

28th April 2021

Dear Parents and Carers of Year 11 students,

End of Year 11 Arrangements

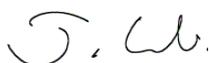
The last school day for year 11 students this year will be Friday 28th May, which is the last day before the May half term break. I apologise for not letting you know this before now, but we were awaiting confirmation that there would not be a nationally set date for all year 11 students to finish.

With regard to assessment and the awarding of GCSE grades, I have attached detailed information in an appendix to this letter. Please be aware that most of the information has been produced by the awarding bodies and applies to all schools, so I apologise again if some of it seems rather obvious to you. For example, we know that as parents you want the best for your child, and will therefore make enquiries about their progress at school in order to support them – this is quite right, of course. However, the exam boards are concerned that there may be some instances across the country where parents try to pressure schools to award higher grades. If this happens, we are now obliged to report it as 'malpractice' that could ultimately result in no grade being awarded. I am sure that will not apply at St Joseph's, but we are obliged to let you know! Please read through the attached guidance and contact tash@stjosephscollege.net if you have any questions.

Finally, I know that students and their families are keen to know whether we can have a Year 11 Prom, when it will be, etc. All I can say at this stage is that we are looking at every possible option. As we all know, the national 'road map' indicates that such events may take place after 21st June. However, this will still depend upon the venue being able to produce an acceptable risk assessment for the event that covers both their own staff, and the people who attend the event. We are now trying to find such a venue, and I will update you as soon as I know any more.

As always, please feel free to get in touch if you need any more information, with your child's Student manager as the first point of contact.

Yours sincerely,



Jerry Giles – Head of School

Appendix – GCSE information 2021

Summary Guidance and Information:

Firstly, please note that a new 'GCSE Guidance Summer 2021' tab under the Parents tab has been added to our external website where all useful guidance and updates can be found. This includes a document entitled: [Guidance for Students, Parents & Guardians](#) You can also find our full Centre Policy detailing our approach to determining GCSE grades on our website [here](#)

Special Consideration and Mitigating Circumstances:

Special consideration requests will not apply in the usual way this summer because there are no external exams. However, if you think that your child's performance in an assessment has been affected by illness or personal circumstances, you should email Teresa Ash, Senior Assistant Principal on tash@stjosephscollege.net as soon as possible and no later than Friday 7 May 2021 giving the specific reasons for the mitigating circumstances e.g. extended illness or family bereavement. It is important that you raise any such instances now before final teacher assessed grades are submitted in June. An application for mitigating circumstances cannot be made simply for lost teaching and learning due to remote learning that affected all students, but should be based on additional personal disruption that you feel should be taken into account e.g. extended absence since March 8th or during September-December 2020.

Assessments

As you will note from the guidance, students are being assessed on a range of evidence based only on the content that they have covered. As planned, on their return to school, students completed assessments in **Assessment Point 1** from March 15 - March 26 and have since been given further ongoing opportunities for assessment in their subjects as part of gathering a portfolio of predominantly recent evidence to support the process of teacher assessed grades. **Assessment Point 2** will take place from May 4 - May 14. Your child has been informed by their subject teachers of both the dates and will be informed of the grades/marks of these individual assessments as well as which evidence will be used to support their final teacher assessed grade in each subject.

Confidentiality & Malpractice

As I am sure you are aware, the final teacher assessed grades to be submitted by 18th June are confidential and cannot be shared with students or parents. Please note that the JCQ and exam board guidance strictly outlines that under no circumstances must students or parents contact or ask individual teachers or leaders about the final teacher assessed grades or place undue pressure around expected or target grades. Any such contact can be interpreted as malpractice and may need to be reported to the specific awarding organisation.

Results Day

All students will be emailed their results via their school email account on Thursday 12 August 2021 by 9am.

Appeals

Although everyone will be working hard to make sure that correct grades are issued on results day, there will also be an appeals system as a safety net to fix any genuine errors that were not identified earlier on. If you believe an error has been made in determining a grade, your child will have a right to appeal. There are two stages to the appeals process and any appeal should be emailed by the student from their school email in writing to our exams officer, Mr Ian Cotrell at icotrell@stjosephscollege.net Please refer to the guidance information on the website regarding further details including dates.

Stage 1: centre review - If you don't think you have been issued with the correct grade, you can appeal to the school directly and we will review whether there was an administrative error or did not apply a procedure correctly.

Stage 2: appeal to the exam board - If you still don't think you have the correct grade after the centre review is complete, you can ask us as a school to appeal directly to the exam board, who will review whether we made an unreasonable exercise of academic judgement in the choice of evidence from which we determined your child's grade and/or in the determination of your child's grade from that evidence; we did not apply a procedure correctly or the exam board made an administrative error. At both stages of the process you will need to submit your appeal and give written consent to conduct the appeal or submit it to the exam board on your behalf. It's important to remember that your grade can go down, up or stay the same through either stage of the process.