

Our Ref: SST/HBr

Monday 15th March 2021

Dear Parents, Guardians and Pupils,

Re: Awarding of GCSE, AS and A Level grades 2021

You may recall that I wrote to you several weeks ago outlining the government and Department for Education's plans for the allocation of GCSE, AS and A Level results. I stated in that communication that I would notify you of the Duston School's approach in due course. This letter outlines how we will be approaching the awarding and allocation of examination grades this summer.

I would like to be clear that the grades awarded this summer are not awarded by the school nor the school's teachers. Whilst the staff at The Duston School will be setting and marking the work that is produced by our pupils the actual work and the marking of it will come under scrutiny and quality assurance via the external examination bodies that ultimately award all examination grades. Fundamentally the exam boards themselves will be the ones who verify, rubber stamp and award grades this summer.

As a school we are expected to piece together a portfolio of evidence for every pupil for every subject, with a view that this will be submitted to the examination boards. The examination boards, Ofqual and the Department for Education have been clear that the work produced in the next 8 to 10 weeks may be more representative of the abilities of any one given pupil and that work produced in this next window may well carry more weight. That is not, however, to dismiss the historic work produced by our pupils.

In due course you will be receiving the most recent set of CAG grades for your son/daughter again. These were taken from our December data capture and will provide you with the most up-to-date grade that your son/daughter was achieving prior to schools closing nationally. Please take the time to discuss these CAG grades with your son/daughter. At this stage it is really important that every single pupil thinks about the next 8 to 10 weeks of school and how they can through hard work, effort, graft and determination increase their overall grade. The work that is put in now and sustained for the next few months could make a positive, if not demonstrable, difference.

Attached to my letter is a summary of the work that will make up the portfolio of evidence for each and every subject. The only subject area that is omitted is PE as we are waiting for further guidance detailing the precise expectations for the awarding of grades in this subject. Once we have this information I will write again to you. Please take the time to read over the following information so you fully understand what is expected over the coming few months. If, of course, there is any doubt in your mind regarding what is expected of your son/daughter or your son/daughter themselves are

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not sure then please contact their class teachers or encourage your son/daughter to speak directly to them.

I wish every pupil the greatest success over the next few months and now is the time to demonstrate the resilience and aspiration to really succeed.

Yours faithfully,



Mr Strickland

Principal

Art & Design Faculty

Hair & Beauty

Hair and Beauty grades will be calculated using a combination of coursework and classroom assessment. Students have already completed three of the four units for this course and these grades have already been verified by the exam board (VTCT). The last unit is due to be completed in school, ready for submission to VTCT for marking and moderation. However, this unit will now be teacher assessed and not submitted to VTCT. The grade for this final unit will be calculated using historic grades for coursework already completed and coursework that has been partially completed by students for the last unit.

Hospitality & Catering

The grade for Hospitality and Catering will be awarded in several ways. Students have all completed their coursework, which has been marked in accordance with the exam boards marking scheme. The students have also completed their practical exam, which will be marked in the same way. As there is no theory exam the students will be graded on previous work completed, such as tests, homework and previous engagement that has taken place throughout the course

Design & Technology

Grades will be given to students based on the marks awarded from the 6 sections of their Major NEA Project and their level of engagement and focus, over time. Additionally, students will undertake tests based on AQA resources and past papers to assess their knowledge and understanding of the theoretical aspects of D&T.

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Art & Graphics

Students will be assessed on their coursework only, using the four assessment objectives set by AQA. All students will need to complete at least one unit of work for this component, some students will still be able to complete two units of work due to the levels of engagement during remote learning. Students will be judged primarily on the quality of work, and whether their coursework shows sufficient evidence of meeting each of the assessment objectives.

Art & Photography

Year 13

During Year 13, students have been undertaking a specific personal investigation into a chosen area of interest.

Students will be assessed against Exam Board set criteria on this component using the four assessment objectives. Within this, students will be required to evidence a practical portfolio of work and a supporting written component of between 1000 and 3000 words.

Computing, Business and IT Faculty

Computing

Year 11

In Computer Science we are discontinuing with the delivery of content and focusing on the consolidation of learning and gathering of evidence for grading. We will be conducting 6 short tests on the 6 units of work that have been covered. Each topic will be revised throughout the week culminating in a short topic test at the end of the week. Topic tests will be written, for theoretical content and practically assessed for some programming content. A combination of the above mentioned tests, tests from year 10 and tests from the start of year 11 will be used to generate a grade for each student.

Year 12

In Computer Science we are discontinuing with the delivery of content and focusing on the consolidation of learning and gathering of evidence for grading. We will be conducting 6 short tests on the 8 units of work that have been covered. Each topic will be revised throughout the week culminating in a short topic test at the end of the week. Topic tests will be written, for theoretical content and practically assessed for some programming content. A combination of the above mentioned tests and tests from the start of year 12 will be used to generate a grade for each student.

Year 13

In Computer Science we are discontinuing with the delivery of content and focusing on the consolidation of learning and gathering of evidence for grading. We will be conducting 6 short tests on the 8 units of work that have been covered. Each topic will be revised throughout the week

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Culminating in a short topic test at the end of the week. Topic tests will be written, for theoretical content and practically assessed for some programming content. Students will continue with their project and the completed project will be assessed internally. A combination of the above mentioned tests, tests from year 12 and tests from the start of year 13 along with the project will be used to generate a grade for each student.

IT

Year 11

In BTEC Digital Information Technology the students will continue with coursework, which comprises 20% of their grade, as that is the only part left of the course. The exam and coursework, comprising 60% and 20% respectively, has been banked from last year. As it stands the coursework, being worked on now, will be externally moderated via the SV (Standards Verifier). With this in mind, it is business as usual.

Year 13

In Cambridge Technicals, students will continue with their coursework as usual. Coursework will be internally assessed and graded. Students have banked grades from year 12 which will be combined coursework grades to generate an overall grade for IT. Therefore our focus is on the swift completion of all coursework and creation of digital content.

Business

Year 11

GCSE Edexcel Business

In order to allocate a GCSE grade for Business, students will complete a series of mini assessments during lesson time. These will consist of exam style questions, including multiple choice, some calculations and longer style responses.

We will consider all data from year 10 and year 11. Students have also completed a mock style paper in the Christmas term which will be taken in to account.

We will be allocating the GCSE grades for Business after gathering a portfolio of evidence of work that the students have completed during the course of their GCSE studies and reviewing these pieces of work to determine an overall GCSE grade.

Year 13

BTEC Business extended certificate

Students completing a BTEC in Business will complete a series of mini assessments based on topic areas covered in Personal and Business finance.

Students also completed a mock paper in the Christmas term which will also be taken in to consideration.

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English Faculty

GCSE English Language

Evidence informing teacher assessments will come primarily from a portfolio of work that will be spread over the next eight weeks. This work will comprise of partial exam papers and students will be given guidance on the specific types of questions they will be assessed on. The content / topics that students will be assessed on will be on material of the course content and also covers at least two thirds of the curriculum content they would have been assessed on in normal exam circumstances. Students will be assessed using fiction and non-fiction extracts from the 19th and 21st century, as outlined in the AQA exam specification. Included within the portfolio will be a piece of work completed on an externally moderated platform, to further standardize our approach. If required to further evidence working standards, previous results of class assessments will also be used to come to a holistic judgement on a final grade. Students will need to submit physical copies of previous marked work which will be part of an evidence portfolio in the eventuality of an appeal.

GCSE English Literature

Evidence informing teacher assessments will come primarily from a portfolio of work that will be spread over the next eight weeks. This work will comprise of partial exam papers and students will be given guidance on the specific types of questions they will be assessed on. The content / topics that students will be assessed on will be on material of the course content and covers at least two thirds of the curriculum content they would have been assessed on in normal exam circumstances. Students will be assessed using the following texts studied: An Inspector Calls and the AQA Power and Conflict poetry anthology. Included within the portfolio will be a piece of work completed on an externally moderated platform, to standardise our approach. If required to further evidence working standards, previous results of class assessments will also be used to come to a holistic judgement on a final grade. Students will need to submit physical copies of previous marked work which will be part of an evidence portfolio in the eventuality of an appeal.

AS/A Level English

Remaining content will be taught so the course is complete by Easter. Evidence informing teacher assessments will come primarily from a portfolio of work that will be spread over the next eight weeks. This work will comprise of partial exam papers and students will be given guidance on the specific types of questions they will be assessed on. The content / topics that students will be assessed on will be on material that has been taught over the duration of the course and covers at least two thirds of the curriculum content they would have been assessed on in normal exam circumstances. If required to further evidence working standards, previous results of class assessments will also be used to come to a holistic judgement on a final grade. Students will need to submit physical copies of previous marked work which will be part of an evidence portfolio in the eventuality of an appeal.

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Film and Media

GCSE Media

Your child's grade will be arrived at considering the following pieces of evidence: coursework folders, mock results and classwork. This means that the quality of work in their workbooks and in their exercise books will be considered. In class mini tests will be set to assess the knowledge of all nine of the topics which the students have studied.

GCSE Film

Your child's grade will be arrived at considering the following pieces of evidence: coursework folders, mock results and classwork. This means that the quality of work in their workbooks and in their exercise books will be considered. In class mini tests will be set to assess the knowledge of all 6 of the films which the students have studied.

Y12 Media

Your child's grade will be arrived at considering the following pieces of evidence: coursework folders, mock results and responses to essay questions which they have written throughout the year. In the final half term, your child will be given further opportunities to write essay responses on the final units studied.

Y13 Media

Your child's grade will be arrived at considering the following pieces of evidence: coursework folders, mock results and responses to essay questions which they have written throughout the year. In the final half term, your child will be given further opportunities to write essay responses on the final units studied.

Geography

GCSE Geography

For Paper 1, The Physical Environment, we will be focussing on the Changing landscapes and Ecosystems topics. Students will rewrite an 8 mark question for the Coast subtopic and complete end of topic tests, worth 30 marks each, for both.

- For Paper 2, The Human Environment, we will be focussing on the Cities and Energy topics. Students will rewrite an 8 mark question for the cities topic with a focus on the emerging case study of Sao Paulo and complete end of topic tests, worth 30 marks each, for both.
- For Paper 3, Geographical Investigations, we will be focussing on the UK challenges topic of the course (a revision topic for all content previously taught). Students will be guided through the question and supporting resources in lesson, and will be completing the 12 mark question under timed conditions.

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A Level Geography

- For Paper 1, Physical Geography, we will be focussing on the Tectonics and Coasts topics. Students will complete end of topic tests, worth 56 marks in total, for both.
- For Paper 2, Human Geography, we will be focussing on the Globalisation and Superpowers topics. Students will complete end of topic tests, worth 32 marks in total, for both.
- For Paper 3, Synoptic Paper, students will be guided through the question and supporting resources in lesson, and will be completing the 18 and 24 mark questions under timed conditions.
- A range of 8, 12 and 20 mark questions from the previously taught topics of Health, Human Rights and intervention, Carbon Cycle and Energy security, and The Water Cycle and Water Insecurity will be used.
- The NEA (independent investigation) will also be marked and moderated to be used as evidence.

History

GCSE History

For GCSE History we will use a range of evidence for all units studied taking into account previous work studied and some new in-class assessments detailed below. For paper 1, Medicine and the British sector of the Western Front, students will sit two four mark exam questions and one sixteen mark exam question in class. Students will also sit a fifty mark knowledge test with questions from across the whole paper. For paper 2, Early Elizabethan England, students will sit a four mark exam question and a twelve mark exam question in class. Students will also sit a fifty mark knowledge test with questions from across the whole paper. Finally, students will sit three four mark exam questions for Germany and one eight mark exam question in class. Students will also sit a fifty mark knowledge test with questions from across the whole paper. The exam questions students will sit across all three papers will cover a range of question stems combining sources and knowledge.

A-Level History

For A-Level History there will a range of evidence for all units studied to formulate a student's final grade. Students have already completed a wide range of essays for each of their units (Germany, Italy and Warfare) which will be taken into consideration. In addition, students will sit two essays per unit of work in the upcoming weeks with a range of source questions and knowledge based essay questions asked. Student's coursework will also be used to formulate their final grade.

A-Level Politics

For A-Level Politics there will be a range of evidence used to formulate a student's final grade. Students have already completed essays for UK Politics, Ideologies and US Government and Politics. In addition to this, students will sit one additional UK Politics essay in class, two US Government and Politics thirty mark essays along with two twelve mark questions from this paper. Students will also answer three ideologies questions covering core ideologies and non-core ideologies.

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Maths

GCSE Maths

For the remainder of year 11's time at TDS, pupils will continue to finish their Data and Statistics workbook this side of Easter. Teachers will then use lesson time to bridge gaps in content and revise key topics. After the Easter break, students will have a weekly assessment every Friday for 5 weeks – starting 16th April, finishing on the 14th May. These assessments will be used along with the two past papers that were undertaken before Christmas to help teachers determine a final grade. We recommend students still complete past papers on Methodmaths, along with their independent revision, to help prepare for the upcoming assessments.

Post 16 Maths and Further Maths

Will continue to learn parts of their course that have not yet been covered. Once finished, teachers will choose to cover/recap key topics. Assessments will take place after Easter and will help teachers to determine a final grade, details below:

W/C 19th April – Year 12 and 13 Stats Tests (excluding large data set), Year 12 and 13 Further Stats Tests

W/C 26th April – Year 12 and 13 Mechanics Tests, Year 12 and 13 Core Pure Test 1

W/C 3rd May – Year 12 Pure test 1

W/C 10th May – Year 13 Pure Test 1, Year 12 Pure Test 2, Year 12 and 13 Decision Tests

W/C 17th May – Year 13 Pure Test 2, Year 12 Pure Test 3, Year 12 and 13 Core Pure Test 2

If the outcomes of these tests vary significantly from the results we have from the topic tests completed throughout the year(s), then the topic test results will be incorporated into the grade to reach a more accurate result.

CORE Maths

Will continue to cover the following topics

	Monday Lesson 1	Monday lesson 2	Tuesday	Thursday
WC 1/3	Est Mean Stem & Leaf	Exchange rates Compound Int/spreadsheets Paper 1 – Q3 & 6	Standard Deviation	VAT/Percentages Income Tax/NI
WC 8/3	Activity Network	Histograms	Cascade Diagram / Gantt Chart	Critical Analysis
WC 15/3	Paper		Misleading Data	Expectation
WC 22/3	Paper		Model Answers Paper 1	

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CORE Maths Pupils will also sit assessments that will contribute their grade awarded as follows:

- W/C 15th March
- W/C 22nd March
- W/C 19th April
- W/C 26th April
- W/C 10th April
- W/C 17th April

Music and Performing Arts Faculty

Year 11 GCSE Music

The TAG will be based on a holistic approach, taking into account the weightings of the three components of the course. C1 Performing & C2 Composing – pupils already have a banked performance and composition but will be given the opportunity to improve their marks. C3 Exam – pupils have a banked set of assessed exam listening questions and will spend lesson time focussing on adding to a bank of assessed exam dictation and essay questions.

Year 11 BTEC Performing Arts

Pupils have already completed Components 1 and 2 which have been assessed and graded. They are currently working on Component 3 which they will continue to do, in order to create a bank of evidence of both written and practical work. This will be marked according to the marking criteria to give a TAG for the whole qualification.

Modern Foreign Languages

Year 11 portfolio of evidence to include:

- Twice weekly vocab tests – 12 in total
- Four writing assessments - either at foundation or higher level
- One listening assessment
- One reading assessment
- A teacher assessed speaking grade, pass, merit or distinction

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Year 11 - 8 week plan

Week beginning 15th March			
Theme: Identity and culture 1			
Lesson 1	Lesson 2	Homework	Further study
Vocab test 1	Vocab test 2	Reading questions	Seneca/ BBCBitesize
Listening questions and feedback in class	Guided writing question		
Week beginning 22nd March			
Theme: Identity and culture 2			
Lesson 1	Lesson 2	Homework	Further study
Vocab test 3	Vocab test 4	Literary texts booklet to complete over holidays	Seneca / BBCBitesize
Reading homework marking and feedback	Writing assessment 1		
Listening questions and feedback in class			
Easter hols			
Week beginning 12th April			
Theme: School 1			
Lesson 1	Lesson 2	Homework	Further study
Vocab test 5	Vocab test 6	Reading questions	Seneca/ BBCBitesize
Listening questions and feedback in class	Guided writing question		
Week beginning 19th April			
Theme: School 2			
Lesson 1	Lesson 2	Homework	Further study
Vocab test 7	Vocab test 8	Reading questions	Seneca/ BBCBitesize
Reading homework marking and feedback			
Listening questions and feedback in class	Writing assessment 2		
Week beginning 26th April			
Theme: Local area, holiday and travel 1			
Lesson 1	Lesson 2	Homework	Further study
Vocab test 9	Vocab test 10	Reading questions	Seneca/ BBCBitesize
Reading homework marking and feedback	Guided writing question		
Listening questions and feedback in class			
Week beginning 3rd May (BH Monday)			

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Theme: Local area, holiday and travel 2			
Lesson 1	Lesson 2	Homework	Further study
Vocab test 11	Vocab test 12	Reading questions	Seneca/ BBCBitesize
Reading homework marking and feedback	Writing assessment 3		
Listening questions and feedback in class			
Week beginning 10th May			
Assessment of all themes covered so far in listening and reading			
Lesson 1	Lesson 2	Homework	Further study
Listening assessment	Reading assessment	Reading questions	Seneca/ BBCBitesize
Week beginning 17th May			
Theme: Future aspirations, study and work			
Lesson 1	Lesson 2	Homework	Further study
Reading homework marking and feedback x 2	Writing assessment 4		
Last writing preparation			
Week beginning 24th May			
Feedback for assessment of all themes in listening and reading / collation of evidence			
Lesson 1	Lesson 2		
Feedback Listening assessment	Feedback Reading assessment		
May half term			

World Studies Faculty

A-level Sociology

Evidence informing teacher assessments will come primarily from three upcoming assessments that will be spread over the next eight weeks. These assessments are partial exam papers and students will be given guidance on the specific types of questions they will be assessed on. Assessments are planned for the following dates;

- Thursday 25th March – Education topic
- Thursday 29th April – Families topic
- Thursday 20th May – Beliefs

The content / topics that students will be assessed on will be on material that has been taught exclusively face to face (to mitigate the differing impact of lockdown on students) and also covers at least two thirds of the curriculum content they would've been assessed on in normal exam circumstances. In addition to the upcoming three assessments, previous results of class assessments

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will also be used to come to a holistic judgement on a final grade. Students will need to submit physical copies of previous marked work which will be part of an evidence portfolio in the eventuality of an appeal.

AS Sociology

Evidence informing teacher assessments will come primarily from two upcoming assessments that will be spread over the next eight weeks. These assessments are partial exam papers and students will be given guidance on the specific types of questions they will be assessed on. The first assessment will be completed on the week commencing the 12th April and the second assessment will be completed on the week commencing the 3rd May. In addition to the upcoming two assessments, previous results of class assessments will also be used to come to a holistic judgement on a final grade. Students will need to submit physical copies of previous marked work which will be part of an evidence portfolio in the eventuality of an appeal.

A Level Psychology

Evidence informing teacher assessments will come primarily from four upcoming assessments that will be spread over the next eight weeks. The dates of the assessments are;

- 26th March – Approaches
- 23rd April – Research methods
- 7th May – Social influence with research methods
- 18th May – Attachment

The content / topics that students will be assessed on will be on material that has been taught primarily face to face (to mitigate the differing impact of lockdown on students) and covers the 'core units' of the curriculum. In addition to the above four assessment, evidence will also consist of student results in previous class assessments to aid us in reaching a holistic judgement on their final grades. Students will need to submit physical copies of previous marked work which will be part of an evidence portfolio in the eventuality of an appeal.

AS Psychology

Evidence informing teacher assessments will come primarily from three upcoming assessments that will be spread over the next eight weeks. The first assessment (approaches topic) will be completed on the week commencing the 22nd March, the second assessment (social influence) will be completed on the week commencing the 19th April and the last assessment (Attachment), will be completed the week commencing the 3rd May.

The content / topics that students will be assessed on will be on material that has been taught primarily face to face (to mitigate the differing impact of lockdown on students) and covers all of the units that will have been taught at the time of these assessments. In addition to the above three assessment, evidence will also consist of student results in previous class assessments to aid us in

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reach a holistic judgement on their final grade. Students will need to submit physical copies of previous marked work which will be part of an evidence portfolio in the eventuality of an appeal.

GCSE Citizenship

Grades will be allocated using a range of evidence for Citizenship Studies, after gathering a portfolio of evidence that the students have completed during their GCSE studies, and reviewing these pieces of work to determine an overall GCSE grade. The portfolio evidence of student work will include assessments that were undertaken by the students as they were completing units of work from the GCSE Citizenship Studies course.

Two full assessments, which are based upon content that is used in Citizenship studies exams, have already been completed by the students. These two assessments will form part of the collection of work that will be included in the portfolio of evidence that will be drawn upon to determine the students' final grade. In the first week of Term 5 the students will complete another full assessment, based upon the content from the 'Life in Modern Britain' course that has been taught in Year 11, that will be added to the portfolio of evidence to determine the final grade, and in weeks five and six of Term 5 the students will complete a final extended assessment, comprising of two full assessment papers, that covers aspects of work from the 'Rights and Responsibilities', 'Politics and Participation' and 'Active Citizenship' units of work, based upon the content that has been taught during the course so far. The final pieces of work that will be included in the portfolio of evidence will be aspects of the students' work completed in the workbooks, including examples of 8 mark extended writing questions that have been completed throughout the course.

Health & Social Care - Single and Double Award

H&SC students will be assessed on 100% of the course as originally planned. Students should continue to complete coursework to the highest standard possible. All coursework should be finalised by the Easter break (26th March). We shall soon receive feedback from the exam board regarding grades for assessments sat earlier in the year. It is anticipated that students required to resit this assessment shall do so in school through a series of assessments equivalent in size and format to normal examinations. Students will be supported between 12th April and 17th May to prepare for assessments which will take place in the week beginning 17th May.

Please be aware that we are awaiting further information from the H&SC exam board. Should this plan be changed for any reason we will update parents and students as soon as possible.

Child Development & Care

Child Development and Care students will be assessed on 100% of the course as originally planned. Students should continue to complete coursework to the highest standard possible. All coursework should be finalised by the Easter break (26th March). Students are urged to bring in any and all coursework for marking and moderation as soon as possible.

After the Easter break students will then be supported and prepared for two assessments to be taken at the end of Term 5. These assessments will be equivalent in size/format to normal examination papers and worth 50% of the course. These assessments will take place in the weeks beginning 10th May and 17th May.

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Please be aware that we are awaiting further information from the Child Development and Care exam board. Should this plan be changed for any reason we will update parents and students as soon as possible.

Science Faculty GCSE and A-level

GCSE

- Students have completed the GCSE content so are ready for the next stage.
- Paper 2 content was primarily covered during the first lockdown (March-June 2020) and from Sept-Dec 2020 during which time there was considerable disruption to learning.
- Therefore assessing students on paper 2 at this stage is likely to disadvantage students.
- Students will primarily be assessed on paper 1 assessments during April/May 2021. These will consist of full exam papers (2019) for Biology, Chemistry and Physics and completed during a 2 hour double lesson so that there is sufficient time for all students to complete the paper including those that require extra time. We have historically used paper 1 mock exams in January to inform predicted grades for the summer exams which have been broadly in line with outcomes.
- Students will not receive the papers or marks once completed.
- Students have also completed mini tests during Year 10 and Year 11 which will also be used as supporting evidence. These are 20-30 mark assessments based on each topic completed every two weeks. Additional mini tests for biology, chemistry and physics paper 1 during March-May 2021 as supporting evidence. These will be 30 marks covering a limited range of questions from paper 1.
- Student workbooks completed during March-May 2021 will be used to support the final grade decision.

A-level – Y13

- Students have completed the vast majority of the A-level course.
- Students will not be assessed on the content that has not been covered.
- Students will sit mini mock exams using 2019/2020 papers (not including content that has not been covered). Paper 1 and Paper 2 will be split into a multiple choice section and two written answer sections to be completed during three lessons each to allow sufficient time. The unified paper will be split into two sections to be completed in two lessons.
- Year 12 Mock exams will also be used as supporting evidence.
- Students have also completed end of topic assessments / other assessments that will also be used as supporting evidence.
- Practical Endorsement portfolios will also be used as supporting evidence.
- Students will not receive the papers or marks once completed

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AS-level – Y12

- Students have completed the vast majority of the AS course.
- Students will not be assessed on the content that has not been covered.
- Students will sit Breadth and Depth Assessments using 2019/2020 papers (not including content that has not been covered)
- Students have also completed end of topic assessments / other assessments that will also be used as supporting evidence.
- Students will also complete mini assessments during April/May 2021 as supporting evidence.
- Students will not receive the papers or marks once completed.

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