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Dear Students, Parents and Carers

As you will be aware, students will be receiving their GCSE grades on Thursday. You will also be aware that there have been some real difficulties in the last couple of weeks that have been outside our control. Following changes announced this week, we are pleased that arrangements for GCSE and other Level 2 qualifications are now likely to be fairer and clearer than those for A levels last week.

Most (but not all) of the final grades students receive on Thursday will be the same as the centre assessed grade that the school submitted to the exam boards. Given some of the confusion nationally and some mis-reporting, it is very important that everyone understands that these are “moderated centre assessed grades” and not “teacher assessed grades”.

The grades that schools submitted underwent a rigorous moderation process within school as per Ofqual’s instructions. Centres were asked to submit grades that “reflect a fair, reasonable and carefully considered judgement of the most likely grade a student would have achieved if they had sat their exams this summer and completed any non-exam assessment”. In order to achieve this and do this in a way that was honest and fair to all students, there was a multi-stepped approach that followed all guidance:

Step one:

Using existing records and all available evidence (including mocks), teachers submitted an initial summary grade.

Step two:

Subject leaders checked all grades and worked with teachers to moderate those grades and agree the rank order of students. This stage ensured that “judgements are objective, and they only take account of evidence about student performance.”

Step three:

Grades were scrutinised at senior leader level. Ofqual required us to consider:

“previous results in the centre – these will vary according to a number of factors, including prior attainment of the students, but our data shows that for most centres any year-on-year variation in results for a given subject is normally quite small”

“the performance of this year’s students compared to those in previous years”

Stage four:

Ofqual instructed Heads of Centre to ensure that centre assessed grades were in line with historical results and that they hadn’t been artificially inflated. The Head of Centre was required to state:

“Having reviewed the relevant processes and data, I am confident that they honestly and fairly



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represent the grades that these students would have been most likely to achieve if they had sat their exams as planned.”

Step five:

Ofqual has checked these grades, using its own data sets and issued students with their final grades. No final grade is lower than the Centre Assessed Grade that schools submitted but some final grades are higher.

Following all the changes to the process that the government has made over the last week, we do not yet have final information on any process for appealing against results. We expect that students will still have the opportunity to take an exam in the autumn if they wish to improve upon a grade and we will provide you with information about any other options if and when we receive that information.

None of us could ever have imagined a situation where exams would be cancelled and that grades would be awarded in this way. We would like to pay tribute to our students who have shown enormous resilience and determination, not just during the pandemic but throughout their time in school. We would like to thank our staff for the professional way they have worked throughout this process, responding rapidly to a unique situation. While it is impossible for us to know how fair results are nationally, we are absolutely clear that the results students are receiving this week are a fair reflection of the trajectory this year group were on and are consistent with the performance of similar students in our schools in recent years.

Should you have any concerns or questions about this or anything else, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'JR Uttley'.

Jonny Uttley
CEO

Richard Williman
Headteacher



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