

Dear Parents / Carers

### **A level and GCSE grades**

We have now received updated information regarding the awarding of A level and GCSE grades this summer. Firstly, at this point I think it is fair to say to all Year 13 and Year 11 pupils that they needn't continue working specifically on any work set by their teacher, with a view to it potentially affecting their grade positively.

For A Level and at GCSE level, schools are being asked to recommend a grade for each pupil in each subject. This will be done using a variety of information we know about each individual, and will, essentially, be the best and most accurate prediction we can make. Within the group of pupils being predicted each grade we are also being asked to rank order them, from most secure to least secure.

This process will be done within departments and will then be looked at by the senior team before being submitted. We will be submitting recommendations that reflect what grade each pupil is most likely to achieve. So, for example, if a GCSE pupil is a strong grade 4, with what we believe to be a small chance of achieving a grade 5, we will recommend a grade 4. If a pupil is working at a weak grade 4, with what we believe to be a small chance of achieving a grade 3, we will recommend a grade 4.

Clearly there are strengths and weaknesses to this approach. Although by the time the exams come around we are confident in our predictions, and there are rarely big surprises on results day, of course a few pupils do achieve slightly better than we would have thought. Additionally, and possibly more frequently, pupils can drop below what we had expected, especially at GCSE level.

At this point I have to say that I will not allow any opportunistic 'grade inflation', and will instruct staff to recommend grades with complete integrity. As stated earlier, final recommendations will be the result of an internal process involving all levels of management within the school. I will also instruct staff not to respond to any parental queries regarding grade recommendations, so please direct any queries you might have about this process to me via the school office, and I will respond as soon as is possible.

Timings for this whole process are not defined at this point, but it has been stated that results will be published no later than the previously identified date, and hopefully well

Headteacher: T Gibbs B Ed (Hons) NPQH  
Whitwell Road, Reepham, Norwich, NR10 4JT  
**Reepham High School & College** Tel: 01603 870328  
Email (main school): [office@reephamhigh.com](mailto:office@reephamhigh.com) [www.reephamhigh.com](http://www.reephamhigh.com)  
Email (college): [office@reephamcollege.com](mailto:office@reephamcollege.com) [www.reephamcollege.com](http://www.reephamcollege.com)



Artsmark  
Silver Award  
Awarded by Arts  
Council England



before. There will also be an appeal process, and ultimately pupils can opt to sit the exam in the future if they are unhappy with their grade.

### **What to do now**

I think it would be very unwise for any Year 11 or 13 students to just stop working between now and September. Certainly Year 11 pupils are missing out on a period of their school life that is often the most productive in developing the independence required for post16 courses. It is true that by having no GCSE exams they will miss out on the chance to become really skilful in the pressured examination situation. Year 13 students have been through this but have also missed out on the chance to perform at a higher level under more pressure.

I strongly recommend that all Year 11 pupils should continue working in some way. For example, as soon as possible after the Easter holidays Reepham College will contact all pupils with a conditional offer who have identified the college as their first choice A level provider, with subject specific 'summer work' to help them prepare for next term. This should be regarded as compulsory as those who do not complete this often struggle to adapt effectively to the higher demands of the Level 3 course. This is our normal procedure but this year, for obvious reasons, we will set a bit more work. All students will be required to sit an assessment of this summer work, during lesson time, for each of their A Level subjects. This will take place during the second week after returning to College. Year 13 students will continue to receive advice and guidance from the College to help them prepare for their 'next steps', including any course specific guidance for those who have made applications for university, and updates regarding apprenticeship vacancies.

I suggest those of you with children planning to go to other post 16 institutions contact those places and ask to be guided towards suitable work that will prepare them for that course, so they can get on with enjoyable and really worthwhile study over the summer.

We will keep you updated if and when necessary.

Yours sincerely

Tim Gibbs