



Great Marlow School

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Dear student,

I hope that you are well and that you have been coping with the restrictions of the lockdown procedure and the uncertainty that you may have had regarding your GCSE qualifications.

We are rapidly coming to the point in the school calendar when you should have been taking your final GCSE examinations. As a result, I thought it would be a good opportunity to give you an update about what we have been working on at GMS in terms of your Centre Assessed Grades, encourage you to prepare for the next academic year and let you know about what Miss Tuddenham has planned as a replacement for you final leavers' assembly.

Your Centre-Assessed Grades (CAGs) are the grades that, in teachers' professional judgement, are 'the most likely grades a student would have achieved if exams had gone ahead'.

GMS staff have taken the decisions about these grades extremely seriously. We know how hard students have worked and how important these results are to them and we want to get it right. The CAGs have been based on a range of evidence of student performance over the course of study. Any access arrangement or special consideration that a student would have been entitled to has been taken into account.

We have worked hard to make the process fair, rigorous and objective, with no single teacher deciding grades for a subject. Grades (and rank order within each grade) have been scrutinised by middle and senior leaders as well as by an external non-profit organisation, the Fischer Family Trust, which supports schools in analysing performance data. After a half-term of work determining the CAGs, we finally submitted those for GCSE and A Level by last Friday and the vocational grades will be submitted by this Friday. We are forbidden to share these CAGs with parents or students.

The second stage of the process is the statistical standardisation of the CAGs by the exam boards, overseen by Ofqual. Standardisation will consider the expected national distribution of results as well as historical evidence of centre performance, given the prior attainment of our students. CAGs may be altered by exam boards during standardisation, although the rank order of students within each subject will not be changed. The grades resulting from this process are known as Calculated Grades / Results. It is these that will be issued to students on:

Thursday August 13th: A / AS Level and Level 3 Vocational

Thursday August 20th: GCSE

We are awaiting the outcome of an Ofqual consultation about the options that will be available to any student who feels strongly that a Calculated Result does not show their true ability in a subject. We hope there will be few students in this

position. One possible suggestion is that the student could elect to sit exams relevant to that subject in the autumn term, but we will have a clearer picture when the consultation decisions are published.

By the time that you re-start your studies in the 6th Form at Great Marlow School in September, there is a potential that you may not have completed any academic studies for over six months. It is, therefore, extremely important that you take some responsibility for your learning before you begin your A level or BTEC studies and conduct some independent study. At the start of the last half-term, you were provided with a transition booklet: **Year 11 into Year 12 Independent Study and Research Projects**. To be a successful A level student, you need to take ownership of your learning, have good research skills, be motivated, be effective at independent study and to work consistently over an extended period-of-time. I think that the use of the **Independent Study and Research Projects** booklet and completing some independent work between now and September would benefit you hugely once you enrol for your A level and BTEC subjects. The planning of the enrolment procedure for the 6th Form at GMS has yet to be fully completed, but we will keep you updated via the school website and email communication in the over the coming weeks.

Finally, Miss Tuddenham is organising a virtual final assembly for year 11 students. The assembly will take place as a Teams Live event and will run from 11am on Friday 26th June. You will receive an invitation to this event via email next week, Miss Tuddenham is very much looking forward to speaking to you all.

I wish you the best of luck with your GCSE grades and look forward to welcoming you to the 6th Form at Great Marlow School in September.

Yours faithfully,

Mr O.Hollyman
Assistant Headteacher