

22nd March 2021

Our Ref: RWJ/CAS

## Centre Assessed Grades 2021

Dear Year 11 Parents and Carers,

This letter outlines the approach that we are taking at Holyrood Academy towards allocating students Centre Assessed Grades in light of exams being cancelled this academic year. We appreciate that the past year has been brought with it many challenges for young people and therefore our Centre Assessed Grade processes are based upon three principles:

1. Fairness – We are aware that many students have faced disruption throughout the past two academic years and therefore want to give them ongoing opportunities to demonstrate what they are able to do.
2. Kindness – We will support all students in feeling that we are here to help provide them with opportunities to do their best. We recognise that after a difficult period of disruption, and with ongoing uncertainty, all students deserve to be shown kindness and care.
3. Robustness – We will have rigorous internal processes of standardisation and moderation of the evidence that we use to assess students' grades.

Centre Assessed Grades will be based upon a combination of all of the following sources of evidence:

1. Classroom Assessment
  - a. Assessment that has already been completed.
  - b. Assessments that may be completed from now onwards.
  - c. NEA (non-examined assessment like a drama performance or food practical) where already completed or practicably possible to reproduce within lesson time.
2. Mock Exams
  - a. Mock Exam Series 1 (completed)
  - b. Mock Exam Series 2 (to be completed)

Alongside the work that students have completed in class and during the Remote Learning period, mock exams provide teachers with useful evidence that can be fairly compared alongside the work of other students. Mock Exam Series 2 starts on Friday the 7<sup>th</sup> of May for Year 11 students who are studying English Literature and for all others, will start on Monday the 10<sup>th</sup> of May, finishing on Friday the 14<sup>th</sup> May. We have thought carefully around students not being overwhelmed with too many mock exams and so have decided that there will be:

*One two-hour paper for English Literature students, one two-hour paper in English Language, one two-hour paper in Maths (half calculator, half non-calculator), three papers of one hour 15 minutes in Science, and one one-hour paper for options subjects.*

This will allow us to balance the need of collecting robust evidence of student performance without running the large number of exams that students would normally have during a standard exam season. In order to reduce the pressure on students in between now and the mock exams, students will be informed of the topics that they will be assessed on. Whilst we will not be revealing exact questions, we do not want students to feel 'surprised' or caught out by what they are being asked to do in mock exams. For this reason, lessons in between now and the mock exams will focus in on teaching and reteaching content that students need to feel confident in. Lessons will also allow teachers to collect more evidence of student's current levels of work, there will be in-class

assessments in between now and mock exams but these will always be delivered in a way that means students will feel prepared for them.

We have to submit grades to exam boards by the 18<sup>th</sup> of June. Any work that students produce before the mock exams, during the mock exams and even after the mock exams will provide us with an opportunity to award them the grades that they deserve. Whilst we are unable to fully confirm this (we are still awaiting for an open government consultation from Ofqual to report its decisions), we currently plan that most Year 11 students will have their last school day on Friday the 28<sup>th</sup> of May. Not all students will finish on this date, we will still require some students to attend school where we still need to support them in producing more evidence.

Throughout this time, we require you not to ask any teacher the grade that they are planning on awarding your son/daughter. This is for two main reasons. Whilst each teacher is responsible for collating evidence and suggesting a student's Centre Assessed Grade, there are then many processes that take place to ensure that each student is treated fairly regardless to the class that they are in or the teacher that they have. It was also the case last academic year when the Centre Assessed Grade process was first needed, that any teacher disclosing the grade that they were planning on awarding a student could be held responsible by exam boards of 'malpractice', which is something that would have serious consequences for individual teachers and the school.

We will do everything that we can to support students throughout the rest of this academic year and beyond. We know that many students are already feeling pressure around the next few months and we are determined to help them, treating all students with kindness alongside helping them to show us their best work.

Feel free to contact myself or Mr Reid if you have any questions or concerns.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "R Crocker". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'R' and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Mr R Crocker

Deputy Headteacher