

Note: August 2020: This guidance was originally sent out to parents in July and is being resent along with our appeals guidance for reference only. Many aspects of the information in this guide have since been superseded by national events.

Exam Results 2020 – A guide for Students and Parents

Exam Results before 2020

Usually, Year 11 and Year 13 students sit the full range of public examinations during the summer term. These exams are assessed by the exam boards and results are issued in August. If a student feels there has been a mistake with the GCSE grade they have been awarded, they can ask for their paper to be remarked. This facility is not available this year as there are no exam scripts to review. All GCSE and A Level grades across the country have been calculated in the same way for every student in every subject and cannot be reviewed in the same way as usual.

Exam Results in 2020

Strict guidelines were given to each Exam Centre telling them how to identify a centre assessed grade (CAG) for every exam entry. This guidance came from Ofqual and can be found by clicking the link here:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/890811/Summer_2020_grades_for_GCSE_AS_A_level_guidance_for_teachers_students_parents_09062020.pdf

These CAGs were put into a rank order for each subject and submitted to the exam boards who followed a standardising procedure across all schools and colleges in the country to arrive at a final grade for each exam entry.

Why is there a difference this year?

The Secretary of State for Education announced on 18 March 2020 that all exams due to take place in the summer of 2020 would be cancelled. This was part of the response to the pandemic by the Government to help fight the spread of COVID-19. The Secretary of State explained that results would be issued to students based on a range of evidence of their progress and achievement in each subject. This school-based assessment is routinely completed in school so the Government decided that schools were best placed to judge the likely performance of their own students at the end of the course. Our record of making accurate predictions for achievement at the end of the course is excellent, and our teachers' assessments are rigorous, moderated and highly accurate with many of our staff acting as examiners for exam boards to ensure they have an accurate understanding of the standards required, so we are confident that the CAGs and the rank order are accurate.

How were the results calculated?

All schools and colleges were asked to use their professional experience to make a fair and objective assessment of the grade they believed students would have achieved had they sat their exams this year. Schools and colleges were advised to take into account the full range of evidence available from the course so far to help with this judgement including homework assignments, classroom assessments and Pre-Public Examinations (PPEs). Only work completed before the school became dispersed was considered in this judgement.

Schools and colleges were also asked to provide a rank order of students within each grade in a subject. This rank order is provided to enable exam boards to complete a detailed statistical standardisation between centres.

All subjects completed these tasks and went through a rigorous internal moderation process to ensure the results were standardised and fitted with the pattern of proven professional practice in assessment and prediction of results, and the achievement of students in examinations over the past few years.

Senior staff worked with heads of department on this to check that we were happy that our grades and rank order were as accurate as possible before they confirmed them as the final centre assessed grades. The Headteacher, Mr Rouse then signed a declaration that the centre assessed grades and rank order were a true representation of our students' performance as a school and submitted them to the exam boards.

AQA, one of the Exam boards has produced a video to explain the process which applies to GCSE, AS and A levels Extended Project Qualifications and Advanced Extension Awards in Maths. A similar process has been followed for all other qualifications such as BTEC. The link below will take you to a video produced by AQA for teachers explaining how calculated grades are produced:

<https://youtu.be/e-8qW2MOCSE>

How do we know our Centre Assessed Grades (CAGs) are fair between different exam centres?

To make sure that grades are fair between all centres (all schools and colleges), exam boards have put all centre assessed grades through a process of standardisation using a model developed with Ofqual.

The standardisation model uses results from previous years for each centre, the prior attainment of those students at KS2 or GCSE and the expected grade distribution for the subject that had already been calculated nationally. If the standardisation process shows that a centre has been too generous or more severe than others, exam boards will adjust the grades for some or all of those students. This means that the final grade that students receive may be different from the CAGs that schools and colleges submitted.

Why can't I know the Centre Assessed Grade now?

Schools and colleges are not allowed to share CAGs or rank orders with students or parents. This is to protect the integrity of the process and to ensure staff are never under pressure to submit a grade that is not supported by the evidence. Any school or college suspected of releasing this information will be investigated for exam malpractice.

What will happen on A Level Results Day on Thursday 13th August and GCSE Results Day on Thursday 20th August?

Year 13 – Thursday 13th August

The college will be open at 9:00am, pupils will be allowed onsite between 9:00am and 10:30am to collect their results. Members of the Sixth Form Leadership Team will be on hand to offer advice and support, including advice for university clearing should students need it.

Year 11 – Thursday 20th August

The college will be open at 9:30am with pupils invited at an allocated slot during the morning to collect their results. Further correspondence will be sent to confirm these details. Members of the Senior Leadership Team will be on hand to offer advice and support.

Those pupils that do not collect their results will have their results sent out in the post; they will be sent to pupils' most recent address.

Grades will have the same status as results in all other years with universities, colleges and employers, and will be reported in the same way as previous years on results slips on the day and certificates in the Autumn term.

What if I don't think the grade is accurate?

Ofqual and the exam boards undertook to do everything possible to ensure grades awarded this year are as fair as possible for all students. So, they have decided that individual student appeals to exam boards will not be permitted because it would not be in the best interests of all students – there is no one better placed to provide an accurate assessment than your teacher, and if one appeal is allowed it would have a knock on effect that would be unmanageable nationally.

Therefore, the Centre Assessed Grades and the Rank order can neither be revealed to you nor appealed against by you. The only grounds for an individual student to appeal would be if they had evidence of bias or discrimination. If this applies, the student should raise it with Mr Rouse (see below).

However, appeals can be made by the centre if staff believe that there has been an error in submitting the information or if the centre believes that the exam board has made a mistake. The centre can also appeal if there is reliable evidence that there is a significant demographic difference between this year's cohort of students and the historical results Ofqual will have used for the statistical standardisation. Staff will review the results carefully when they arrive to look for any anomalies.

Finally, if a student feels that their grades from the summer do not reflect their ability, they will have the opportunity to take their exams in the autumn series or the following summer. If they choose to do this they will be able to use the higher of the two grades for future progression.

What happens if there is an appeal?

If there are grounds for an appeal, the following procedure should be followed. Students and staff have 7 days from the release of A-Level results on the 13th August and GCSE results on the 20th August to write a letter to the Headteacher detailing the subject, grade and reason for the appeal stated in points 1, 2, and 3 below. It will not be possible to investigate appeals made after the 27th August.

Staff will review the results as soon as they arrive and identify any unexpected issues, raising queries with the exam boards as appropriate. In exceptional circumstances a student may have a query that has not been dealt with by the guidelines above. If your question is about one of the following 3 points please follow the steps shown:

1. A Mistake in the Upload of Data: An appeal can be allowed where a centre believes there has been an error in submitting the grade information. We feel a mistake is unlikely as all grades have been checked by the Classroom Teacher, Head of Department, Senior Line Manager, Assistant Head in charge of Outcomes and finally the Headteacher. However, if there is an appeal submitted due to an alleged administrative error, two senior leaders will investigate, including the line manager of that department. They will be given access to grade and rank information by the Assistant Head in charge of outcomes. They will review the data to ensure that the information given to the exam board was correct. They will write to the student to inform them of the outcome. If a mistake has been made the awarding body will be informed of this mistake and a possible change of grade may take place.
2. A Mistake by the Exam Board. If the centre (St Anne's) believes an exam board have made a mistake they will contact the relevant exam board to ask for the grade awarded to be investigated. Staff will write to students with the outcome of the result of the investigation.
3. A student has evidence of Bias or Discrimination. If a student has evidence of bias or discrimination they should bring it to the attention of the Headteacher in writing as soon as possible. This would be investigated by two senior leaders at St Anne's. The senior staff will write to the student after the investigation has taken place.

What happens next?

Appeals this year provide few chances of a change in grade, therefore we recommend that if you are unhappy with a grade then the best course of action is to re-sit the subject again in the Autumn series of exams that are being set up (further information will follow at a later date). However, if you can go onto college or apprenticeship with the grades you have been awarded, then we advise you to continue with your next stage of study and move on to your next step.

Grades will have the same status as results in all other years with universities, colleges and employers, and will be reported in the same way as previous years on results slips on the day and certificates in the Autumn term.

We hope you will be pleased with your results and will be able to move forward with confidence and the sense of achievement you deserve. Don't forget, all students studying for exams this year are in exactly the same position as you, starting their next challenge having had the same frustrating experience at the end of their courses.

Please keep in touch and let us know how you are doing as you move on to new challenges - we will all enjoy hearing about your successes.

L. Bourne

Miss L M Bourne
Executive Headteacher

J. Rouse

Mr J Rouse
Headteacher