

21 January 2021



Dear Parent/Guardian

### **Awarding of examination grades**

I am writing this message to the parents of all students who were due to sit examinations this summer to give you an update regarding arrangements for the awarding of grades to students. Many of you have already been in touch to ask what is happening. We will not have a definite answer about the arrangements for awarding grades in 2021 until the middle of February at the earliest.

The body that oversees public examinations, Ofqual, has laid out their intentions in two Consultation documents, one covering arrangements for GCSE / A-Level subjects and one for Vocational qualifications. These consultations were opened last Friday and will close on Friday 29th January. Ofqual will then review the responses and liaise with the Department for Education before publishing the outcomes in February.

The key proposals in the consultation are as follows:

- a student's grade in each subject will be based on their teachers' assessment of the standard at which the student is performing;
- this final assessment will be made towards the end of the academic year, at about the time students would have taken their exams;
- exam boards should provide guidance and training, and make available a set of papers, which teachers use with their students as part of their assessment;
- teachers should draw on a range of broader evidence of a student's work in making their final assessment.

The consultation proposes that students continue with their education in school and would be assessed in a period between late May to early June. Results would be confirmed by exam boards in early July following teacher submission of grades and an external Quality Assurance process. The consultation is clear that students should not be disadvantaged by any period of schooling missed due to the need to self-isolate.

Please note that these are currently proposals only and have not been confirmed. Once we know the outcome of this consultation, I will write to you again to confirm that decision and how it will affect students at STS. It is clear however, that the students will be required to undergo some sort of assessment before the end of this academic year, therefore, it remains essential that the students continue to work hard and follow all the lessons that we are providing during this period of closure.

Ofqual have invited feedback from teachers, students and parents so do please have a look at the full documents and submit your views if you have time.

The consultations can be viewed here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/consultation-on-how-gcse-as-and-a-level-grades-should-be-awarded-in-summer-2021>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/consultation-on-alternative-arrangements-for-the-award-of-vtqs-and-other-general-qualifications-in-2021>

I know that once it was announced that exams were cancelled there was a risk of students feeling confused, anxious and demotivated. I will be releasing a brief assembly on the 21st January for Year 11 and 13 students that will hopefully reassure them and address some of the concerns they may have.

Please do get in touch if you have any questions.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Simon Sharples". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent flourish at the end.

Simon Sharples  
Deputy Headteacher