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Dear Students and Parents

Exam Grading update for Y11, 12 and 13 students (2)

I write as a follow up to my previous letter dated 5 March 2021, that outlined our general approach and timescales for the upcoming Assessment Weeks. You can access the letter [here](#) if you have not yet read it.

In this update I plan to focus on our proposals for the design and setting of assessments, and how we will approach the marking of them.

Designing the assessments

Assessments will be classroom-based and take place in lessons under the supervision of teachers. They will last 45 mins, which provides some time at the start and end of the 1 hr lesson for admin and instructions/collection of papers. All students will take the same assessment at the same time to ensure fairness.

Where students have additional needs and therefore qualify for Access Arrangements such as extra time, we will make arrangements for them to sit their assessments in a dedicated space in school.

The assessments will be put together using past paper questions (or parts of questions), which will be provided by the exam board. The exam boards will also provide some unpublished questions that we may choose to use. Assessments will include content from face-to-face teaching and online learning although we will place less emphasis on topics/content taught during the first lockdown period, i.e. late March-July.

In designing the actual assessments we propose to reduce, and ideally eliminate, any potential claim of favouritism or unfair advantage between teaching groups by doing the following:

- Each assessment will be designed by 1-2 teachers within a department and remain confidential until use
- By keeping the assessment material confidential it avoids any suggestion that some teachers have provided preferential treatment to the classes/students they teach

Marking assessment tasks

As with designing assessments, we will ensure that our approach to marking papers is beyond reproach and removes any suspicion of bias or preferential treatment. To achieve this aim, we propose the following:

- All assessments will have a clearly defined mark scheme



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- No teacher will mark a full assessment but rather the marking load will be shared between 2-3 teachers, each marking the same questions for an assigned set of papers
 - Wherever possible, class teachers will have no involvement in marking their own students' papers although we recognise this will be impractical in some smaller departments/subjects
- Marked assessment papers will be randomly sampled by subject leaders to provide another layer of moderation and quality assurance

Key documents and deadlines

The final point is to confirm what you will receive next Thursday 18 March; this is set out below.

Resource to be shared with students and parents		To be shared on
1	Subject teaching overviews for each subject	Thursday 18 March
2	Assessment Week A, B and C overviews. These will signpost topics/content to be covered in the respective assessment weeks	Thursday 18 March
3	Timetables for Assessment Week A, B and C	Thursday 25 March

These documents will be shared with students and parents via:

- Google Classroom links
- Links within the Weekly Bulletin to Parents

Putting all of this in place is a logistical challenge but I hope the information you have received thus far reassures you that our planning has been both diligent and comprehensive. If you have any questions on the content of this letter then please email phs@ponthigh.org.uk and I will respond promptly.

Yours faithfully



Kieran McGrane
Headteacher