

Re: Awarding of Grades 2021 for Core Maths, GCSE Maths and GCSE English Language

Dear Y12 Parents

We are writing to inform you of the process by which your child will receive their final grades this summer.

Last year's process for the award of Centre Assessed Grades (CAGs) required teachers to project the 'most likely' grades a student would achieve had the disruption of the first lockdown not occurred. Invariably this meant we could look at a student's trajectory before the pandemic and predict possible improvement. This year however, teachers have to generate their Teacher Assessed Grade (TAG) based on concrete evidence generated by the student during the duration of the course. This means that a student must have shown performance at the grade being awarded in at least part of an assessment during their studies to be awarded the grade overall. The deadline for the UTC to submit final Teacher Assessed Grades is by 18 June 2021.

It is not all bad news. As way of compensation, exam boards have accepted that students will be able to be awarded a grade from evidence relating to less than 100% of the full course content and as of March no new content needed to have been studied. Additionally, it needs to be remembered that in non-Covid years students would effectively have no grade until the summer result was officially published, but under these current circumstances students have a strong indication of their minimum grade from Progress Tracker 3 even before they complete the rest of the year and the closing assessments. The extra evidence collated after PT3 should only improve the grade a student will be awarded.

A document we think parents should be aware of is published from the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) document [Guidance for students, parents and guardians: GCSEs and AS/A Levels in England Summer 2021](#) (published here www.jcq.org.uk/summer-2021-arrangements/). In response to this document and the subsequent accompanying guidance for schools we have created our own policy document relating to this process that we would invite you to read to understand the rigour by which any judgement this year will be made. (available on the UTC website)

To summarise this briefly, we will be creating a portfolio of evidence for each student for each subject. This could be evidence from trial exams, coursework, classwork, work completed during online learning or our final closing assessments. Students will then sign a declaration stating that the work contained is their own work and they will also be asked to sign a document for all subjects to say they understand the process by which their marks will be awarded this year. This folder will then be subject to a process of internal moderation to validate the marking and double check any final grade we may award. These folders of evidence will be stored should we receive notification of an external moderation of our results so we can confidently assure students and parents that our grades will be fair and robust.

Students have already had an assembly with the Associate Principal to explain the process and subject teachers will be addressing any possible concerns in class.

The policy document process highlights that the UTC assessment grades will have been defined and standardised by multiple members of staff and a range of external partners. The responsibility for the submitted grade does not rest with any individual teacher. A summary of this process is detailed below:

- Subject teachers will collate evidence from a range of sources as detailed above. All grades will be based on the evidence available.
- All grades will be checked to ensure marking is accurate by at least one subject teacher and in collaboration with the Curriculum Director.
- The Curriculum Director will then collate all grades from teachers in their department.
- Grades will be added to our school data analysis system to allow us to view whole-school performance. If any subjects appear to be doing much better or worse than expected staff will then be given the opportunity to check grades again and ensure everyone submitted is fair and accurate.
- All the grades will then be checked by the Trust Data Analyst and SLT. Performance will also be analysed by the Baker Dearing Trust (BDT) who oversee UTCs nationally and, also, through Fischer family Trust (FFT) who offer a national data analysis service.
- Grades will then be submitted to the exam board portal.
- Curriculum Directors will check all grades again to ensure there are no clerical errors.
- Every single grade will then be checked and approved by the Associate Principal before being submitted to the exam board.
- Exam boards will then put all Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGs) through their own external standardisation process. Exam boards may then contact the UTC to ask us to provide the evidence used to generate student's grades. This process may result in the UTCs data being moderated and the grades awarded being different to those submitted.
- Exam boards then award grades in the normal way with results days taking place on Tuesday 10 August (A level / Level 3) and Thursday 12 August (GCSE / Level 2)

Can we remind you that we are looking to award the most positive and realistic grade based on the evidence we have accumulated. Please can we again urge all parents and students to refrain from asking staff for a direct grade regarding this, as we have received a directive from the Department for Education not to reveal our final submitted Teacher Assessed Grades. Trying to overtly influence a grade with a teacher is also defined as examination malpractice and should be reported to awarding organisations. We hope all communication we have now provided is informative and helps to mitigate some of the uncertainty associated with this process.

The government have outlined an appeal process for parents and students where results appear inaccurate. We would only expect an appeal from parents and students whereby a clerical error is believed to have occurred or, the final TAG is lower than either the Closing Assessment Grade or the grade awarded for Progress Tracker 3. Please see the following table:

	Final Predicted Grade/ Result from PT3 – April 2021	Closing Assessment Grade/ Result – May 2021	Teacher Assessed Grade/ Result – August 2021	Appeal Needed?
Student A	5	5	5	No – This shows a consistent pattern between work marked before and during closing assessments
Student B	4	5	5	No -This is fair based on Closing Assessment Grade Performance
Student C	5	4	5	No - This is a fair grade based on Progress Tracker Grade performance
Student D	4	4	5	No - This might also happen. As students continued to produce evidence after PT3 was issued
Student E	5	5	4	Yes - This appears unfair as one or both of the grades prior to results days were higher

If you have any further questions about the process, please do not hesitate to get in touch and we will do our best to clarify any concerns you may have.

Please stay safe and well,

Mr L Kirkwood
Associate Principal