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24th May 2023

Dear parents and carers,

As exams are now underway, I am writing to reassure you about how these assessments are working this term, and how grading will work over the summer and what this means for you or your child.

Ofqual guidance for students

In May, Ofqual published some useful guidance for students on the 2023 summer exam series – available [here](#). Ofqual is the exams regulator, which checks the systems and processes of individual exam boards.

Exams in 2023

This is the first year since the pandemic that exams have taken place without any significant adaptations, although students are able to use formula and equation sheets to support them in GCSE maths, combined science and physics.

This means that students have needed to study all content in their subjects as any topic could come up in the exam. This is the same across the country and across all exam boards.

Grading in summer 2023

As exam papers are completed, exam boards will begin to mark them using the same mark schemes as were in place in 2019 and in 2022 (the last two years in which exams took place). The marks awarded will depend on the quality of the student's work.

Once all papers are marked, then exam boards will set grade boundaries. This year, Ofqual's decision is to return to a similar pattern of grade distribution as in 2019. Ofqual has put systems in place to ensure that nationally grades will not be lower than in 2019, even if the quality of work is slightly lower. In other words, a student has about the same chance as achieving a Grade 4 or Grade 7 or Grade 9, etc. at GCSE, or a Grade A*, Grade C, etc. at A level, as they did before the pandemic. This is the main way in which the exam boards are attempting to ensure that students are not disadvantaged by having lived through the pandemic. Again, this approach is the same across the country, and across all exam boards.

Contingency date

Please note that Thursday 15 June (afternoon only) and Wednesday 28 June (all day) are national exam contingency days, in case any exam has to be rescheduled. These should already be on students' exam calendars. It is essential that students are available on these days and do not book holidays over this period, even if their last scheduled exam is over.

These dates hopefully won't be needed, but if they are, and students cannot attend due to holiday, they will not receive any marks for that paper.



Student support

If you need any further support during the rest of the exam series, or have any questions about this letter, please contact Mrs Gourlay, Year 11 Progress Leader.

We wish all our students the best of luck with the rest of their exams.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "C Robson".

Mrs C Robson
Principal
Ormiston Maritime Academy