



14th June 2021

Dear students, parents and carers,

GCSE grades – summer 2021

I am writing to outline the next steps for the GCSE grading process. We are now in a position where students have sat all the required assessments to give our staff the evidence they need to make a judgment on the grades students will receive. This week, in line with our Centre Policy and the JCQ guidance, we will be undertaking our Internal Quality Assurance processes, rigorously ensuring that the grades have been fully checked, moderated, discussed and agreed before we submit them to the exam boards on the 18th June. This process will be validated by the exam boards, who will be reviewing and our processes and evidence, as they will for all schools nationally, on the week beginning 21st June, to ensure that you can have the utmost confidence that the grades you will receive in August 2021 are as fair and robust as they can possibly be.

The date for GCSE Results day will be **12th August 2021**. Given current uncertainty around what will and will not be permitted in terms of distancing and logistics on the day, I do not yet have the full details for how this day will run. As soon as this is clear, I will write to you again to outline how Results Day will work, so that we can share in your successes and help provide guidance for your next steps. Alongside Results Day, the JCQ released last week the details of how the Appeals Process will work this summer. Whilst we believe that the grades we will be submitting are as fair and robust as they can be, we will fully support the Appeals Process to allow all involved to have the confidence that the grade they have received is the grade they have earned and deserve. Our Appeals Procedure and the JCQ guidance will be sent to you later in the term alongside the details of how Results Day will work.

In order to ensure you have confidence in the grades you will receive, our intention is to be as transparent as possible about how we have reached our judgments. In light of this, before we submit the grades, we are sharing with you a number of elements of our grading process today, with a view to allowing you to see exactly what we intend to use as evidence for the grades. I have attached to this letter an outline of all the evidence that has been used for each subject.

In line with the JCQ guidance, we are aware of a small number of students, who, for specific extenuating medical or personal circumstances, were majorly affected in terms of their learning throughout their GCSE course, or were majorly affected during the sitting of the assessments which are being used as evidence for their grades. These students have and will be contacted by us over the coming week to explain how this will be managed. However, we want to provide the opportunity for all students to highlight to us any severe circumstances, such as long standing medical issues that they believe we may need to consider as part of our judgments. As such, the below form will allow students to flag to us anything they feel we need to consider or discuss further as part of our judgments (please note, in line with JCQ guidance, the periods of remote education and the impact of learning from COVID are not reasons for special consideration, unless a student was severely more affected by comparison to their peers – we have already taken the circumstances of COVID and remote education into our judgments of what has been assessed and used as evidence). This form will also allow students to know the marks they have achieved on the assessments that will be used to inform their grades, although I must be clear that this is just raw marks and no indicator can be given of how this links to any grades. The form can be found at:

<https://forms.office.com/r/PNP7R7kZEK>



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Whilst under JCQ guidance, we do not need to do this at this point in time, we feel it important to give students the opportunity to know the evidence used and crucially to flag anything they think is important to our judgments before we submit the grades, so that everything is as transparent and clear as possible to all involved, rather than concerns being raised on Results Day when the grades have been issued. In light of this, can I please ask that all requests through the form are completed by **12pm Wednesday 16th June**, as any after this date may not be addressed prior to the grades being submitted to the exam boards.

The process for GCSE grades this year has been especially challenging for all involved. I want to thank the students again for their hard work and resilience. I'm sure you will also join me in acknowledging the hard work of our staff, who have worked tirelessly to ensure that students have been given as fair and rigorous an opportunity as possible to achieve what they deserve. Please can I remind you that all requests and concerns need to be directed towards Mr Downes, Mr Conant and the exams team via exams@sydneyrussellschool.com, rather than communicating with teachers or Heads of Department directly, who will simply refer you to the exams team.

Yours faithfully,

Janis Davies

Principal