



Kingswinford Academy

A part of Windsor Academy Trust

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21st May 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

Teacher Assessed Grades 2021

As part of the process for awarding Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGs) for qualifications this year, it is important that we make students and parents aware of some key aspects in this process which are outlined in this letter. This information is a summary derived from the full [Qfqual guidance](#) which has been attached to this email for your reference. There is a Google form that will need to be returned to confirm understanding of certain aspects of it.

Teacher Assessed Grades Policy

Each school is required to have a 'Centre Policy' that outlines how Teacher Assessed Grades will be determined. This is available on the website and can be viewed [here](#). Here is a summary of some of the key points in the policy:

- The disruption caused by the pandemic over the past twelve months will mean schools will assess students only on the content they have been taught in sufficient depth but enough content needs to have been covered in order to allow progression to the next stage of each student's education.
- Grades will be determined by considering a range of different assessments over the course of study to give an overall grade that reflects the knowledge, skills and understanding the student has demonstrated.
- In some limited circumstances students can request Special Consideration from the school similar to if there had been exceptional extenuating circumstances on the day of an exam. More details are given later in this letter.
- Eligible students will have had access arrangements in place for assessments. Where this has not been the case this will be taken into account when determining grades.
- Staff have received training and support, including around bias and objectivity in assessment and grading decisions.
- Grades will be moderated (including in conjunction with other schools in the Trust) and quality assured (again at department, Senior Leadership Team and Trust level) to ensure that the correct standards have been applied.
- Quality assurance will include reviewing the grades against historical data, so that any variations can be explained.
- Exam boards will quality assure the school's grades; the school will submit evidence of students' work to verify that the standard applied is correct.



- Schools cannot inform students or parents of grades before the Results Day in August.

Evidence Base

Grades will be the result of considering evidence from across the course of study to make a holistic judgement of each student's performance on a range of evidence relating to the content that they have been taught. This could include coursework, internal assessments, assessments provided by the exam boards, assessments completed in exam conditions and records of performance in practical subjects. Assessments could be those that have been completed remotely although teachers will balance the strength of that evidence in terms of how secure we can be about whether the work is the student's own work as this is more challenging than when assessments are done under supervision in school. Assessments used are those that have been completed by the whole cohort of students to ensure that students have equality of opportunity to demonstrate what they know and can do. There can be flexibility if students missed an assessment to use the other evidence we have.

Each student must be made aware of the evidence that is going to be used and understand that the range of evidence used to determine a grade is not negotiable. Subject leaders have been working on ensuring that the evidence base used is as comprehensive and fair as possible and teachers have been talking through this list of evidence in each subject with students in lessons this week. It is also on the WAT website [here](#) and accompanies this letter.

The Google form at the end of this letter is where students will confirm that they understand which pieces of evidence are being used to determine their grades; if there are any queries relating to the evidence being used, these can be raised with us via the form.

Authentication

It is essential that we ensure that work used in support of the Teacher Assessed Grades is the student's own and that no inappropriate levels of support have been given to students to complete it, either within school or with external tutors. Exam boards will investigate instances where it appears that evidence is not authentic. As such as part of the Google Form at the end of this letter, we are asking students to confirm that the evidence being used to determine the grade is their own and to let us know where this is not the case.

Special Consideration

As the range of evidence is flexible and we can take account of instances such as missed assessments by taking into consideration other evidence we have, instances of special consideration should be limited. If necessary, we should be able to select work completed by a student where they were unaffected by adverse circumstances and where this is the case we will let the student know.

Where this is not possible and a temporary illness, a temporary injury or some other event outside of the student's control may have affected their performance in assessments which will be used to determine a grade, we will take this into account. Special consideration cannot be applied due to lost teaching and learning, for example as a result of any disruption caused by the pandemic, because we have been able to assess only content where this has not been the case. We have to be satisfied that the issue or event has had, or is reasonably likely to have had, a material effect on a student's ability to demonstrate his or her normal level of attainment in an assessment and we must record how we have determined the impact of the misfortune.

Special Consideration is for circumstances at the time of the assessment where this is likely to have had an adverse effect on performance such as illness or accident/injury, bereavement, domestic crisis, participating in a sporting event at an international level or failure to implement previously approved

access arrangements. It is not used for long-term illness or domestic inconvenience such as moving house or holidays. We may ask for documentary evidence to support the request.

If a request for Special Consideration is granted, the effect on performance in that assessment will be taken into account when making the grading decision. This is likely to mean that teachers will use an alternative piece of work or consider whether the grade in that assessment would have been affected which will then be taken into account when considering the range of evidence for determining the Teacher Assessed Grade. It will not necessarily mean that a higher grade is awarded. The subject grade will be awarded to broadly reflect the level of performance the student has demonstrated through the majority of the assessment evidence. Judgements taking into account Special Consideration will also be subject to the school's internal quality assurance process.

Malpractice

It is important that the grades awarded retain their value and are a fair reflection of what students know and can do and as such processes are in place to reduce the chance of malpractice taking place. It could be considered malpractice for students to obtain an unfair advantage by submitting work which is not their own or for students or parents/carers to try to influence grade decisions by applying pressure to school or staff. Any such attempts are required to be recorded and if malpractice is confirmed grades could be withheld. It is for this reason that students need to confirm work used as evidence towards their grades is their own and why staff cannot engage in discussions around the Teacher Assessed Grades with students or parents.

Results

Results Days are expected to run in a similar format to usual, although the dates are earlier in the summer holiday.

- Year 11 students will receive their results on **Thursday 12th August 2021**.

Appeals

As students are aware which assessments are being used to determine their Teacher Assessed Grade and because we will be aware of any requests for Special Consideration before submitting the grades to exam boards, the need for appeals should be limited. In addition, the grades awarded will have been awarded according to an effective policy and following an extremely rigorous process of quality assurance, including at various levels within school and the Trust. Grades will have been agreed upon following a process involving checking by teachers, Faculty Directors/Heads of Department, the Senior Leadership Team, Windsor Academy Trust Subject Directors/Leads, the Headteacher and the WAT Executive Leadership Team.

If students wish to appeal any grades following the issue of results, there will be two stages:

Stage 1: Centre Review. This stage is if a student does not consider that they have been issued with the correct grade and they can ask us to check if an administrative or procedural error has occurred. The student needs to be aware that grades could go up, down or stay the same. If we find that an error has occurred, we will submit a request to the exam board to correct the error and amend the grade without the need to make an appeal to the exam board.

Stage 2: Appeal to the Exam Board. This stage is used if the student considers that the centre did not follow its procedure properly, the exam board has made an administrative error or the student considers that the grade awarded was an unreasonable exercise of academic judgement. The student needs to be aware that the grade could go up, down or stay the same.

More details will be provided if necessary following the issue of results in August.

Google Form: Please return by 4pm on Monday 24th May

Please complete this Google form; it is absolutely essential that this is completed for all students in order for Teacher Assessed Grades to be awarded as it is the way in which we can confirm students understand the evidence being used for their grades, that the work is their own and that there is an opportunity to let us know about any Special Consideration being requested.

Thank you for your support in this challenging period.

Yours faithfully

Mr A Jones
Assistant Headteacher