

Lincoln Christ's Hospital School

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Dear Parent / Carer,

You will be aware that this year, as in 2020, schools are required to submit assessment grades to examination boards. Our process is designed to ensure that the achievements and attainment of our students are recognised. Our students have worked hard during the difficult challenges of remote learning and we are very grateful for your support in keeping them focused and motivated. Staff are now working carefully to assemble the portfolio of evidence and assessments to be completed by students during the period of April 26th to May 28th.

The last day on site for the majority of Year 11 and 13 students will be Friday May 28th. However, some students may be called into school between Monday 7th and Friday 11th June to complete any final pieces of assessment evidence where required. Final moderation of assessment evidence will be completed during this period for submission by Friday 18th June. Students continued learning will be supported by a remote offer from the 7th June until their official final day of June 25th. They will receive 'Bridging' materials through ClassCharts to complete during June to prepare for their transition into Sixth Form. We will also be providing details of transition days and events for Year 11 students during this final term. The Progress Leader and Pastoral Manager will also remain in close contact during this period to support the continued wellbeing of our students. We will provide further details of celebration events such as Leavers Assemblies, planned to take place after June 21st.

Teacher / Centre Assessed Grades – 2021

'Fair grades for students based on performance, not potential' (JCQ)

Our intent is to use a broad range of evidence from the following:

Using student work produced in response to assessment materials provided by our awarding organisations, non-exam assessment work (often referred to as coursework) and student work produced in centre-devised tasks.

Substantial class or homework, internal tests taken by pupils, mock examinations and records of a student's capability and performance over the course of study in performance-based subjects such as music, drama and PE.

All work must be their own, submission of fabricated evidence or plagiarised work would constitute malpractice.

Each qualification may use a different range of evidence, this is required to be consistent across the cohort or class and have been asked to collect between four and six pieces, depending upon the subject. This portfolio could have a maximum of two 'historic' pieces of evidence, this provides an opportunity for students to maximise grades in their upcoming assessments. When awarding grades, we must consider when the assessment was completed and the level of control it was completed under. e.g. **High** (formal exams in the sports hall), **Medium** (assessments completed under teacher supervision) and **Low** (students work completed independent of teacher supervision). All of these provide valid evidence for awarding grades to students but greater weighting will be given to higher levels of control. Additionally, greater weighting would be applied to assessments conducted later in the course.

Students will be informed in advance of any assessment and these will be noted within ClassCharts by their teacher. Assessments will take place within lesson time and will be no more than 45 minutes in duration, with the exception of specific assessments mandated by the exam boards related to practical examinations e.g. GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition.

Students will be informed of the evidence used to determine their grade and will be asked to provide details of any mitigating circumstances which may impact on a particular piece of work, e.g. due to illness etc. Where students have access arrangements or reasonable adjustments, every effort will be made to ensure that these arrangements are in place when assessments are being taken and consideration given when determining grades.

How will grades be awarded this summer?

Grades for Vocational Qualifications will be based on a similar process to last year, in which completed units provided an overall grade. Students must continue to work on the assignments due to be completed as part of their course.

Grades for GCSE, GCE and most other qualifications will be based on a process involving teacher assessment against national standards, internal quality assurance, and external quality assurance by the exam boards.

The national process defined by the Department for Education and the exams' regulator, Ofqual is as follows:

1. Teachers will assess students against a national standard provided by the JCQ.

[GCSE Standards](#) [GCE Standards](#)

From the overall balance of evidence, teachers will work together to decide on the grade and this will be verified within departments.

2. Departments will submit grades which will be quality assured by the school. This internal quality assurance process will be verified by the exam board to ensure it is rigorous and in line with national standards.
3. Our school results will be quality assured externally by the exam boards, which may include random sampling of our school's evidence.
4. If the exam boards are confident in our submitted results, then the exam boards will award students their final grades.
5. If students do not think their results are accurate, they will have the right to appeal.

So, do teachers award the grade?

Simply: no. The grade students achieve will start with their teacher's assessment of their performance across a range of evidence. This is against a nationally-defined standard, not the teacher's own opinion. This assessment is then subject to internal moderation by a team of teachers and external quality assurance before the final grade is awarded by the exam body as usual.

Does this mean grades are decided by an algorithm?

No, unlike last year, students' grades will not be changed by a formula. The internal and external quality assurance measures will all be done by humans, not an algorithm. There is no limit on the achievement of students, providing we have consistent evidence that they are working at that grade.

What about loss of learning/impact of COVID-19?

This year, teachers will only assess students on content that they have been taught. This means students will not be disadvantaged if they individually, their whole class or whole year group have been unable to complete their full course. However, grades can only be submitted based on the evidence we have of students' performance, even if that evidence covers less of the course than usual. Students who would usually have extra time in the exams, or other 'access arrangements', will continue to have these applied in teacher assessment.

Will grades be different between different schools nationally?

No, the standard against which teachers will be assessing students is set by the exam boards. This is the standard that will be used during external quality assurance and appeals to ensure consistency and fairness across the system.

What evidence will be used?

Each qualification will decide on the range of evidence to be used. This may include records of assessment prior to this point as well as evidence from April 26th until May 28th. This may include homework tasks, mock exams and additional assessment materials set by the exam boards. There is no requirement for any one type of assessment to be used, it is about performance across a range of evidence. Heads of Department have been working hard with their teams to make sure the evidence used for their qualification gives students the best chance to shine.

Will I get access arrangements or special consideration?

If your child has special educational needs and requires reasonable adjustments, the school will ensure that these are in place when evidence is gathered. Where appropriate reasonable adjustments were not in place when an assessment was taken the teacher will take that into account when determining the final grade.

Special consideration requests will not apply in the usual way this summer because students will not be taking final exams. Students will be asked to inform us if there are any mitigating circumstances at the time of taking the assessment. If you think that your child's performance in an assessment has been affected by illness or personal circumstances, you should talk to us about this as soon as possible. It is important that you raise any such instances before we submit a grade.

Can students and parents make the case for why a student should get a higher grade?

Our teachers are already using their professional expertise to assess students on the content they have been taught. Teachers are unable to submit higher grades for students unless they have the evidence that they are consistently working at this level. If teachers submit higher grades without evidence, they are committing exam malpractice.

The Joint Council for Qualifications advise that when students or parents/carers are found to be putting teachers or leaders under undue pressure to increase grades, then the matter must be referred to the exam boards and an investigation into malpractice may ensue.

Can students discuss their grades with teachers?

Teachers will be able to discuss which evidence they are using to inform their judgement with students, including marked or graded pieces of work. However, we are not allowed to disclose the final submitted grade we give to the exam board. Students should not attempt to second-guess the grade submitted, as teachers will be using a range of evidence to inform their final judgement.

Will final grades be the same as a student's predicted grades?

We issued a set of predicted grades and mock grades in January 2021. These grades were predictions of what teachers believed students were most likely to achieve at the end of their courses, under the assumption that the May/June exam series was going to go ahead, and were not

produced using the process outlined in this letter. They are not the same as Teacher/Centre Assessed Grades, which will be the final grades awarded to students.

When will results be issued?

Results days will be Tuesday 10th August for GCE and their equivalent Level 3 Vocational qualifications and Thursday 12th August for GCSE and their equivalent Level 2 Vocational qualifications. Detailed arrangements for results days and the collection of results will be provided in June/July.

Can I appeal?

All students have the right to appeal against the grade they have been awarded. An initial appeal would be made to the school. The school will check for errors and ensure its own processes were followed. If the school finds an error, we can submit a revised grade to the exam board. If the student wishes to take the appeal further, they will ask the school to submit a formal appeal to the exam board for them. The exam board will check whether the school followed its own processes and exam board requirements, as well as reviewing the evidence used to form their judgement and providing a view as to whether the grade awarded was a reasonable exercise of academic judgement. If the exam board finds that the grade is not reasonable, they will determine the alternative grade and inform the school. Appeals are not likely to lead to adjustments in grades where the original grade is a reasonable exercise of academic judgement supported by the evidence.

Please note grades can go up or down as the result of an appeal.

Everything is very much still to play for, for all our Year 11 and 13 students. I have been immensely proud of the attitude, commitment and mature approach students have taken since coming back to school from the lockdown – in what must be recognised as very difficult circumstances. We also recognise that these coming weeks may be very intense for students as they complete assessed pieces for their portfolios in lessons. There may be days when students face multiple assessments in a day – this can not be avoided. Hopefully the assurance that assessments will be shorter in duration than a normal exam and the knowledge that in a ‘normal exam year’ students would have done similar pieces at this time of year in preparation for their exams will ease this burden. The weeks ahead for our Year 11 and 13 pupils will continue to have an impact on the outcomes that they achieve, and I would like to assure parents and carers that we will work tirelessly and do everything in our power to support our pupils to achieve grades that reflect their ability and hard work.

Regards

Mr B Middleton

Assistant Headteacher

[JCQ Guidance for Parents & Carers](#)