



King
Egbert
School

King Egbert School
Totley Brook Road
Dore
Sheffield
S17 3QU

0114 235 3855)
enquiries@ecgbert.sheffield.sch.uk ✉
www.ecgbert.sheffield.sch.uk 🌐

Headteacher: Mr Paul Haigh
Chair of Governors: Mrs Karen Milbourn

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Our ref: NJ/HW

Dear Students, Parents and Carers

This letter concerns the **Y11 Grade Collector reports** that are being published shortly via Edulink. We wish to clarify as much as we can about these reports so everyone is as informed as possible in these final weeks of Y11.

The main things to note about these reports are:

- These grades are **not your final Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGs)**;
- These grades are a reflection of work completed over the course, including performance in the recent Y11 mocks;
- These grades are – in most cases – reported as a split grade (e.g. 4/5 or 9/8);
- These grades **may have changed from previous reports**. This is mainly due to teachers having had more time with students and significant assessment having taken place;
- The final TAG awarded to a student may be different from these grades (for reasons explained below).

I would now like to explain in more detail some of the points highlighted above.

Why might these grades be different from past grades? How are teachers making these judgements?

As you will know, we have been asked to enter a Teacher Assessed Grade (TAG) for each student in Y11.

Since writing to you in March 2021, we have had some significant updates from the government and the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) who are overseeing the grading of students this Summer.

The guidance we now have to follow has some slight but significant alterations and clarifications from that which was released in January 2021. These will have influenced the way teachers have approached this Grade Collection report.

The main areas to note are:

- Teachers must have **clear evidence** (and where possible, **recent evidence**) of a student performing at a particular grade to be able to award it
- Teachers cannot award a grade based on 'potential' or 'flight paths'
- Teachers cannot give special consideration to lost learning
- Evidence used to grade students must be consistent for all – we cannot just select the 'best bits' of work by each student



The top two bullet points have had an impact on this latest report. What teachers have to consider is whether the student has shown enough **evidence** of a grade to be able to award it. The impact on students is therefore that they **must demonstrate that they can produce work at a specific level**.

Therefore, the impact of recent mock exams and the current performance of students will carry weight in the teacher's mind. It is not the only piece of data being used here, as I said in March, but it matters in the way that all assessments matter. This may have changed the teacher's judgement from what it was previously.

Also, teachers will now be in the process of moderating and standardising and this may influence judgements as well. They have only recently been provided with supporting material through exam boards that they need to use that they have not had before now – this will have an impact on how they have to grade.

My grade is not what I wanted. Can it change in the TAG?

Yes. There is a final opportunity in this next assessment window. No grade on these reports is a definitive grade. Those who do well in these final assessments can make a difference to their outcomes this Summer.

Why is it a split grade?

This is because teachers are working all the time to refine their judgements, but they do not have the final amount of information, nor have they completed the process of grading yet. Hence the choice in many cases to award a split grade.

My grade has changed significantly. Why?

You have to remember that teachers have had less information to use this year than ever before with which to complete reports. Significant assessments such as mocks show better than anything else what grade a student is likely to get – that is why the government were desperate for exams to go ahead this summer. Also, as you will find out when you are given the information on TAGs, teachers have been told to count a range of **specific pieces of evidence** which you will be told about – they cannot count everything on an individual basis. As a result, this may have altered their viewpoint about a student's performance.

I will be publishing shortly the information for Y11 students about the evidence we will use to create TAGs this summer. Students will then have the opportunity to inform us about any specific circumstances that affected their performance in those specific assessments. Teachers will, if the guidance allows, be able to take these things into account, or find alternative evidence. At all times, the decision as to whether this information can be taken into account must be in accordance with the guidance from JCQ and the exam boards. I'd urge all students and families to read this information carefully when it is published to you.

In the meantime, students must concentrate fully on preparing for and completing their final assessments. Good performances in these assessments can go a long way to helping teachers justify grades.

Yours faithfully



Mr N Jones
Deputy Headteacher