



# SIR JOHN DEANE'S SIXTH FORM COLLEGE 1557

**1 April 2021**

Dear Parents and Year 13 Students

## Update

I am acutely aware that there is a lot of information about Teacher Assessed Grades which it has been important to share with you. It is my hope that by having clarity and certainty, students may feel both confident and well supported.

The Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) published the formal guidance on the determination of grades for A Levels for summer 2021 on 26<sup>th</sup> March. In the light of this document, which spans some 55 pages of detail with numerous links to other key documents, the College has reviewed and enhanced its processes. I am confident that the College is working within both the formality of the guidelines and the spirit of the guidelines.

The JCQ has outlined the national quality assurance process which will seek to ensure demonstrable robustness in the allocation of grades by schools and colleges. The quality assurance process will include the comparison of grades to results for previous cohorts.

*"After grading judgments have been made, centres should compare the grades for this year's cohort to cohorts from previous years when exams have taken place (2017-2019)"*  
JCQ 2021

Centres will be expected to provide confidence that the grades awarded "*command assurance*".

I should stress again expectations from the Department of Education, Ofqual and JCQ include:

- *"Grades will be based on teachers' assessments of the standard at which students are performing and will be based on the student's demonstrated knowledge and skills".*
- The final grade is based on performances by students, and a grade based on "*a predicted trajectory or target grade is not permitted*".

In the light of the guidance, the College has made one refinement to its Teacher Assessed Grade process.

We must take into consideration the key elements highlighted by JCQ including recency of work, where work completed later in the course is more representative of the performance standards of students; *“level of control”*, which includes consideration of the conditions, level of supervision and redrafting opportunities; and the importance of *“authenticating evidence”*. The College will continue to consider four pieces of written work as the benchmark for grades, to include Key Assessment 4, Test week 1, Test week 2 (19<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup> April) and Test week 3 (10<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup> May) and where relevant coursework. Each teacher assessed grade will be a holistic professional judgement. The refinement to our approach is that of the four grades awarded, the weakest grade from the two assessments completed via Teams at home during the most recent lockdown and remote education period (Key Assessment 4 and Test 1), will not be considered in the final judgement. Importantly both of the grades awarded for the forthcoming tests (Test 2 and Test 3) will be considered. I very much believe that this is the fairest and most defensible position in terms of the robustness of the process which will safeguard all grades.

I understand that this is a challenging time for everyone and again I speak directly to parents and ask that you reassure your children that they have the time and support they need to do well.

At this time teachers and indeed leaders nationally are open to much criticism and challenge over claims of unfairness. I believe that whilst no system can be above challenge, I would reassure you that the system in place is transparent, robust and in line with expectations and requirements of Ofqual and JCQ.

If you have any queries please direct them to [tag@sjd.ac.uk](mailto:tag@sjd.ac.uk).

I wish you and your family a peaceful and happy Easter with the wonderful opportunity to meet safely with your wider family and friends.

Yours sincerely



Miss K E Kirkwood  
**Principal**