

# King Charles I School

## Amendment to the Examinations Policy during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak

On Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> March, the Government announced that all GCSE, AS and A Level examinations and assessments will be cancelled this summer. This was to support the fight to stop the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

On Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> April, Ofqual released further guidance as to how the GCSE, AS, vocational courses (BTECs, WJEC Tech awards, OCR Nationals and AQA Tech awards) and A Level grades will be awarded this summer. The guidance states that:

- Ofqual's over-riding aim in awarding the grades is to be fair to students this summer and to make sure they are not disadvantaged in their progress to sixth form, college, university, apprenticeships, training or work because of these unprecedented conditions;
- for each GCSE and A Level subject, we will send the exam boards: a centre assessment grade for each student. This is the grade we believe each student was most likely to get if teaching, learning and exams had happened as planned; and the order of students, by performance, for each grade;
- The students will be issued a calculated grade. Ofqual and the exam boards will standardise the grades across schools and colleges, to make sure that, as far as possible, results are fair and that students are not advantaged or disadvantaged. They state that students' individual performance will not be predetermined by their prior attainment at KS2 or GCSE. Please note that the final grade students get may be different from the centre assessment grade we send to the exam board;
- the grades awarded to students will have equal status to the grades awarded in other years and should be treated in this way by sixth forms, universities, colleges and employers; and
- Ofqual are focused on making sure students are not disadvantaged by these unprecedented circumstances including allowing for an appeal where appropriate. Students who feel that their grades from the summer do not reflect their ability will have the opportunity to take their exams in the autumn series or in summer 2021. If they choose to do this, both grades will stand.
- Calculated Grade Results will be released on the published results days. These are 13<sup>th</sup> August for A level and 20<sup>th</sup> August for GCSE.

### Procedure used for assigning centre assessment grades

The school considered a range of assessments for each student in determining their centre assessed grade: their classwork; their results in assessments and any mock exams; any non-exam assessment or coursework; and their general progress in each subject. Teachers will also apply their considerable experience of their subjects, examinations and the students they teach, when making decisions about the centre assessment grades. The centre assessment grades are not determined by a single teacher and have been subject to a stringent moderation process. The guidance document states that schools must be cautious in accepting any work submitted from Years 11 and 13 students after Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March when all schools were directed to close. As a school we took the decision not to set any additional formal assessments over the period of home learning in order to ensure fairness. The process the school followed in making the centre assessment grade decisions is outlined below:

Stage 1: Subject leaders identified the pieces of assessment evidence which would be used to generate the centre assessment grades. This evidence was selected from assessments completed since the start of the Key Stage.

Stage 2: Subject leaders decided upon the weighting each piece of evidence would have in generating a final subject mark

Stage 3: Subject leaders ranked the students

Stage 4: Teachers assigned each student a centre assessment grade based upon the rank of the students, previous years grade boundaries and school grade distributions

Stage 5: Departments met as a group, moderated and finalised every students' grade and rank. Where there are small numbers in a department teachers worked in collaboratively in the Multi Academy Trust.

Stage 6: Senior leaders checked every students' grades for disparities and consistency in following the process.

Stage 7: Data is inputted and checked by a second party for clerical errors.

Stage 8: The head of centre checked the data for clerical errors and authorised.

## **Malpractice**

The awarding bodies may investigate credible allegations that raise concerns about the failure to follow due procedures in the centre assessed grade process. Examples (for General and Vocational qualifications) include:

### 1) Centre malpractice

- A Head of Centre fails to submit the required declaration when approving and submitting their Centre Assessment Grades and rank orders.
- A failure by a centre to appropriately manage Conflicts of Interest (COIs) within a centre.
- Centre Assessment Grades and/or rank orders being released to learners (or their parents/carers) before the issue of results.
- If new exam entries are created for learners who had not intended to enter for June 2020 or if tier changes are made to gain an unfair advantage rather than as an accurate reflection of a learner's ability.
- A failure to submit Centre Assessment Grades and rank orders which honestly and fairly represent the grades that students would have been most likely to achieve if they had sat their assessments as planned. This might include situations in which centre staff have been unreasonably pressured into making changes to their Centre Assessment Grades and rank order judgements or making such changes themselves without reasonable grounds.
- A failure to accurately report grades of completed units for vocational qualifications.

### 2) Student malpractice

It is possible that some learners may attempt to influence their teachers' judgements on their Centre Assessment Grades and/or rank order. Learners might try to do this by submitting false evidence of performance or by applying pressure.

In all the scenarios listed above, as well as any others that have not been explicitly identified here, the JCQ Suspected malpractice policies and procedures 2019-2020 continues to apply.

## **Appeals**

King Charles I School is committed to ensuring that whenever its staff assess students' work for external qualification, this is done fairly, consistently and in accordance with the specification for the subject concerned. The centre assessment grades have been conducted by staff who have appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills, and who have been trained in this activity.

### 1) Student appeals

Students cannot appeal the calculated grade they receive. Students who feel that their grades from the summer do not reflect their ability will have the opportunity to take their exams in the autumn series or in summer 2021. If they choose to do this, students will be able to use the higher of the two grades for future progression. If a student has evidence of bias or discrimination they should raise the issue by contacting the school.

### 2) Appeals against an exam board

Appeals will be allowed in cases where a centre believes it has made an error when submitting its information; or similarly, if the centre believes an exam board made a mistake when calculating, assigning or communicating a grade.

Please see the following links for further information:

- [Ofqual guidance document for teachers, parents/carers and students](#)
- [Ofqual letter to students](#)
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/awarding-qualifications-in-summer-2020>

