

17 July 2020

Dear Parents, Carers and Students

I hope that you and your families are well. The last few months have been particularly challenging for students in years 11 and 13. I am writing to update you on issues relating to GCSE, A-Level and vocational qualifications.

OFQUAL have finalised guidance around the awarding of the summer exam grades and released details of November exam series. We thought it useful to provide an update of the details.

Centre Assessed Grades and Rankings

Earlier this term, staff were asked to provide a grade and ranking for each student, in each qualification where results were due this summer. To ensure these grades were the grades which each student would have been most likely to achieve in the summer, a variety of evidence was considered. This included trial exam results, partially complete coursework (where appropriate) and other in-class assessments. The grades were agreed with each Curriculum Leader, followed by a very thorough moderation process. This entailed many hours of looking at all the evidence to ensure consistency between classes and subjects. Once agreed, the grades were submitted to the exam boards by Curriculum Leaders, followed by an administrative check on each submitted grade. Finally, as head of centre, I examined each subject's Centre Assessed Grades and signed them off as accurate.

I appreciate that this process is not the same as students sitting the exams, but I can assure you that the academy staff did everything they could to make the awarding of the Centre Assessed Grades as fair as it could possibly have been in the circumstances. If for any reason students wish to have access to the Centre Assessed Grades these can be obtained by filling in a request form on results day.

National Standardisation of Grades

The Centre Assessed Grades are now going through a national standardisation process. This means that they may be moved up or down based to ensure that outcomes are comparable to previous years. This will give confidence to educational establishments and employers that this year's exam results are directly comparable to any other year, rather than being perceived as inflated. Exam boards will consider the prior attainment of the year groups and past performance of the school when coming up with the final grades to be awarded. This part of the process is applied externally, by the exam boards, and is not something we are able to influence or challenge.

Appeals

OFQUAL have now confirmed what students and schools will be able to appeal. These are all centred on potential administrative errors either at the board or at school level. It has been clarified that students will not be able to appeal against the Centre Assessed Grade or the ranking assigned to them.

Results Days

We will be holding results days for both year 11 and year 13. Staff from the academy and from INSPIRA will be available to give guidance on next steps for students. We will publish the details of these results days nearer the time. These will be in line with national guidance on social distancing.

The dates of the results days are as follows:

Year 13:	Thursday 13 August
Year 11:	Thursday 20 August

Resits in the Autumn

OFQUAL have confirmed that a full suite of GCSEs and A-Levels will be available for students to sit in November, with the results published in February. These exams are for students who are unhappy with the standardised grade they are awarded on results day, and wish to see if they can get a higher grade by sitting the actual exam. We will have several staff available on results day to give guidance to students who may be considering sitting exams in the Autumn Term.

The dates of the external exams are as follows:

Year 13:	5 October to 23 October
Year 11:	2 November to 23 November

I hope this update has been useful for you. Please do not hesitate to contact the school by telephone if you have any concerns or questions.

Yours faithfully



Mr D Bird
Headteacher