



The Earls High School

A Specialist College for the Performing Arts

Headteacher: Mr. J. Fox

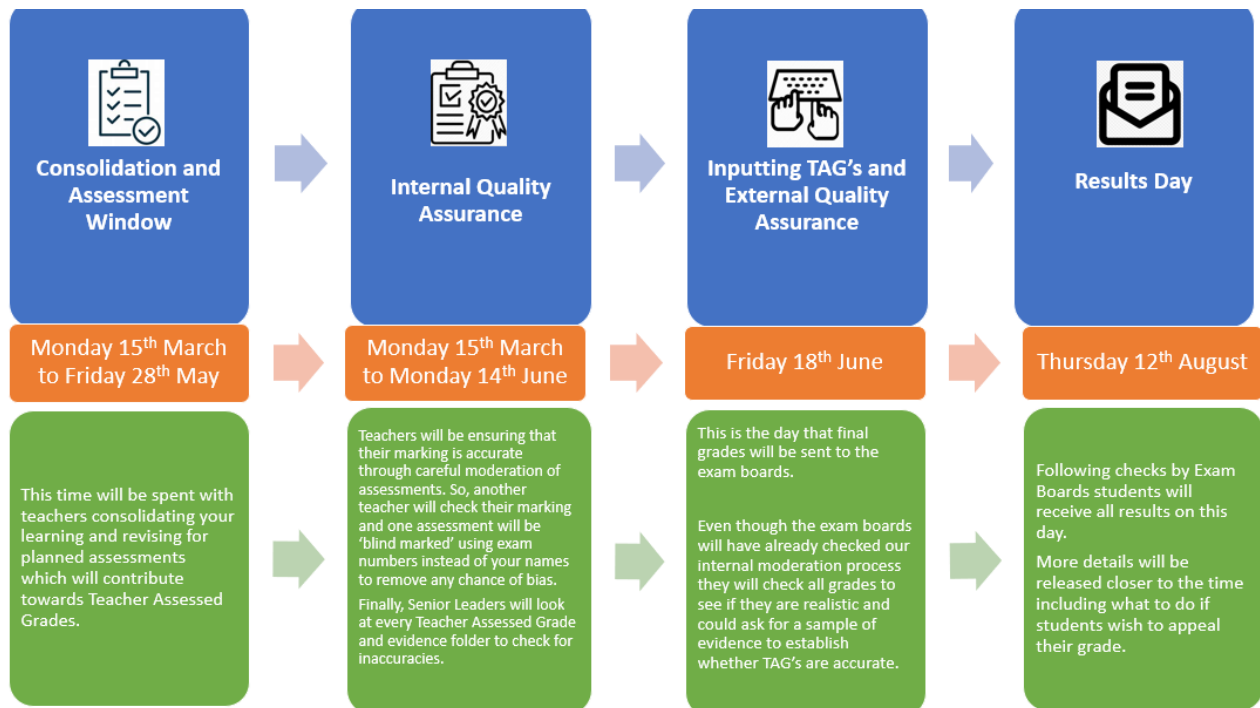
Wednesday 10th March

Dear parents and carers,

It has been wonderful to welcome most Year 11 students back into school this week. Prior to their return to lessons tomorrow, I would like to outline the approach we are taking in supporting students through the process of Teacher Assessed Grading which is replacing Year 11 Examinations this year. When deciding on these plans with Heads of Faculties and subject teachers we wanted to prioritise the following:

- Students spending time in the classroom with their teachers consolidating their learning.
- Giving students as many opportunities as possible to succeed and demonstrate their full potential.
- Ensuring that Teacher Assessed Grades are fair, accurate and robust.
- The wellbeing of students and eliminating any unnecessary pressure.

The infographic below outlines the timeline for awarding Teacher Assessed Grades and explains each crucial element in the process. Following this, you will find further explanation in the form of key questions you may have about the process.



What are Teacher Assessed Grades?

Teacher Assessed Grades are what the Government has decided will replace exams this year due to the impact of Covid-19. Ofqual released guidance to schools on what this process should entail; this detailed guidance can be found [here](#). A Teacher Assessed Grade reflects the **current performance** of a student, it is not a predicted grade.

Excellence, Care, Partnership

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How will Teacher Assessed Grades be decided?

Teacher Assessed Grades will be decided by subject teachers after gathering enough evidence which demonstrates that a student is working consistently at a certain standard. This standard is ultimately decided by the Exam Boards. Teachers will exercise their professional judgement when determining whether a student has met this nationally defined standard but must provide evidence supporting this.

What evidence will inform Teacher Assessed Grades?

This will differ slightly from subject to subject. However, most evidence will be generated from what a student can produce in the assessment window when they return to school. We have given students the maximum amount of time possible with their teachers to demonstrate their best ability in this assessment window which begins on Monday 15th March.

We want to provide every opportunity possible for them to succeed so, where appropriate, some subjects may choose to include evidence outside this assessment window if teachers believe it showcases students performing at their best. An overview of the evidence for each subject will be published on Friday 12th March and can be accessed on our website or by clicking [here](#).

What will lessons be like for the rest of the year?

Students will not be taught any new content. Lessons will be spent consolidating and revising what they have already been taught. All assessments will take place in lesson time; we do not want students to feel under any more pressure than they already are.

Heads of Faculty and teaching staff have created an overview for each subject which will be published on Friday 12th March and can be found [here](#). This gives details on what topics are being consolidated and revised each week along with when students can expect an assessment.

How will we ensure Teacher Assessed Grades are fair, accurate and robust?

This is an extremely important part of this process. Students should feel proud of the grades they will achieve this year and confident that the evidence and grades have been rigorously checked and moderated by more than their subject teacher. So, to ensure this we will be doing the following:

- All assessments will be standardised before being marked which means that teachers will meet and agree marks on a sample of work to establish a consistent standard.
- All assessments informing the Teacher Assessed Grade will be moderated internally and another teacher will be required to agree the marks awarded.
- One assessment will be 'blind marked' which means the marker will not be able to see a student name. This will improve our internal quality assurance process by mitigating any potential for bias.
- An inset day on Monday 7th June where subjects will moderate final evidence informing Teacher Assessed Grades.
- Heads of Faculty will quality assure and sign to agree all Teacher Assessed Grades after looking at all available evidence during an Inset day on Monday 7th June.
- Members of the Senior Leadership Team will then ensure that Teacher Assessed Grades are robust and fair in relation to previous years performances.



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- The Headteacher will sign a declaration to confirm that all grades are a true representation of student performance.

External quality assurance by exam boards will also ensure that our internal processes of quality assurance are robust and fair and there will be some further sampling, at subject level, the evidence on which grades were based.

What if students are impacted by Covid-19?

Attendance is more crucial than ever throughout this process. During the assessment window students will be either preparing for or sitting an assessment which could be used as evidence for their Teacher Assessed Grade. However, we are working in challenging circumstances which could mean students are asked to self-isolate at any point or be absent from school for reasons beyond their control. Should this happen, we will ensure that classwork is set on Teams and assessments are either completed at home or upon return to school where possible.

Will students know their grade before it is sent to the exam board?

To protect the validity of the process of awarding Teacher Assessed Grades, and in line with Government guidance, subject teachers will not be sharing any grades with students before results day. I would encourage students not to attempt to second-guess the grade submitted, as teachers will be using a range of evidence to inform their final judgement. Students must not pressure teachers to reveal the grades they are submitting, or to increase the grades, as doing so may be considered exam board malpractice. It is important that we trust the integrity, professionalism and expertise of our excellent teaching staff who have the best interests of our students at heart.

How can students maximise their chances of success?

We know students will want to do well and achieve the best grade possible. Ultimately, this process allows all students to have ownership over their Teacher Assessed Grades because their individual performance in the remaining weeks is what counts most. I encourage them, as always, to respond to feedback given and make the most of every learning opportunity and the valuable time they have left with their teachers.

It is undoubtable that these next weeks will be a challenging and stressful time for our year 11 students, which would be the case in normal circumstances around exam season. However, I have been overwhelmingly impressed at the resilience of this year group and I have no doubt that, along with your support, they will rise to this final challenge of their time at The Earls. We will be supporting them every step of the way whilst keeping both yourselves, as parents and carers, and year 11 students informed.

I hope that they will finish their time with use feeling enthused about their learning and proud of their achievements. If you have any further questions or concerns then please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours Faithfully

Mrs Houlston

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