



Educating with care to succeed

PB/CH/00190
19 July 2021

Dear Parents/Guardians

Year 11 GCSE Information

As we approach the end of the academic year, I would like to take the opportunity to inform you about the arrangements for GCSE results day, on Thursday 12 August 2021 as well as to summarise the process that has taken place for awarding grades for GCSE and other qualifications this year.

How did we form our judgements?

Following the announcement by the Education Secretary Gavin Williamson to cancel the GCSE examinations in summer 2021, we have taken the following steps:

- We have followed JCQ and Ofqual guidance to form our policy for the awarding of grades. Please see the academy website for more information about this.
- Subject teams have undertaken extensive training to ensure a thorough understanding of assessment criteria and successful implementation of the policy.
- Each department produced an assessment plan in order to assess students across the range of content taught and assessment objectives. Departments were given the opportunity to assess students in a number of ways including coursework (where applicable), exams and in-class assessments. Students were informed about these and were made aware that these contributed to final outcomes.
- Accurate records and all assessments have been kept by teachers and subject leaders to document the process undertaken. These have been checked by senior leaders prior to submission of the grades.
- All assessments were moderated and standardised by department teams to ensure consistent and accurate judgements. This included the 'blind marking' of March examinations, where teachers were unaware of the names of the students they were marking papers for.
- Departments have had marking checked and moderated by schools in the Midsomer Norton Schools Partnership.
- We have worked with examination boards on marking, standardisation and sourcing of assessment materials.
- GCSE grade boundaries from previous exams series, examination board assessment criteria and JCQ grade descriptors were used by teachers to inform final judgements.
- All grades submitted were scrutinised by our senior leadership team and checked to ensure that grades were consistent with the evidence base.

We have also worked with the following parties to ensure our policies and procedures were correct. This included:

- Policy approval by the Board of Directors in advance of its implementation.
- Checking of our policy and its approval was undertaken by JCQ.
- Submission of students' marked assessments, examination papers and other supporting evidence to AQA for external checking to ensure our judgements were consistent with other centres nationally.
- Submission of student grades to the Fischer Family Trust to check performance against students nationally and previous cohorts.

We are confident and want to reassure you that the policy and process outlined above has ensured that students will receive a fair grade for each subject, based on a range of evidence that constitutes an accurate demonstration of the level each candidate was working at.

GCSE Results Day - Thursday 12 August 2021

Students will be able to collect their results from 9:00am to 10:30am on Thursday 12 August 2021. All students should enter the site via the front gates by the sports centre, from where they will be directed to the relevant collection point. Members of staff will be available to answer any questions or concerns on the day. We ask that students follow Government guidance on social distancing to avoid becoming a close contact.

If for whatever reason, a student is unable to collect their results in person, we ask that they contact the Exams Officer, Mrs Teare (steare@bucklersmeadacademy.com) to request the results be sent electronically to a nominated email account.

Appeals

JCQ guidelines clearly stipulate that we are not allowed to share final grades with students until results day. It is also important to note that final grades may have changed from the student reports issued in the autumn and spring. To avoid disappointment we advise against making any assumptions on final grades based on reports published earlier in the year.

JCQ and Ofqual have set out the conditions and process for appeals if a student has a concern about a grade received. It is important to note that students or parents cannot submit an appeal because they do not like or disagree with the result. Students can only appeal on the following grounds:

- The awarding organisation or centre made an administrative error in relation to the result.
- There is evidence the centre did not follow its procedure properly or consistently in arriving at the result.
- There is evidence that the centre made an unreasonable exercise of academic judgement in the choice of evidence from which to determine the grade and/or the determination of that grade from the evidence.

Full guidance on the appeals process and actions required will be available on the academy website. We advise all persons concerned to read all of the documents and policies before making an appeal enquiry. It is also important that you are aware of the possible outcomes of an appeal. These are as follows:

- Your original grade is **lowered**, so your final grade will be lower than the original grade you received.
- Your original grade is **confirmed**, so there is no change to your grade.
- Your original grade is **raised**, so your final grade will be higher than the original grade you received.

The deadline for the submission of appeals is Friday 3 September 2021. Appeal enquiries should be directed to our Exams Officer (steare@bucklersmeadacademy.com).

I hope that this letter provides you with some clarification of the grading process and subsequent arrangements. If you have any further questions or queries, please visit the website or make contact via the main reception.

We look forward to seeing all students in Year 11 on results day.

Yours faithfully



Mr P Balkwill
Acting Deputy Headteacher