



Dear Parents/Carers,

We are writing to you to share the guidance we have received regarding the awarding of exam grades for current Y11 and Y13 students, none of whom will be sitting exams this academic year. This is outlined below, with further advice from the government website available [here](#).

- Exam boards will be asking teachers, who know their students well, to submit their judgement about the grade they believe the student would have received if exams had gone ahead.
- To produce this, teachers will be asked to take into account a wide range of evidence and data including performance in mock exams and non-exam assessment, so as to accurately predict the grades students would have achieved after a further eight weeks of study and revision. Clear guidance on how to do this fairly and robustly will be provided to schools and colleges soon.
- Exam boards will then combine this information with other relevant data, including prior attainment, to produce a calculated grade for each student.
- Regulators and exam boards will be in discussion with teachers' representatives before finalising the approach, to ensure that it's as fair as possible.

We'll also aim to ensure that the distribution of grades follows a similar pattern to that in other years, so that this year's students aren't disadvantaged. Furthermore, it is the DfE and OFQUAL's intention that no student will be disadvantaged as result of the COVID-19 outbreak, whether they are completing or moving on to the next stage of their education.

- The aim is to provide these calculated grades to students before the end of July.
- These grades will be indistinguishable from those awarded in previous years. Universities, colleges and sixth forms should accept the calculated grades in the same way as they would accept grades awarded in any other year.
- Students will be able to appeal their grades if they don't believe the right process has been followed.
- There will also be the option to sit exams early in the autumn term for any students who wish to, and alternatively students may choose to sit exams next summer.

At SDCC we will be advising Y11 and Y13 students to look forward to the next phase of their education and to begin preparing for that.

## Y11

This means that once you have had your A Levels courses confirmed we will begin to set guidance, pre-course and course materials on SMHW, so that you are ready for the term to start in September. Remaining in close contact with the departments that you will be studying with is imperative and will give you the best possible preparation for your Post 16 studies; please don't hesitate to contact them. If you have applied to SDCC 6<sup>th</sup> form, letters of confirmation will be with you shortly so that you know the courses you have accepted on to. It may be prudent to keep yourself familiar with the content of your current programs of study in case you are not satisfied with the grades awarded in July and wish to appeal the decision or take a later exam in autumn / summer 2021.

## Y13

You will know by now, in the main, your plans following Sixth Form, if you are progressing to specific courses/establishments in September. Our advice is to consolidate your learning from this year and continue to further your knowledge and understanding of the courses that you are going on to study. If they are subjects that we offer at A Level or closely related, then our staff are on hand to provide you



with material to ensure that you are best prepared for your time at university. Reading widely around your chosen subject and/or practicing skills will only enhance your knowledge/skill base. It may be prudent to keep yourself familiar with the content of your current programs of study in case you are not satisfied by the grades awarded and choose to sit your examinations in the available exam windows. Staff will ensure that you have access to the required material, assessments and support should you choose this option.

Universities should not be making new unconditional offers and applicants should feel no pressure to accept such offers, as they will be awarded a formal calculated grade for each exam they would have taken. If you already have an unconditional offer you have already met the entry requirements, so the place is yours if you want it.

Students in both Y11 and Y13, with coursework elements in their subjects, or those that are internally assessed (e.g. music, food and nutrition, CTEC/ BTEC and HPQ/EPQ), should use their time wisely to complete and submit to teachers where they have the materials/are able to do so. This is in case we are required to submit the coursework as evidence of work completed. It is however entirely possible that the work produced won't be able to be submitted if we are required to submit projected grades prior to the school reopening – it would also be unfair if a student who doesn't have the materials available and can't access them were to be disadvantaged because of this. I would imagine that the DfE and Ofqual will provide some clarity on the process by the end of the scheduled Easter break so that we can give more certainty at that point.

Students progressing to confirmed apprenticeships, training and employment after Sixth Form should contact their employers for guidance. Careers advice is available from Jackie Ellis on [jellis@southdartmoor.devon.sch.uk](mailto:jellis@southdartmoor.devon.sch.uk)

We understand that students may be disappointed that they have not been able to sit their exams. Please remember that if they do not feel that their calculated grade reflects their performance, they will have the opportunity to appeal, or to sit an exam, as reasonably possible.

We will continue to support all students to access the next step of their education journey. Thank you for your continued support and understanding in these unprecedented times. Stay safe.

Emma Dixon  
Deputy Head – Curriculum and Assessment