

21st July 2020

Dear Students, Parents and Carers,

I hope this letter finds you well and you are continuing to cope with the many challenges that COVID-19 is still presenting to us all. I am writing to you to remind you about the process used to award your exam grades in August. I thought this would be useful before the Summer holidays begin and in readiness for our results days in August.

Firstly, I just wanted to share again with you the links to the government guidance documents on the issue of the awarding of Summer 2020 exam grades. Ofqual along with the Department for Education (DfE) released the following detailed guidance for parents/carers:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/awarding-qualifications-in-summer-2020>

The DfE have also provided student friendly infographics and a video guide on how grades will be awarded this Summer:

Infographics -

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/887041/6614-4_Infographic_-_Process_for_awarding_GCSEs_AS_and_A_levels_summer_2020.pdf

Video guide - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?reload=9&v=fRTyGmUJlrw&feature=youtu.be>

The guidance can be summarised in the following quote:

'Centre assessed grades (school) grades submitted to exam boards must 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'.

Below is the guidance I sent to Year 11 and Year 13 students in April:

Why is this system deemed (by the DfE) to be an appropriate way of deciding student examination grades?

- Teachers know their students well and schools are able to assess grades with a high degree of accuracy.
- The grades centres submitted to the exam boards are agreed by the centre following an internal quality assurance process and are not the sole responsibility of any individual teacher.
- The standardisation model (checking system that quality assures results from different schools) developed by Ofqual and the awarding organisations is statistical and may not reflect the grades submitted by the centre.
- The standardisation process applied by the exam boards ensures grades awarded this year are consistent with those awarded to other cohorts in other years.
- This was the fairest possible approach available under extreme circumstances. It is a rigorous process which means that grades awarded this year are as valid as in any other year.
- This will allow pupils to progress to the next stage of their lives in the normal way.

What information was the school expected to provide?

For every GCSE, AS and A level subject, exam boards required our school to submit the following information:

- A centre assessment grade for each student – this was the school's judgement about the grade that each student was most likely to have achieved if they had sat their exams. This judgement is reached from evidence held within school. We used several pieces of work you have done. For example - essays, assessments, report grades, mock exams, coursework already completed and which has been reviewed by subject teachers and relevant heads of department. **This grade is not just a current grade, target grade or UCAS grade.**

How did school produce these grades?

- Your performance in key components of the course, including for example report grades, classwork, homework, book work, coursework completed, mock exams and/or participation in performances in subjects such as Music, Drama and PE.
- Performance on any non-exam assessment or coursework (NEA), even if this was not fully completed.
- Grades should obviously make sense in terms of your tier of entry in a subject (higher or foundation) - this is only in subjects that have a tier of entry.
- The grades you were given by your teachers were then checked by various other members of staff in school.

Can my grade be changed?

Once your grades were given to the exam boards, they will then be checked in various ways. This may lead to the grade that you are given by the school being changed. The reason for any grades being changed will be so that the grades given to students in the country this year are similar to previous years. The government want to make sure you are not treated more strictly or kindly than previous year groups.

What if I am unhappy with the grade I am given?

You will have the chance to appeal against the grade given to you in the Summer. Details on how this will be available from staff on results day. If you appeal or even if you don't appeal then you will be able to sit your GCSE/A-Level exam alongside whatever study you are doing later in the year (when these exams are possible). This is in October and November 2020. Again, further information on the exact dates of these exams will be released by exam boards in due course. If you do sit the exam then both the grade the school gives you and the grade you get in the exam will both stand/count.

When will results be released?

Thursday 13th August – A-Level (Year 13) Results day
 Thursday 20th August – GCSE (Year 11) Results day

Finally...

I would very much like to take this opportunity again to say to all Year 11 and Year 13 students and their families, how sorry we are that this has happened.

All we could control is how hard we worked to ensure that your child is not disadvantaged educationally. I would like to personally reassure you that the grades we submitted to the examinations board were **fair**, checked by multiple staff and will hopefully reflect everything for which your child has worked so hard.

21st July 2020

SAMWORTH
CHURCH
ACADEMY



All of the staff at The Samworth Church Academy would like students to know that we continue to wish them well in whatever they choose to do and that we are very proud of them all. Please be assured the Academy will continue to be there and support your child long after what would have been their usual leaving dates and fully intend to hold our leavers celebrations for Year 11 and Year 13 students as soon as we are able to do so, which they are so deserving of. Further information on these will follow in the new academic year.

All the very best, take care and stay safe.

C. Vallance

Chris Vallance
Strategic Director for Student Experience