

Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2021

Dear Student

**RE: Awarding student grades Summer 2021**

I am hoping that you are now feeling confident in the approach that we are using to determine your grades this summer. You will be fully involved in the assessment stage, and I hope that this is not becoming too stressful. I thought it would be useful to provide a short update and some links to guidance documents that you may find of interest. I have also included some answers to frequently asked questions that you or your peers have been asking.

**Centre Policy**

All schools are required to create a Centre Policy. Once completed, this is submitted to the Joint Council for Qualifications, JCQ. The [CCS Centre Policy](#) is available on our school website. The Centre Policy outlines the high-level approach to awarding grades this summer. It includes:

- An outline of the roles and responsibilities of individuals in the centre.
- Details of the training and support provided for less experienced teachers and training around objectivity and decision making.
- A description of the process that will be adopted to determine Teacher Assessed Grades.
- An outline of the internal quality assurance process in place.
- Confirmation of the arrangements for special consideration.

Please be aware that the JCQ have produced a Frequently Asked Questions document that is available on the [JCQ website](#). It would be sensible for you to read this guidance.

In addition, Ofqual released on the 10<sup>th</sup> of May a '[student guide to awarding summer 2021](#)'.

The following are some of the **frequently asked questions and answers**:

**When will I know what evidence is going to be used?**

Your teachers will speak to you in class about this and you should already have a clear idea of the evidence that we will be using. Nearer to the submission date, which is the 18<sup>th</sup> of June, we will confirm in writing the evidence that will be used.

**What if I have requested Special Consideration?**

It is important to realise that special consideration is very different this year to a normal exam year. JCQ have confirmed that, **'because the range of evidence is flexible and can be tailored to an individual student according to coverage of the specification..., instances of special consideration should be limited.'** They have also said that special consideration cannot be applied, **'due to lost teaching and learning'**. The short overview of the special consideration process produced by JCQ is available on our school [TAG webpage](#).

**Secondary:** 01604 669200 **Primary:** 01604 669210 **Website:** [www.ccs.northants.sch.uk](http://www.ccs.northants.sch.uk)

**Principal:** David James **Vice Principals:** Andrew Fisher Katherine Patterson Gary Wakefield

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**The Wooldale Centre for Learning, Wootton Fields, Northampton NN4 6TP**

If you are concerned that when you completed an assessment there were extenuating circumstances which affected your performance, you should inform Mrs Mann (exams manager). Possible actions that could be taken:

**Possible actions to be taken (depending on varying factors):**

- The teacher could select an alternative piece of work completed by the student where he/she was unaffected by adverse circumstances.
- The teacher could apply less weighting to the piece of evidence affected by the extenuating circumstances. E.g., a teacher could use other assessments / evidence that reflect your true ability.
- An assessment could be rescheduled, or an alternative venue agreed.

An example of an extenuating circumstance **could** be:

- A student who is suffering from anxiety and experiences a panic attack at the **time of the assessment.**
- A student who did not receive the required access arrangement at the **time of the assessment.**
- A student who faced **additional** disruption to their learning as a result of COVID-19, **in comparison** to their class peers.
- A student where temporary illness, bereavement, might have temporarily affected their performance.

If you have applied for special consideration, Mrs Man will inform you of the outcome and what, if anything, you need to do next.

**Will my class performance be ranked?**

It is important to realise that this is a different situation to last year. In 2020, teachers were asked to predict the potential of a student's performance in deciding the overall grade. This year your teachers have been asked to assign an overall grade based on the evidence that you produce; your teacher will refer to:

- grade descriptors which provide general statements
- exam board exemplar material
- exam board mark schemes

There is no cap on the number of grades that can be achieved. We are basing your performance on the evidence that you produce, and this will not be affected by the performance of others in your class / cohort.

When we are completing internal quality assurance, we may rank student performance; this will be used as an internal check to make sure grades are in line with performance.

### **Will my predicted grades or UCAS grades be used as evidence?**

No. It is important to realise that predicted and UCAS grades are based on your potential. They were produced to identify the grade that you may have achieved had you taken an exam.

### **What if I didn't do as well as I hoped in my PPEs?**

Your teachers are being asked to decide a holistic grade based on all your evidence. Shortcomings in some aspects of your evidence may be balanced by better performance in others. Your grade will not be based on one piece of evidence.

### **What is the appeal process?**

The JCQ document [Guidance for Students and Parents](#) contains detailed information on the appeals process.

The guidance suggests that to help you decide whether to appeal you can request that we share the following information on results day - if not before:

- The Centre Policy.
- The sources of evidence used to determine your grade, along with any grades/marks associated with them.
- Details of any special circumstances that have been considered in determining your grade, e.g., access arrangements, mitigating circumstances such as illness.

We will provide an update on how we will share this information with you.

**It is important to remember that your grade can go down, up or stay the same through either stage of the appeals process.**

### **What is the October / November exam series?**

There will be an opportunity for students to sit any exam that they were entered for in the summer of 2021. Exams would be in their usual form and number for each exam. Non-Exam Assessments (NEAs) will not be completed. Grades will be determined based on performance in the exam only.

I realise that the last two years have been extremely difficult. I remain convinced that the process this year is a fair one and that you will receive the grade that reflects the work you have completed.

I hope and look forward to being able to celebrate the end of this process at your prom.

Best wishes



Mr G Wakefield

Vice Principal

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