



Queen Mary's Grammar School

Headmaster: T J Swain, M A

December 2015

Changes to grading structures at GCSE

Dear parent/guardian

You may be aware that there are significant changes being made in the way GCSEs are structured and assessed. From September 2015, reformed courses are being introduced with the aim of all exams being of the new variety in the summer of 2019.

Subjects are being reformed at different times:

- 1. First new GCSEs from September 2015 (first exam 2017)**
English Language, English Literature, Maths
- 2. Second wave from September 2016 (first exam 2018)**
Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Geography, History, French, German, Spanish, Computing, Art, Music, RS
- 3. Third wave September 2017 (first exam 2019)**
DT, Business & Economics, Mandarin

The new courses are reported to be more difficult and have greater content than previously. They are also being assessed differently, with a 9-1 scale replacing the established A*-G measure. The two scales don't necessarily map neatly across, but the bottom of the new level 7 is aligned to the bottom of an old grade A and the 3/4 boundary will be the same as the old C/D level. The new level 9 is meant to represent the top of the old A*, with 20% of students who achieve a level 7 or above receiving this nationally.

As you will see on the Interim Reports, we have attempted to model this change in the STAR estimates and end-of-term attainment grades across the subjects and year groups. In simple terms, the type of grade your son will receive in each subject from now on will be the one which he would be awarded in that subject if he were to carry on until the end of Year 11. We have used the Fischer Family Trust for our number grade estimations and this has meant some variations compared to the letters received in previous years.

I have spoken to parents of Years 9 (at the November parents' evening) and Year 10 (at the October information evening) and have thoroughly briefed staff and students of the changes. I will continue to communicate with you and the pastoral teams will be using the new system as part of their on-going monitoring.

If you have any further questions, please do contact me at the School.

Yours sincerely

Mr R.J. Langton
Deputy Headmaster

Queen Mary's Grammar School
Sutton Road, Walsall, West Midlands, WS1 2PG
t: +44 (0) 1922 720696 w: www.qmgs.org
e: postbox@qmgs.walsall.sch.uk  @qmgs1554