

Dear Students, Parents and Carers,

Ofqual has today published [guidance](#) setting out details about how GCSEs, AS and A levels will be awarded this summer and published further [guidance](#) for teachers, students, parents and carers. In addition, they have published a message specifically for students which we have attached to this communication. This seeks to provide reassurance that Ofqual is working closely with the exam boards to do everything it can to make sure that, as far as possible, grades are fair and that students are not disadvantaged in their progress to sixth form, college, university, apprenticeships, training or work because of these unprecedented conditions.

Whilst we would encourage you to read the guidance for students and parents/carers, the main points are summarised below for your convenience and placed into context of Ilkley Grammar School.

Exam boards will be contacting schools and other exam centres after Easter asking them to submit, by a deadline that will be no earlier than 29 May 2020, the following:

- a **centre assessment grade** for every student in each of their subjects: that is, the grade students would be most likely to have achieved if they had sat their exams and completed any non-exam assessment. Teachers are expected to balance different sources of evidence such as classwork, bookwork and any participation in performances in subjects such as music, drama or PE; any non-exam assessment (NEA) – whether or not complete; the results of any assignments or mock exams; previous examination results – for example, for any re-sitting students or those with relevant AS qualifications; and any other records of student performance over the course of study.
- the **rank order** of students within each grade for each subject – for example, for all those students with a centre assessment grade of 5 in GCSE maths, a rank order where 1 is the most secure/highest attaining student, and so on. This information will then be used in the standardisation process as outlined below.
- a declaration from the Head of Centre making the submission.

To make sure that grades are as fair as possible, the centre assessment grade submitted by the school will be put through a national standardisation process. Details of this process are still to be finalised, but it is expected that the model will consider:

- **expected grade distributions at national level**
- **results in previous years at individual centre level**

At Ilkley Grammar School our results are consistently and significantly above national averages for both attainment and progress. In 2019, for example, our GCSE results were well above average and in the top 10% of the country and our A-Level results were above average and in the top 20%. We have a long history of students making excellent progress. This will therefore be taken into account in this process.

- **the prior attainment profile of students at centre level**

This means that a student's *individual* performance in their SATs at Key Stage 2 or GCSE performance at A-Level won't be considered, however, they will look at the profile of the year group and look at how similar year groups from our school have performed in the past. Our current year 11 statistically have a very similar profile to last year's year 11, so it is not unreasonable to assume that our current year 11, on average, would perform at least as well as last year's cohort.

**Please note, all schools and colleges have been told that they must not share their centre assessment grades with students, parents or carers, under any circumstances.** This is to protect the integrity of the centre assessment grades, and to avoid teachers feeling under any pressure to submit a grade that is not supported by the evidence. In addition, as mentioned previously, the grade submitted by the school is only one element of the final result and thus the two grades could be different.

The Department for Education had previously said that they hoped that the final results would be published by the end of July. This date may stand, although it is possible that the results will now be released in August, at a date no later than they were originally due to be released.

Details of the appeals process are still to be confirmed and published. However, we know that students will be able to sit an exam in each subject at the earliest reasonable opportunity at the start of the new academic year, or in summer 2021, if they feel that their final results from the summer do not reflect their ability. If they choose to do this, both grades will stand: the result from summer 2020 and the new result based on assessment by exam.

The information published today refers specifically to GCSEs, AS and A Level, the Extended Project and the Advanced Extension Award in Maths. Information regarding BTECs and other technical or applied qualifications is still to be confirmed. Ofqual have reassured us that they are working quickly to develop an approach for these qualifications and will provide further information as soon as possible.

We fully appreciate that this continues to be a really challenging time for you all. However, please be assured that our staff will do their very best to work within the published framework to ensure that the centre assessment grades are fair, consistent and accurately reflect the grade each student would have been most likely to get if they had taken their exam(s) in a subject and completed any non-exam assessment this summer. Please note, all teachers across the country will be making judgements on the balance of all the evidence they have available and students will not be penalised if they have not been able to complete any non-exam assessments after schools have closed.

We will continue to keep you updated as more information is released.

Kindest regards,

Carly Purnell

Deputy Headteacher