

30<sup>th</sup> June 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

## **Re: GCSE grades this summer**

This year's GCSE results have had to be awarded differently from usual, after exams were unable to go ahead due to Covid-19. Schools were asked to use their professional experience to make a fair and objective judgement of the grades based on work and assessments that students have done in school, then to submit these teacher-assessed grades (TAGs) to the relevant exam board.

## **How were my child's grades arrived at this year?**

Grades this summer will be based on Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGs). TAGs were submitted to the exam boards by us as a holistic assessment of students' performance in a subject, following a rigorous process of assessment, moderation, and quality assurance. These grades were then approved by the relevant exam board, following external quality assurance checks. You can read our school approach to this process, which has been approved by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) as well as details for each individual subject via our school website:

[www.stratfordschoolacademy.com/pupils/our-assessment-approach-for-awarding-grades-2021](http://www.stratfordschoolacademy.com/pupils/our-assessment-approach-for-awarding-grades-2021)

## **When can results be collected from school?**

We will be open from 8.30am – 1pm on 12<sup>th</sup> August and from 9.30 – 1pm on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> August.

Key staff who will be available include our Exams Officer, Mr Karbhari, our Careers Lead Mr Bland, a Careers Advisor from the provider 15billion and members of the Senior Leadership Team.

## **What can I / my child do now to be prepared for receiving their results**

The top priority is to ensure that your child has made applications to at least two sixth forms or colleges and that at least one of these requires grades that they are certain of obtaining. A good way of thinking about this is having a 'plan A' – if they get the best possible grades (looking at their target grades and most recent predictions will help with this) and a 'plan B' (which requires lower grades) in case they did not perform quite as well as they hoped in certain assessments. Students should avoid putting all of their eggs in one basket as post-16 providers may not offer a place even if a student is just below their entrance requirements. And as everything is more uncertain this year it

is much better to have plans in place in advance rather than having to react to results on the day. **We would advise students to pick up their results at the earliest opportunity on 12<sup>th</sup> August and contact their chosen college or sixth form immediately.**

The school is in the process of contacting all Year 11s to check that they have these plans in place and offer support with applications if they need it. **Therefore, no-one should be collecting their results without at least two plans in place.**

### **What can I do if I am not happy with my child's grade?**

We would advise you to speak to a member of staff on results day if you are considering appealing as the process is very different to a normal exam year. Details of how to appeal can be found via our school website: [www.stratfordschoolacademy.com/pupils/our-assessment-approach-for-awarding-grades-2021](http://www.stratfordschoolacademy.com/pupils/our-assessment-approach-for-awarding-grades-2021), however it is important to note:

- Grounds for appeal are limited and very specific
- Grades may go down as well as stay the same or go up on appeal
- Because of the way grades have been assessed this year, independent reviewers will **not** remark work, instead they will look to see if any teacher acting reasonably could have arrived at the same grade. In essence this means the bar for re-grading is higher than usual.
- The process may take some time, so there is no guarantee of receiving the outcome of an appeal in time to secure a place at a particular post-16 provider

### **And finally**

We know our Year 11s have worked really hard over the last two very challenging years. Teachers have also put in a lot of extra work to ensure they have been fairly assessed and therefore receive the grades they deserve. We look forward to them collecting their results, congratulating them and sending them off on the next stage of their educational journeys as great ambassadors for SSA.

Best wishes



Craig Hewitt  
Headteacher