



20 August 2020

Dear Students, Parents and Carers

I am writing in relation to the examination results which have been released today and which you will have received via e-mail or post. I sincerely hope that you have received the result that you were hoping for in the option which has completed this year.

In light of the changes to grading announced by OFQUAL on Monday, only GCSE results have currently been amended and released by the exam boards. The exam boards OCR and Pearson have yet to release exam results for Cambridge Nationals or BTEC subjects, as they are still revising the grades for these. This affects all schools in England. This means that there will be no results today for BTEC and Cambridge National subjects, but we will send these results out as soon as the exam boards issue them to us. We anticipate this being next week.

The purpose of this letter is to outline further detail regarding the process used to arrive at the grades, as well as the next steps if you require support in terms of discussing your results or reviewing your options for further education or training.

The process used in awarding grades

As you will have no doubt followed in the news over the last week, the Government has confirmed that the GCSE grades have been awarded on the basis of the centre assessed grades (CAGs), which were submitted by the school to the examination boards. This followed an instruction in March from the Secretary of State for schools to submit these grades, following the cancellation of exams this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

OFQUAL published detailed criteria on how schools should form the centre assessed grades using a range of information, which subject teams then used to form a professional judgement as to what they felt a student would have achieved if the exams had gone ahead. The evidence used was different for each subject, but examples of evidence used include: performance on mock exams; practical work; non-examined assessments (NEA); classwork and homework; and the historic rates of progress made by previous cohorts between March and June. Where students were entitled to a reasonable adjustment that had been agreed by the boards, this was also included in the judgement.

These judgements were then scrutinised by leaders, who discussed the evidence and justification for each grade across the subjects, to ensure that each one was a fair, reasonable and carefully considered judgement which reflected the most likely grade a student would have gone on to achieve. The centre



assessed grades which were submitted are, therefore, not the sole responsibility of any individual teacher, but the product of a rigorous internal quality assurance process.

As a result, we are confident in the grades which entered on behalf of students, with outcomes reflecting the strong outcomes seen over the last few years.

Appeals

Current guidance from OFQUAL states that, given the exceptional circumstances, the normal appeals procedures will not take place this year. As such, there is currently no opportunity for students to challenge their centre assessment grade or the process used in determining this grade by the school.

The exceptions to this are as follows:

- Centres can appeal to the examination board where they have identified a clerical error in the submission of grades to the awarding bodies, or where there is concern that an error has occurred in the processing and awarding of the final grade by the awarding body. Students can make a request to the school to check whether such an error has occurred.
- Candidates who have evidence of bias or discrimination by the school in the generation of the centre assessed grades have the ability to raise this with the school through the complaint procedure (which is available on the “Policies” section of the school website). Candidates can also pass this evidence directly to the examination board for investigation.

These are the only grounds for appeal. Both exceptions are very limited in their scope and require clear evidence for them to be taken further. Exam boards will not consider appeals from candidates directly. If you believe that you have grounds for an appeal under these two exceptions, please contact the school in early September to discuss this with a member of the senior leadership team.

Students who are unhappy with their grade will have the opportunity to take these examinations in the autumn, which the school will support with in terms of costs and revision. Students wishing to sit these examinations should discuss this with Mrs Britton (KS4 Phase leader) in September.

Sitting exams in autumn

For candidates who feel that the awarded grade is not a true representation of their ability, there will be an opportunity provided for all students to take examinations in autumn, for all GCSE subjects. These exams will take place during the autumn term, between Monday, 2 November and Monday, 23 November. Timings for BTEC examinations may be later in the year. These exams will be paid for by the school, with support from a Government fund.



The deadline for exam entries to be submitted to exam boards is **9:00 am on Friday, 18 September**. Any student wishing to undertake autumn examinations should discuss this with Mrs Britton (KS4 Phase leader) in early September, or email our Examinations officer (Zoe Senior) at z.senior@tmhs.co.uk. Please only use this e-mail address to request autumn exam entries.

I hope that this information helps to address any questions you may have. As always, we are very proud of the achievements of all our students and we hope that you are pleased with your result.

Yours sincerely

Mr M West
Principal