



Tuesday 18th August 2020

Dear Year 13

I understand that this has been a difficult and anxious time for you as a result of the disruption caused by the coronavirus pandemic which undoubtedly has been further compounded in the last few days with changing government policy and the extensive press coverage of it. As you may be aware, yesterday the Chair of Ofqual wrote to students to apologise for creating such uncertainty and in order to remove any further stress, Ofqual has decided to award students grades on the basis of what teachers submitted to exam boards in June as opposed to the calculated results produced by their standardisation algorithm which were distributed last Thursday.

To allow you to understand if and how this affects you, we will be emailing you all individually today with the centre assessment grades submitted by your teachers. (Please note that we will **NOT** be sending this information for BTEC courses as the process for awarding BTEC grades was slightly different with very limited statistical standardisation used and as a result all of our BTEC grades were upheld).

***\*\*Update - We are as yet unsure if the government U turn applies to Criminology. We are awaiting confirmation from the exam board and will update you when we are able to do so.\*\****

For the vast majority of students these centre assessment grades will be the same as or higher than the calculated result you received last week. However, there are a minority of students (13 to be exact) whose final calculated result produced by the standardisation algorithm is actually higher than the centre assessment grade submitted by their teachers. If this applies to you, please do not worry - Ofqual have confirmed that you will receive the higher of the two grades.

**What is the Centre Assessment Grade?** If you recall I have already shared with you details to explain centre assessment grades in the final letter of the year sent out in July . However, by way of reminder a centre assessment grade is a holistic, evidence based professional judgement on the grade teachers believe that you would have achieved in the subject under 'normal' circumstances balancing the different sources of evidence available to them relevant to their subject context. As you would expect, the staff at Durham Sixth Form Centre took this task very seriously and spent a great deal of time reviewing the evidence and discussing it with colleagues to ensure that the process was completed fairly, objectively and professionally.

Just to clarify that the centre assessment grade is **NOT** the same thing as your target grade, UCAS prediction or mock exam result. Your teachers will have considered all of the evidence that they have about you and your progress over the course of your studies and have used this information to decide upon a centre assessment grade which they believe is the best assessment of what you would have achieved if you had taken exams. I can reassure you that your teachers approached the task of submitting these grades with the utmost diligence, and that they felt the grades submitted were a fair and accurate reflection.

**Appeals** - There may be a very small minority of you who are disappointed with the centre assessment grades submitted by your teachers. As it stands there have been no new updates with regards to the appeals process and so please click on the

following link to read the most up to date information on appeals as published by Ofqual earlier this month - [Student Guide to Appeals](#).

For your information, Ofqual states that students cannot appeal or challenge their results directly to the exam boards this year. They have confirmed that only the school may appeal to the exam board if it believes the centre itself made an error when submitting a centre assessment grade; or similarly, if it believes an exam board made a mistake when assigning or communicating a grade. We are in the process of checking the data for any such administrative errors and in the unlikely event that this occurs, we will contact you.

Ofqual states that if students have concerns about bias, discrimination or any other factor that suggests that a centre did not behave with care or integrity when determining the centre assessment grade they should normally raise these concerns with their centre, in the first instance. You can do this via the grade queries email address listed below.

It is important to be aware that receiving a grade lower than you hoped for, expected or feel that you deserved is not in itself grounds for appeal and as such if you do wish to request an appeal you must read the above document carefully and state very clearly the grounds on which you are appealing based on the criteria provided. Due to the age of our students, we would ask that any such queries come directly from you. Please direct queries to: [gradequeries2020@durhamsixthformcentre.org.uk](mailto:gradequeries2020@durhamsixthformcentre.org.uk)

**Resits** - Ofqual believe the fairest way to address a students' concerns about the grade awarded to them in the summer is to allow them the opportunity to sit the examinations in what they are referring to as the 'additional examination series' in the autumn term. Ofqual have now published specific dates for this additional examination series - they will take place from Monday 5th to Friday 23rd October 2020 with results expected in December.

Exam boards recommend that any student who contacts the school to submit an appeal should also enter for the equivalent exam in the autumn series if they wish to do so. This is because of the tight deadlines for the autumn series entry and the turnaround time required for an appeal. This way if a student is not happy with the outcome of the appeal, they can then sit the exam to improve their grade. If you wish to resit please contact us via the grade queries email address listed above by the end of August.

Thank you for your ongoing patience.

Ellen Beveridge  
Headteacher