



3 November 2021

Dear Parents & Caregivers

Communication Regarding Unexpected Event Grades

As you are aware since the Government announcement late last week there have been changes regarding the Derived Grades and Unexpected Events Grades. Earlier, we published a PowerPoint on the OLE to provide students and their families with an overview of the process, however we acknowledge there are still some mixed messages. The confusion partly comes from NZQA and the lack of clarity regarding the process in the current Covid climate. All the information we have is outlined in the following:

[Deputy Chief Executive of NZQA Update](#)

[NZQA Unexpected Grades](#)

From these documents, we know that;

1. As a school, we will need to supply NZQA with Unexpected Event Grades for each student in December. There are very strict criteria for these grades and the evidence must be collected by the school before the start of the external examination period (22 November).
2. When the student attends the examination, the better of the Unexpected Event Grade or Examination grade will be awarded.
3. The Unexpected Event Grade can be applied irrespective of examination attendance.

The last point has caused some confusion. We believe that the intent as outlined by Minister Hipkins and the Deputy Chief Executive of NZQA, Andrea Gray, is for students to still sit their external examinations. It is our belief, that the point, of the Unexpected Event Grade, is to protect students if they cannot sit the exam due to Covid etc. We believe it is not intended to discourage students from sitting these examinations.

This point was confirmed yesterday (Tuesday 2 November) by our NZQA School Relationship Manager where he stated the following: ***Students are expected to sit exams unless they are unable to due to a COVID related reason. This reason could include themselves, their household or their school.***

We understand that some schools have actively told staff and students that the NZQA externals are optional, however, we do not think that this reflects the academic integrity of the qualification or Covid support package offered to students. Therefore, we strongly encourage Saint Kentigern College students to sit their NZQA externals examinations. However, it is clear that students do have the choice to either sit the exams or to accept their Unexpected Event Grades.

As we do each year, NZQA requires all students to 'sign-off' their internal assessment grades for the year, these will be completed in class before the students go on their exam leave. Practice exam results have been relayed to students by their teachers and will be formally communicated through Senior School Reports which will be published online on Friday 19 November.

Due to NZQA's requirements for the Unexpected Event Grades to be based on valid, authentic, standard specific evidence, in most cases, a student's Unexpected Event Grades will be their Practice Examination results. Where a teacher has sufficient and appropriate evidence to make a change to a Practice Examination result, the student will be informed in writing. Obviously, those students who have performed below their expectations will take the opportunity to improve their grade by sitting the external examinations.

This is a truly a unique situation that we have never experienced before across the Auckland region. Students may choose not to, however we do encourage them to complete these exams as they provide the opportunity to clearly demonstrate their learning and achieve their full potential.

Yours sincerely



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