

04.08.2020

Dear parent/carer

I am writing on a range of matters today regarding the grades that will be awarded to both Year 11 and Year 13 students this summer. The DfE and Ofqual have sent some additional information since schools commenced their summer break. There is rather a lot to report and I hope this does not create an unwelcome interruption in your summer holiday. On balance, I feel it is better to keep you fully informed as a form of assurance. I hope this is the right call.

### **GCSEs, AS and A levels: what's happening now?**

Now that the deadline has passed for us to submit our centre assessment grades and rank order information, exam boards are working to standardise grades to ensure consistency of judgements between different schools and colleges, using the statistical standardisation model Ofqual has developed with them. The model provides the critical tool they will use to maintain standards, both between centres and over time. They have extensively tested different approaches and have selected the one, which gives students the fairest and most accurate results possible. Parents and students can be reassured that at a national level Ofqual expect results to be broadly in line with those in previous years. This will mean this year's results will be in line with previous years results in order to ensure that there is no undermining of the currency of the qualifications for progression.

Due to the speed at which these arrangements had to be put in place, centres were not given an opportunity to develop a common approach to grading. Therefore, it is to be expected that all centres will see some adjustments to their centre assessment grades to bring them into line with other schools and colleges; and a substantial number of students will have at least one grade that has been adjusted as a result of standardisation.

Any adjustments made as a result of standardisation will be precisely determined by exam boards for each subject in each school and college and will be based on evidence. Such adjustments mean universities, colleges and employers can be confident this year's results carry the same currency and the students can compete fairly for opportunities with students from previous and future years.

Ofqual have published a short film and factsheet which give full details about the statistical model used so that schools, students and their parents or carers, can understand how GCSE, and A level grades will be standardised this summer. It is important that the arrangements this year are fully transparent.

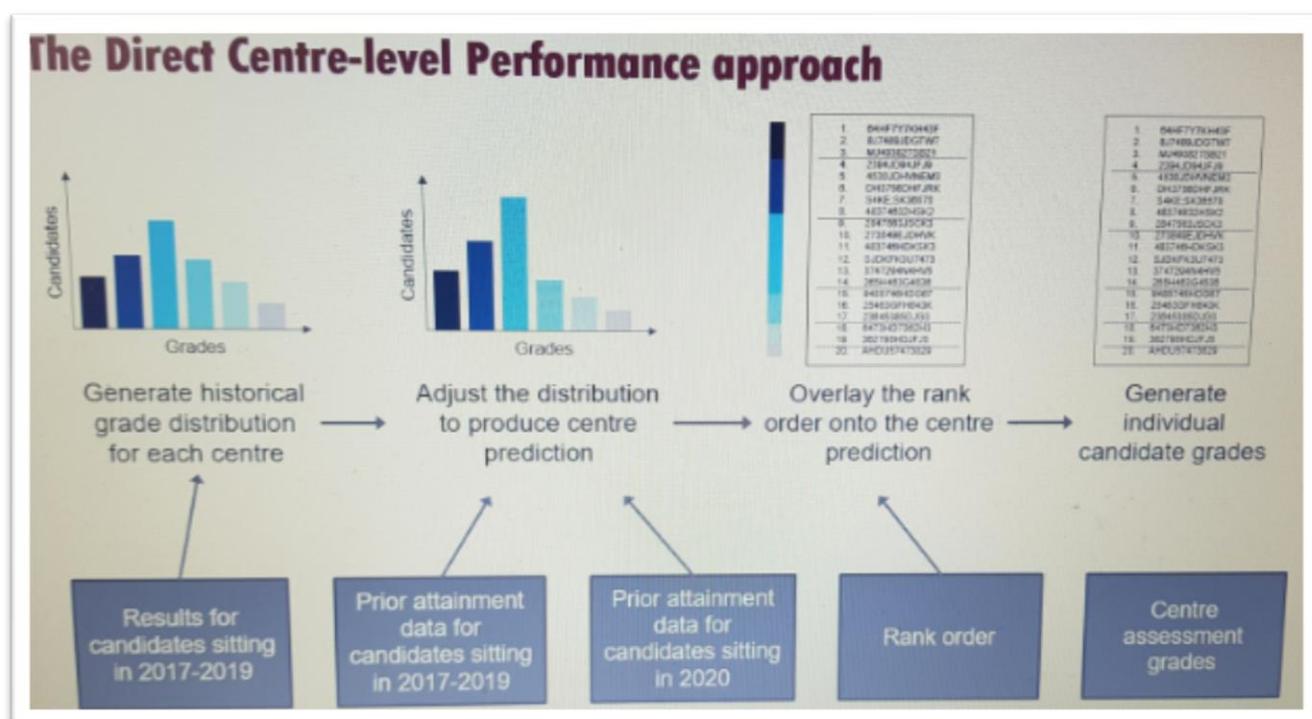
Sally Collier, Chief Regulator, stated recently that the majority of students will get the same grade as the Centre Assessed Grade (CAG), and almost all students will get either the same grade or within one grade of

the CAG. She also said that the statistical model that Ofqual is using has been extensively tested to ensure that as far as possible students are not advantaged or disadvantaged based on their socio-economic background.

Ofqual tested several models. The Direct Centre-level Performance (DCP) Approach was chosen by Ofqual. The DCP approach uses the following data:

- Results for candidates sitting in 2017-19
- Prior attainments for candidates sitting in 2017-2019
- Prior attainment for candidates sitting in 2020
- Rank order
- Centre assessment grades (CAGs)

An explanation of the statistical model that Ofqual will use is summarised in the graphic below:



For transparency, Ofqual will publish the precise details of the model used on results days to stop some centres trying to work out their results before they are released nationally and so that all students get their results at the same time. The links below sets out the approach Ofqual will use:

[Go to Ofqual Guidance](#)

[Go to Ofqual Video](#)

## **Results Days**

At Copleston, we very much believe that this year's results days of **13 August for A level** and **20 August for GCSE** remain events to be celebrated. However, the collection of results needs to be administered in a way that is both in line with Government Covid 19 advice, as well as keeping our students and staff safe.

In complying with the current advice, **all results** will be prepared in an electronic format and released via student's school email addresses on both A Level and GCSE Results Days. The email will contain a PDF copy of the Statement of Results, as well as a PDF copy of the results with a Copleston school header. Also included will be an explanation of the results and how to interpret them.

## **Appeals**

Copleston may appeal to the exam board if we believe there has been an error in how the process has been applied to any student's grades. Ofqual expect that any mistakes will be quickly found and corrected. Copleston is not allowed to share the Centre Assessed grades prior to the release of the results. This is because the final grades for some or all students in a school could be different from those submitted and it also helps to manage students' expectations. After results are issued, and subject to data protection and any other relevant legal considerations, we may provide this information following subject access requests from students.

## **Autumn exams**

Ofqual have confirmed that exam boards will offer the full suite of GCSE, and A level exams this autumn, for any student unable to receive a calculated grade or who would like an opportunity to improve their result.

JCQ have confirmed the following timetable for exams:

- A level exams start on Monday 5 October and finish on Friday 23 October (entry deadline 4 September)
- GCSE exams start on Monday 2 November and finish on Monday 23 November (entry deadline for all subjects except English and maths 18 September; entry deadline for English and maths 4 October)

For vocational and technical qualifications, students who would like to improve their grade or have not received a result may wish to consider taking an assessment at the next available assessment opportunity. The relevant awarding organisation will be able to advise on when the next assessment opportunity will be.

## **Progression – centres with post-16 provision**

Copleston will consider the challenging circumstances Year 11 students have found themselves in this year and will build in an appropriate level of flexibility when considering the suitability of a student for a Sixth Form course.

The DfE has produced two new information pages on choices for young people after both GCSE's and A Levels. Below are the links to these pages:

[Go to Post 16 Information Page](#)

[Go to Post 18 Information Page](#)

## **Resources**

We appreciate that students, parents and carers may have questions about the arrangements for awarding results this summer. Ofqual have published a range of resources on their website, including a Student Guide, e-posters and postcards. You can find these resources through the link below

[Go to Government Guidance](#)

[Go to Ofqual Student Guide](#)

If students, parents or carers, want more information on what their next steps may be once they have received their results, they can contact the National Careers Service Exam Results Helpline on 0800 100 900 and speak to a professionally qualified careers adviser. Ofqual also have a range of information available on their website if you would like more details about the arrangements for awarding qualifications this summer.

With my very best wishes

Mr AB Green (Principal)