



18th August 2020

A Level Results 2020

Dear Parents, Carers and Year 13 students,

I am writing to you following the confusion and uncertainty of the past week. Whilst we all accept that this is an unprecedented time due to COVID, the frequently changing guidance and lack of clear procedures has added to the stress and anxiety experienced by students. Since A Level results day there has been pressure for the government to review the process that generated the final results and yesterday it was announced that students will now be able to accept their Centre Assessed Grades if these are higher than their final grade awarded last Thursday. We have mixed feelings about this last minute change because it has addressed some of the injustice of the grades awarded but it does not help students across the country who have already missed out on university places due to their grades being adjusted. Centre Assessed Grades will be sent to all students today.

How the Centre Assessed Grades were generated

Following the cancellation of all exams due to Covid-19, Ofqual asked centres to provide Centre Assessed Grades (CAG) for students in each subject. The guidance stated that: *'this should 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.'*

The school followed a rigorous and robust process and grades were awarded based on a range of evidence for each subject. For most subjects this evidence included:

- Mock/PPE results
- Target grades
- End of module assessments
- Classwork
- Homework

Teachers and subject leaders used their professional judgement and considered the available evidence held within the centre. Subject Leaders considered the evidence of student work but also last year's data, specifically the grade breakdown, and the historical relative progress that subjects make from mocks to the real exams. No evidence submitted by students after 20th March was considered. The process was challenging and complex, however our experienced Subject Leaders together with the Senior Leadership Team ensured that Centre Assessed Grades (CAG) for every subject were based on a secure and objective evidence base.

It was made clear that examination boards and Ofqual would review and standardise the data submitted by schools. Ofqual also considered the past three years of A Level data from each school. Because St. Mark's has had consistently high grades at A Level our overall final results were very strong, and in fact higher than the A Level results last year, however some individual students were affected by the adjustment of grades and have been left disappointed and frustrated at the process.

The appeals process

There has also been confusion regarding the appeals process. Last Wednesday it was announced that students could appeal using their mock grade but we awaited further guidance as to what a 'valid mock result' would look like. On Saturday guidance was issued and then withdrawn. The school was prepared to challenge any results which were lower than the Centre Assessed Grades, however this is no longer necessary.

As I write this letter, the grounds for appeal remain unchanged. This means that a student cannot appeal, but they can ask the school to check there has been no clerical error. If a student is unhappy with the Centre Assessed Grades the guidance from Ofqual remains:

"Your school or college submitted the grades it believes you were most likely to achieve if exams had gone ahead. We know many students wanted to be able to challenge their centre assessment grades if they were unhappy with them, but we judged this could not be done consistently and fairly. Any appeal would have to be done by someone better placed than your teachers to judge your likely grade if exams had taken place – as exams were cancelled, we don't think there is such a person." Ofqual Student guide to post-16 qualifications results Summer 2020)

Where students are unhappy with their results they will be able to re-sit exams in the Autumn term or next summer but our priority continues to be supporting students with transition to the next stage in their education.

Finally, I want to congratulate all of our Year 13 students for the results that they have achieved and for their resilience throughout this uncertain time. If you need any further advice or clarification in terms of next steps please email Ms O' Connell [oconnell@st-marks.hounslow.sch.uk](mailto:connell@st-marks.hounslow.sch.uk)

We wish you all every success in the future.

Yours faithfully,



Ms A. Waugh-Lucas,
Headteacher.