



RESPECT
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Cardinal Heenan Catholic High School

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Ms K. Smyth Headteacher

JR/KS

12th July 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

As the academic year draws to an end, I would just like to write to you to explain the rigorous process that the school has undertaken to ensure that your son receives the grades at GCSE or A level for which the evidence that he has produced, warrants. Whilst they have been called Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGs) or Centre Assessed Grades (CAGs) in different parts of the media, please rest assured that throughout, the school has only used evidence of your son's performance with regards to the use of formative and summative assessment data.

In order to eliminate any form of bias, all of the final assessments and some of the previous ones, were blind marked. This meant that students did not put their name on the front of an examination paper but were identified by a student number. Only after these papers had been marked within each subject area and the scores collated, were students identified. We felt that this was the fairest and most equitable system for all students in eliminating any bias, whether positive or negative, towards any individual student.

At the beginning of this academic year, we did not have any definitive guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) as to whether the summer examination series would run this year. However, in assemblies to Year 11 and Year 13 students back in September, I clearly informed them of the need to ensure that they take full advantage of every assessment point, as these results may need to be used to inform CAGs. As a school, we also ran a virtual Information Evening for Year 11 parents in September, in which I again spoke about the process that the school had undertaken in 2020 to award CAGs. I reiterated that I did not know if this would be used this year but if they were, then students were actually in a better position than the previous year as they had been forewarned of the possibility, whereas the previous cohort did not have this knowledge as the pandemic broke during their examination year. As soon as we were made aware from the DfE that grades would be awarded by centres, we continually spoke to students and reinforced the message about the importance of revising and preparing fully for any assessment points.

We were asked to produce a centre policy which we had to submit to the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) so that they were aware of, and able to approve, the systems that we had put into place.

Overleaf, I have attached the rigorous and robust timeline which the school used in order to produce these grades. There were many quality assurance measures in place both within school and from other schools and external providers, including two Ofsted inspectors, who further confirmed the accuracy of the processes. I have also included the evidence indicators that each subject has used and the weightings attached to each indicator in order to give you as much detail as possible as to how grades were awarded.



Having submitted all the grades before or on the deadline set, we were then asked to provide evidence by the examination boards for particular pupils, in specified subjects, to once again quality assure all the measures that had been put into place. We responded to these requests on the very same day.

I do hope that you appreciate the enormous efforts that have been made by many teachers across the school who have marked additional work, which ordinarily would have been marked by examination board examiners, in order to ensure that your son receives the grades which his efforts warrant.

Finally, I would like to thank you for your continued support of your son and the school in this particularly tough year. I appreciate that this has been a difficult process for all parties but I do hope that with the aforementioned guidance, you will put your trust in our process and that you will receive your son's grade in the knowledge of how robust our systems have been in producing them.

Important Dates:

A level results Day: Tuesday 10th August 2021

GCSE results Day: Thursday 12th August 2021

On both of these days we will have staff available to support and advise you and your son.

Yours sincerely

K. Smyth

Ms K Smyth
Headteacher

Stage	Description	Staff	Deadline
Stage 1: Evidence Indicators	Decide the information to be used as Evidence Indicators for creating an overall Qualification Score for each qualification and student in Year 11 and Year 13, ensuring in line with EI Checklist and CAG policy, completing updated EI template	Head of Subject, qualification teachers, Leadership Link	Friday 16 April
Stage 2: Evidence Indicators Proforma DPAM	DPAM meeting to QA the Evidence Indicators and weightings for individual qualifications. VG to then produce online spreadsheet for each qualification for collating scores	Head of Centre, Leadership Link, Head of Subject, Exams Officer, SIP	Friday 30 April
Stage 2a: Evidence Indicators Governors' meetings	C&A Governors meeting departments to show Evidence Indicators and weightings for all subjects	Head of Centre, Leadership, C&A Governors	Thursday, 17th June
Stage 3: Deciding Qualification Scores	Add Qualification Scores to online spreadsheet, excluding last assessment	Head of Subject, qualification teachers	Friday 7 May
Stage 4a: Subjects QA Qualification Scores	In line with CAG policy, subjects QA the scores inputted for each evidence indicator, for each pupil, making adjustments where necessary	Head of Subject, qualification teachers	Window: Monday 10 May to Friday 14 May
Stage 4b: External QA Qualification Scores	In line with CAG policy, subjects, links and external verifiers QA the scores inputted for each evidence indicator, for each pupil, making adjustments where necessary.	Head of Subject, Leadership link, external verifier	Monday 17 May or Monday 24 May (INSET day TBC)
Stage 5: Quality Assurance of Qualification Scores (Head of Subject and Leadership Link)	Head of Subject and Leadership Link QA the completed Qualification Scores spreadsheet (looking for data entry errors and expected amendments to have	Head of Subject, Leadership Link	Window: Monday 17 May to Friday 28 May

	been made as a consequence of outcomes of QA stages 4a and 4b). This also includes QA of the final assessments		
Stage 6: Entering Predicted Grades	Predicted grades and rankings entered into Qualification Scores spreadsheet	Head of Subject, qualification teachers, Leadership Link	Window: Monday 17 May to Tuesday 8 June
Stage 7: Special Consideration	Analysis of predicted grades of students with Special Consideration	Head of Centre, SEND Lead, Data Manager, Heads of Subject, qualification teachers	Wednesday 9 June
Stage 8a: Comparing Grades Historically and Nationally	Outcome data compared with historical data and expected outcomes considering starting points	SLT, Leadership Link, Head of Subject	Window: Monday 17 May to Wednesday 9 June
Stage 8b: Adjusting Grades Based on Historical and/or National Data	Where national and historical data suggests predicted outcomes may be inaccurate	Head of Centre, Head of Subject, Leadership Link, Data Manager	Window: Monday 17 May to Thursday 10 June
Stage 9: Presentation of Process and Outcomes to Governors	Ensuring governors understand process and outcomes	Head of Centre, other relevant staff	Thursday 17 June
Stage 10: External final submission of grades	Final grades submitted to relevant exam boards	Head of Centre, Exams Officer	Window: Monday 14 June to Friday 18 June