



3 March 2021

Dear Parents, Carers and Guardians,

Now that your child has completed a past paper in each Science during the December Pre Public Exams (PPEs) and completed the virtual learning for the first half of the Spring Term, I am writing to clarify how we decide on the course and their tier of entry.

The final decision on the tier of entry and whether to sit Combined Science or Separate Sciences papers happens during March. This decision is based upon a number of factors which include the performance in the December PPE, End-of-topic test results, engagement with the virtual learning material and teacher judgement. Although at this point in time there is no clarity on exactly how students will be assessed in the summer, these factors are important in making Centre-Assessed grade projections. The DfE state it is likely that some form of external assessment will be put in place and that this will be in line with their course and tier of entry.

For Combined Science, students must enter the same tier for each Science, their double award grade is an average of their marks and is a reflection of their ability across all three sciences. The **higher** paper offers grades 4-3 to 9-9 and the **foundation** paper offers grades 1-1 to 5-5. Students who wish to be considered for A-level Sciences at Lord Grey are required to sit the higher paper as the minimum entry requirement for A-Level Sciences is grade 6-6.

The Separate Science course is selected for some students, in these cases students have demonstrated an excellent level of knowledge on the material covered so far, scoring very highly in PPEs and class tests, together with an excellent track record of independent learning. This criteria is essential due to the higher cognitive load of Separate Sciences and the additional content. The additional material may need to be taught remotely by necessity. For Separate Sciences, students can be entered for a different tier in each Science as they are separate qualifications. The **higher** paper offers grades 4 to 9 and the **foundation** paper offers grades 1 to 5. Students who wish to be considered for A-level Sciences at Lord Grey are required to sit the higher paper as the minimum entry requirement for A-Level Sciences is grade 6.

AQA recommends that students should only sit the higher paper/s if they are likely to get grade 6-5 or above. We will also consider the tier of entry for Maths and how well students perform on the crossover questions which appear on both papers.

Thank you for supporting your child with their studies during these difficult times; please do not hesitate to contact me at dino.vallender@lordgrey.org.uk should you have any queries.

Yours sincerely

Dino Vallender
Head of Science

