



The Crossley Heath School

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Further Guidance for Students and Parents the Awarding of Grades in 2021

20th May 2021

Dear Parent / Carer

As you will be aware, Y11 and Y13 students have been sitting a series of Spring and Summer Assessments with the exception of Art & Design students who will not sit assessments but have until 26th May to finish their portfolio of work.

The work which students have provided in these assessments is being considered along with other assessment evidence by departments and I would like to provide you with further details of how the process for awarding grades will work this year.

In accordance with Ofqual and JCQ guidance the school has written a detailed Centre Policy which sets out how our processes. A copy of the policy is available on our website in the Y11 and Y13 section.

How grades will be calculated at Crossley Heath

In line with Ofqual guidance, Crossley Heath will be basing grades on a range of evidence. This will include work undertaken as part of the course and any NEA (coursework) which has been completed, as well as information from the Spring and Summer Assessments. Once all the evidence is selected and assessments are complete, teachers will decide on an overall grade. All of the selected evidence will be assessed against national standards and will go through a multi-stage quality assurance process within school. This work has already begun with teachers from across the school undertaking training and moderation exercises on our recent INSET day. In line with our policy, further quality assurance checks will be undertaken at a departmental and whole school level.

In addition to our own internal quality assurance checks the school will also be subject to measures put in place by the exam boards to ensure fairness across schools.

Before submitting our grades to the exam boards the school will write to students / parents detailing for each qualification which pieces of assessed work which have been considered as part of the grading process. This means that when students receive results in the summer, they will know upon which evidence their grade was based. Please note that in advance of results day teachers will not be able to tell students the grade they have submitted to the exam board.

Reasonable adjustments, access arrangements and special consideration

As part of our assessment processes the school will have put in place exam access arrangements for students requiring reasonable adjustments. Where there were any issues with reasonable adjustments, teachers will take that into account when determining student grades.

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Due to the cancellation of national exams and the way grades are being awarded this year special consideration requests will not apply in the usual way. Any student / parent who thinks that performance in an assessment has been affected by illness or personal circumstances, should talk to the school about this as soon as possible. If you have already informed us, there is no need to do so again. It is important that you raise any such instances before the school submits grades in the week commencing 14th June.

I would like to remind you that other than for the special consideration mentioned above, students and parents should refrain from making any further representations to the school regarding assessment or the awarding of grades. We must remind you that given staff's role in determining grades this year, schools must follow strict guidelines and students and parents should not contact their teachers to discuss the assessment process or grades. Exam boards have been clear that students/parents should not seek to influence school processes in any way as this could be regarded as malpractice.

Receiving GCSE and A level grades

- A Level students will receive their results on **Tuesday 10 August 2021**.
- GCSE students will receive their results on **Thursday 12 August 2021**.

The details on when and where students will collect results will be dependent on the prevailing restrictions and national guidelines. The school will write to you later this term to confirm the arrangements for results days.

Appeals

Although everyone will be working hard to make sure students are issued with the correct grades on results day, there will also be an appeals system as a safety net to fix any genuine errors that were not identified earlier on.

If students believe an error has been made in determining the grade, they will have a right to appeal.

There are two stages to the appeals process:

Stage 1: centre review

If students think they have not been issued with the correct grade, an appeal can be made to the school, who will review whether they:

- made an administrative error, e.g. they submitted an incorrect grade; they used an incorrect assessment mark when determining the grade.
- did not apply a procedure correctly, e.g. they did not follow their Centre Policy, did not undertake internal quality assurance, did not take account of access arrangements or mitigating circumstances, such as illness.

To help students decide whether to appeal, they can request that the school shares with them the following information on results day if not before:

- their Centre Policy (already available on our website)
- the sources of evidence used to determine the grade along with any grades/marks associated with them
- details of any special circumstances that have been taken into account in determining the grade, e.g. access arrangements, mitigating circumstances such as illness

Stage 2: appeal to the exam board

If students still don't think they have the correct grade after the centre review is complete, they can ask the school to appeal to the exam board, who will review whether

- the school or college made an unreasonable exercise of academic judgement in the choice of evidence from which they determined your grade and/or in the determination of your grade from that evidence. A reasonable judgement is one that is supported by evidence. An exercise of judgement will not be unreasonable simply because a student considers that an alternative grade should have been awarded, even if the student puts forward supporting evidence. There may be a difference of opinion without there being an unreasonable exercise of judgement. The reviewer will not remark individual assessments to make fine judgements but will take a holistic approach based on the overall evidence.
- the school did not apply a procedure correctly, e.g. they did not follow their Centre Policy, did not undertake internal quality assurance, did not take account of access arrangements or mitigating circumstances, such as illness.
- the exam board made an administrative error, e.g. they changed a grade during processing.

At both stages of the process students will need to submit the appeal to the school and give them written consent to conduct the appeal or submit it to the exam board. **It is important to remember that grades can go down, up or stay the same through either stage of the process.**

If students have a place at university that is dependent on the appeal, they should tell the university so they can decide how to handle your offer. Students should also tell the school so we can ask the exam board to prioritise the appeal.

The timelines for priority and non-priority appeals will be as follows:

10 August to 7 September: priority appeals window

- 10 August to 16 August: student requests centre review
- 10 August to 20 August: centre conducts centre review
- 11 August to 23 August: centre submits appeal to exam board

10 August to end October: majority of non-priority appeals take place

- 10 August to 3 September: student requests centre review
- 10 August to 10 September: centre conducts centre review
- 11 August to 17 September: centre submits appeal to exam board

Finally, if students believe the exam board made a procedural error in handling the appeal, students can apply to Ofqual's Exam Procedures Review Service to review the process undertaken by the exam board.

I hope the above information is useful to you and gives further reassurance that the school's policy and process for awarding grades this year will be open and fair.

Yours faithfully

Jonathan Brownlie

Deputy Head, Achievement