdown; their work ethic, fantastic attendance at live lessons and in particular, their warmth and good humour when communicating with staff, was really appreciated by us all. Unquestionably, Year 11 have learnt new skills over the past few months; not just a greater ability to organise and prioritise their learning, but a new-found resilience to persevere when things go wrong and a confidence to communicate with teachers, families, and friends when they need support - these are all important skills for the future.

Awarding GCSE & Technical Award Grades; what do we know?

We know that there will be no formal GCSE/Technical Award examinations this year and grades will be 'centre assessed'. The grades that will be submitted to exam boards must reflect a fair, reasonable, and carefully considered judgement of the student's performance across a range of evidence, on the curriculum content that they have been taught (including lockdown in Year 10 and 11). All staff will receive detailed guidance on the requirements of grading once it is available, with specific emphasis on the need for objectivity in making judgements. All Centre Assessed Grades will be moderated with Faculties and across Faculties; exam boards are providing further guidance on internal and external quality assurance measures.

We also know that schools should submit grades to the exam boards by the **18th June**, and that GCSE and Vocational Qualification results this year will be published on **12th August** which will be Exams Results Day.

Alongside the evidence we already have, gathered from a range of different sources, we are also going to undertake formal assessments in the two weeks prior to the May half term holiday (**the weeks beginning the 17th and 24th May**). These assessments will form only one



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part of the evidence that teachers will use to make their overall judgement. We believe it is right to undertake some formal assessment, as we know that many students perform better in exam conditions and it is therefore right to give them the opportunity to succeed to the best of their abilities, alongside all the other classroom-based evidence that we already have.

So that students (and you) know exactly what they will be tested on, we will publish on **Friday 26th March**, a subject-by-subject guide as to what is being assessed in the exam and where students can access revision resources. We will also publish the exam timetable and the details of revision classes on this date. We will not be publishing the individual results of these formal assessments, as they will be subject to the centre assessed moderation process and confirmed as part of the final Centre Assessed Grade decision. Students studying Technical Awards will receive further clarification in April when the exam boards release additional guidance as to how these qualifications should be graded by schools.

Finally, all students will undertake an additional English Language exam on **Monday 29th March**. We will provide full access arrangements for those students who qualify. Students will work towards this assessment in their English lessons prior to 29th March. This additional assessment allows students to focus solely upon their GCSE Literature for the formal assessment window in May.

I know that many Year 11 students will want us to confirm as soon as possible the '**Year 11 leaving date**'. We are still waiting for guidance from the DfE as to when this can be from. We will of course confirm this with you as soon as we know. It is still our intention to celebrate Year 11's last day of term and to have a prom, of course the certainty and timing of both of these events will be determined by the national picture.

We are also still awaiting final guidance as to the '**appeals process**' for Centre Assessed Grades (this is due to be confirmed by OFQUAL in April), and the timeframe by which you must appeal. Again, as soon as these are confirmed, we will let you know.

We know that many of you will want to speak to teachers, therefore, we are provisionally looking at scheduling a 'virtual' Subject Review Evening shortly after the Easter holiday. We will confirm this with you nearer the time.

I have met with Year 11 today to take them through this process. I also reiterated to them that they can be rightly proud of all that they have achieved over the past two years and if they continue to work hard in class, produce work to the best of their abilities, and ask for help when they need it, they will get the results they deserve.

Thank you for all your incredible support over the past two challenging years, if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at jharvey@penryn-college.cornwall.sch.uk



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Summary of key dates:

Date:	Action:
26th March	Release of Formal Assessment timetable and subject-by-subject guide to each assessment
29th March	English Language exam
April (TBC)	Exam boards release further information re: Technical Awards
April (TBC)	OFQUAL confirm process for 'appeals'
April (TBC)	Year 11 Subject Review Evening
3rd May	Revision classes begin for Formal Assessments
17th May	Start of two-week Formal Assessment window
18th June	Schools submit Centre Assessed Grades to exam boards
12th August	GCSE Results Day

Yours faithfully

John Harvey
Assistant Headteacher



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