



22nd August 2020

Dear Parents, guardians and carers

I am writing in response to your concern about your / your son / daughter's GCSE / A level grades.

As you know, this year's GCSE and A level results had to be awarded differently from usual, after exams were unable to go ahead due to Covid-19. Schools and colleges were asked to use their professional experience to make a fair and objective judgement of the grades they believed a student would have achieved had they sat their exams this year, based on work that the student had already done, then to submit these centre-assessed grades (CAGs) to the relevant exam board.

Groups of teachers and leaders in each subject worked together to discuss and agree CAGs for each student. They took into account a wide range of available evidence, including class work, mock exams and other records of student performance.

Schools and colleges were also asked to make sure that, unless there had been major changes in their school or college this year, the CAGs they submitted were broadly in line with the institution's previous results in a subject. This is because, although there can be some variation from one year to another, data shows that this is normally quite small.

At Joseph Leckie Academy, we closely followed Ofqual's guidance on determining CAGs, as we were required to do. You can see this guidance, on our Academy website. Please refer to the guidance document "How Examinations Grades were calculated".

The intention was that the exam boards would moderate the submitted CAGs, to check that schools and colleges had approached this task consistently, before providing students with their final calculated grades. Unfortunately, as you will no doubt be aware, the method they used to do this proved problematic, and was likely to lead to many grades being unfairly downgraded.

The government therefore made the decision that GCSE and A level students and subsequently Vocational qualifications would be awarded whichever was higher for each subject – their CAG or their calculated grade. This is what the grades students received are based on.

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Vocational results will be available next week and we will send any amendments to students via their email address.

The late decision to change to a different method, while necessary in the circumstances, is also far from perfect. While most students will have received grades which accurately reflect their performance and enable them to move on to their next stage of education or employment, some will be disappointed, and may feel they have not been fairly treated.

The grounds on which students can appeal their grades are fairly limited this year. The appeals process is on our website along with the Ofqual document "Student Guide to appeals, malpractice and administration complaints". These documents explain the grounds for appeal, and the process that would be followed. Essentially, students are only able to appeal, through the Academy, if you believe there has been an administrative error in communicating their grades.

If you believe your son/daughter's grades were wrong as a result of bias, discrimination, malpractice or maladministration, you are able to raise a complaint with the Academy directly by completing the Appeals form and stating what the grounds are, or with the exam board. The Ofqual guidance explains the process for doing this.

Finally, the government has said that there will also be an opportunity for your son/daughter to sit exams in November. This information is also on our website and you can contact us via the examinations email address to state what subject(s) your child wishes to sit and we will be in touch with you early in September.

I hope this has helped to explain in more detail the process used to determine students' grades this year. Please don't hesitate to let us know via the exams email address if you'd like to discuss this further.

Yours sincerely

Rachel Cook
Acting Principal