



# Bishop Wordsworth's School

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Dear Parents/Guardians

## Assessing A Level grades, Summer 2021

Having received the detailed guidance from the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ), it's now possible to give you some more specific information about how we plan to collect the evidence that will be used to determine your son's grade in each subject. Every school or college must submit, by April 30, a Centre Policy document that sets out the process by which they will determine grades. Once ours has been accepted by the exam boards, we will publish it on our website.

In the meantime, though, we can provide a summary of the tasks which will be used to generate this evidence (see attached). Some of these will take place in the assessment week beginning May 10 (for which a separate timetable will be provided in due course) and the others in lessons. Where tasks are planned for lessons, your son's teachers will be able to give the precise day and time if this is not indicated on the summary sheet.

We feel that the fairest way to do this is largely through these tasks, which will be completed under controlled conditions. This will guarantee that the work is the result of the student's own efforts and will also provide a range of robust evidence. Unfortunately, the Yr13 Mock exams could not take place in January as planned, and this explains why Yr13 students will be asked to do more of these tasks, as only a few Departments will be able to include prior work. Completing these tasks after students have had the benefit of being back in school for as long as possible makes a great deal of sense and, as students should be getting better towards the end of their courses, this should offer them the best way to show their current level of performance.

It may seem that students are being put under more pressure than would be the case in a normal year, as there may be more tasks than there would be exams. However, as most of these tasks are to take place in lessons, we have had to reduce their duration to under an hour, whereas most exams would be at least an hour, and in many cases considerably longer. This has been done by spreading the equivalent of an exam paper over two or more lessons. Again, this should be seen as beneficial, as there is less pressure placed on each occasion.

We are confident that all our Departments have created schemes that match the requirements set out by the DfE and the JCQ; are appropriate and manageable for both students and staff, and that they provide a number of opportunities for students to show their current level of performance. An important aspect of this is that it will be no harder or easier to achieve a grade this summer than if exams were being sat. However, we do understand that some students may be feeling anxious about the process. Whilst some degree of anxiety is normal in the run-up to assessments, if your son is especially concerned, then he

should speak to a member of staff. This could be his class teacher, his Mentor, or his Head of Year.

In order that we have the best possible set of evidence, it is very important that your son makes every effort to attend the lessons when these tasks will be taking place. If he misses a task for valid and unavoidable reasons, then we will arrange for him to complete the task at another time wherever possible. For this reason, the JCQ has made it clear that applications for special consideration will not apply this summer. It is also important that, if there are mitigating circumstances, your son should make his teacher aware of them as soon as possible, and certainly before the grade submission deadline of June 18.

If your son has access arrangements, such as extra time or the use of a laptop, then these will be accommodated in all of these tasks.

Where feedback on performance in a task could help students make improvements in future tasks, some general feedback may be given following marking and the internal standardisation process that each Department must undertake. However, we have decided that the marks (and/or grades) will only be issued to students on their results day (August 10). This is for two main reasons:

- If provided before this time, students could use the data to determine the grade they will be likely to achieve, and we believe that this could contravene the instruction that schools must not tell students their final grade until results day.
- Marking and standardising will need to be done carefully to ensure fairness, and this will take time. As teachers will have other commitments, many of them would find it extremely difficult to complete this process in a short time without being placed under unreasonable pressure. Therefore, as we believe all students should receive their marks at the same time, the fairest way is for this to happen on results day.

If feedback is given, then this will be given to all students in that subject to ensure a fair and consistent approach. Students should not request individual help and guidance beyond this, as this would be unfair on the other students who did not receive additional help.

Judgements about grades will be made across the full range of evidence, thus ensuring the grade is a holistic assessment, and will be matched against standards published by the JCQ. Teachers will receive training on how to do this objectively, and there will also be internal and external quality assurance. As decisions must rely exclusively on this evidence, no account can be made of a student's potential, as might be indicated by a Target Grade or a UCAS Predicted Grade. It is important to remember that, as Departments have planned to collect evidence through tasks that cover a range of the skills and content that your son has been taught, it remains their decision regarding which evidence will be used.

Finally, I would like to assure you and your son that we will be working hard to ensure he receives grades that are a true reflection of his current performance.

Yours faithfully

Mr M A Harmsworth  
**Assistant Head i/c Assessment & ICT Director**

## Year 13 schedule of tasks used to determine A Level grades Summer 2021

Subject	Previous task(s)	Additional tasks taking place in the week beginning...					
		April 19	April 26	May 3	May 10 Assessment week	May 17	May 24
<b>Art</b>	Portfolio – ongoing project throughout Yrs 12&13						
<b>Biology</b>	-	P1 Biol Processes Section B Qs		P2 Biol Diversity Section B Qs	Paper 3 Unifying Concepts	Multiple Choice Qs from P1 & P2	
<b>Chemistry</b>	-	Modules 2&3	Module 4		Modules 5&6		Practical skills Qs
<b>Economics</b>	Various tasks, incl. use of Ezy Economics and timed essays (March)		2x synoptic essays (Themes 1-4)	Paper 1 (Themes 1-4)	Paper 2 (Themes 1-4)		
<b>English Literature</b>	NEA Tasks 1&2				P1 Section B, P2 Section B		
<b>French</b>	-			Paper 2: Writing	Paper 1: Listening, Reading & Writing	Speaking	
<b>Further Maths</b>	-	Further Pure 1	Mechanics		Core Pure	Additional Pure	
<b>Geography</b>	NEA	Global Governance	Development in an African Context		Ecosystems	Global Cycles	
<b>Geology</b>	-		Geohazards & engineering	Metals & fluids	Foundations in Geology and Tectonics	Palaeontology & Evolution	Field Skills
<b>German</b>	-			Paper 2: Writing	Paper 1: Listening, Reading & Writing	Speaking	
<b>History</b>	October 2020 exam, NEA			Russia (Breadth) British (Depth)	Composite Paper 1&2		
<b>Maths</b>	-	Mechanics		Additional Pure	Pure	Statistics	
<b>Music</b>	-				Listening and Appraisal	Performance deadline (NEA)	Composition deadline (NEA)
<b>Philosophy</b>	-				Philosophy of Religion, Ethics	Christianity	
<b>Physics</b>	-	DC & Waves		Nuclear, Radioactivity & Quantum	F&M, Newtonian World		E&B Fields, Capacitance
<b>Politics</b>	Yr13 Autumn exam Comp 3 Comparative Politics (March)		Comp 2: UK Govt.		Comp 1 & 3		
<b>Psychology</b>	-	P3 essay	P3 short Qs		Papers 1&2	Research Methods	
<b>Spanish</b>	-			Paper 2: Writing	Paper 1: Listening, Reading & Writing	Speaking	

### Notes:

Apart from during the assessment week, when there will be a separate timetable and all students in that subject will complete the assessments in the Sports Hall (unless they have access arrangements), assessments will take place in lessons. The exact time will depend on when your son's class is taught and so will be confirmed by his teacher

NEA – Non-Exam Assessment