



# Bishop Vesey's Grammar School

'Inspiration and Excellence'

Headteacher: Dominic Robson BA (Hons) NPQH

Lichfield Road, Sutton Coldfield, B74 2NH, 0121 250 5400, [www.bvgs.co.uk](http://www.bvgs.co.uk)

01/07/2021

Dear Year 13 Parents/Carers and Students,

Now that the Year 13 students have finished their academic year, I wanted to write to you all.

I must say from the outset how impressed I have been with the professional and mature way in which Year 13 have conducted themselves through a challenging 15-month period. The students are to be commended for their resilience, good humour and hard work.

This letter outlines some important points about the grading process for your children. It will cover the following:

1. **Our Centre Policy**
2. **How have the children been graded this year?**
3. **What evidence has been used in each subject?**
4. **Access arrangements**
5. **What evidence has been used in each subject?**
6. **Can we know the grade submitted?**
7. **The assessments you are doing are different from another Sixth Form/college. How is this fair?**
8. **Will my child's teacher judge them fairly?**
9. **What is exam malpractice?**
10. **Appeals**
11. **Results Day – Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> August 2021**

## 1. Our Centre Policy

The key document to explain our approach to grading as a school is the Bishop Vesey's Grammar School Centre Policy. This Centre Policy has been approved by the exam boards and can be found [here](#).

## 2. How has my child been graded this year?

Grades for GCSEs and A-levels are based on a process involving teacher assessment against national standards, internal quality assurance, and external quality assurance by the exam boards.

In our school, we have used a range of evidence to reach a holistic judgement for each student. This is detailed in each student's Assessment Record. The Assessment Record for every subject can be found [here](#).

This includes student work produced in centre-devised tasks that reflect the specification, which follow the same format as awarding organisation materials, and have been marked in a way that reflects awarding organisation mark schemes.

Depending on the subject this evidence could include: substantial class or homework (including those that took place in remote learning), internal tests taken by pupils, mock exams taken over the course of study, non-exam assessment work (coursework) and practical performance in some subjects.

*Bishop Vesey's Grammar School is Company Limited by Guarantee and registered in England and Wales with company number 7986921. The Registered Office is at Lichfield Road, Sutton Coldfield B74 2NH*

*The Governors of Bishop Vesey's Grammar School are a registered charity (No: 517907)*



### **3. Taking account of special circumstances**

We have already undertaken a special circumstances process whereby students or parents can contact the School to explain why certain evidence should not form part of the Assessment Record. Thank you for contacting us. This has been helpful for the School to make a judgement on whether, and how, mitigating circumstances should be applied to your child's qualifications.

### **4. Access arrangements**

If a student is eligible for any sort of access arrangements as part of their SEND provision, then they have been given this support in their mock and mini assessments.

If a student who is eligible for access arrangements did not have these arrangements for a particular assessment from their assessment record (outside of the mock and mini assessments) then this evidence has been, where appropriate, discounted.

### **5. Can we know the grade submitted?**

No, we are legally obliged not to let students or parents know their submitted grade before results day. In some subjects, students may have received grades or marks for certain assessments that may count towards their grades. Students do not have an automatic right to know their grades or marks in a subject's assessment, just because they have been told marks in another assessment.

### **6. The assessments you are doing are different from another school or college. How is this fair?**

Schools and colleges have been given a lot of flexibility in how they decide a holistic teacher assessed grade this summer. This means that it is likely the assessments will look different in different schools and colleges, even ones in the same area.

Students only be assessed on what they have been taught, to account for variations in lost learning due to the pandemic. The range of evidence will differ between schools and colleges, and even between students within our school or college.

Our approach has been approved by the exam boards; but many different approaches have also been approved. This does not mean one approach is better than the other.

### **7. Will my child's teacher judge them fairly?**

All of staff have undergone objectivity and bias training. This is detailed in our Centre Policy, which has been approved by the exam boards. You can see the training that was provided [here](#).

All of the grades were signed off by two members of staff, including the head of department. All grades were signed off by the head of centre.

We have sent a sample of work to the exam boards, to ensure that grades can be checked by the exam boards so that they are fair and accurate.

If you have a concern about bias please contact Miss Steadman, DSL, urgently, via [k.steadman@bishopveseys.bham.sch.uk](mailto:k.steadman@bishopveseys.bham.sch.uk)

### **8. My child needs a particular grade for university; what can I do to make sure they get it?**

It is important that neither students, nor the parents or carers, put undue pressure on classroom teachers or heads of department to submit a certain grade. If a member of staff feels that pressure is being applied, we will first raise this with you directly.

If the pressure continues, we have been instructed to report this (whether from parents or students) to the exam boards as potential malpractice.

### **9. What is exam malpractice?**

Exam malpractice this year includes students fabricating evidence (e.g. claiming plagiarised work is their own), they or their parents placing undue pressure on teachers to submit a certain grade, as well as teachers fabricating evidence.

If malpractice is proven, the exam boards may decide to withhold the qualification altogether. Our approach to authenticating evidence is set out in our Centre Policy.

### **10. Appeals**

If your child is unhappy with their grade this summer, they will have the opportunity to resit all A-levels in the autumn. Students should email Mrs Cragg about entering the autumn series: [l.cragg@bishopveseys.bham.sch.uk](mailto:l.cragg@bishopveseys.bham.sch.uk)

There is also the option to appeal a grade on the following grounds:

- Administrative error – you think the Sixth Form has submitted the wrong grade for you
- Procedural error – you think the Sixth Form did not follow process correctly
- Error of academic judgement – you do not think the grade submitted reflects a reasonable judgement on either the evidence that was used, or the grade arrived at

All appeals will first be processed as a centre review. Following the outcome of the centre review, students can choose to take forward an appeal to the exam board(s), which we will do on their behalf. Details of how to request a centre review on August 10<sup>th</sup> and beyond is [here](#).

Please note that at any stage of the appeals process a student's grade(s) could go up or down. If the appeal process decides that the submitted grade was too high, students will **not** be able to keep the higher grade. We will require students to sign a declaration saying that they understand this before they submit an appeal.

For further frequently asked questions about the appeals process, please click [here](#).

### **11. Results Day – Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> August 2021**

Results will be available for collection from the dining room from 8:30am. If students need advice regarding university entrance, clearing, or apprenticeships, they can phone the Main School Office on 0121 250 5400 to make appointments with the Sixth Form team. Appointments are available from 9:30am.

We wish you all a lovely summer and best wishes for Results Day.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Dominic Robson, Headteacher.