

July 2021

Dear Parent / Carer,

I hope you are well and that you are looking forward to the summer break. I am just getting in contact regarding Teacher Assessed Grading for Year 11 students.

Results day for GCSE students will be on Thursday 12th August. In light of the pandemic, students will be able to access their results electronically through INSIGHT. Please note as the results belong to the student, it is the student who has to log in to INSIGHT. If students have forgotten their log in details please let school know **before** results day ([admin@lhs.aspireplus.org.uk](mailto:admin@lhs.aspireplus.org.uk)) so we can assist you with this. The results will be released at 8:30am.

If you are unable to access the results electronically you will be able to come into school to collect a paper copy of the results between **10:00 and 12:00**. Please note that **only the student and one parent** will be able to enter the school building. A Positive Steps advisor will be available to contact if you need any advice or support on post 16 options. Senior Leaders will also be available in school between 10:00 and 12:00 if you want to discuss the results or post 16 options.

The Positive Steps Careers Service will be available following the release of results on the 12th August to provide independent career advice by contacting our school advisor Steph Senior via email: [stephsenior@positive-steps.org.uk](mailto:stephsenior@positive-steps.org.uk) or by calling: 07717 299 841.

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

Grades this summer are 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.

In some cases, the TAGs we submitted may have been reviewed by the exam board, who may have asked us to submit an alternative grade. However, any changes to the grades we submitted were done by professional teachers or reviewers; this year no grades have been changed as a result of an algorithm.

The grades awarded to students will carry the same value as grades awarded in other years and on the results documents and certificates, grades will be reported in the same way.

### **What do I do if I'm not happy with my / my child's grade?**

All students have the opportunity to appeal their grade if they meet the eligibility criteria (see below). It is important to note that an appeal may result in a grade being lowered, staying the same, or going up. So if a student puts in an appeal and their grade is lowered, they will receive the lower mark.

There is also the option to resit GCSEs in the autumn, which may be preferable to some students. The design, content and assessment of these papers will be the same as in a normal year.

### **What are the grounds for appeal?**

There are five main grounds for appeal, as dictated by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ). They are:

- You think we have made an administrative error: an example of this would be putting the wrong information into a spreadsheet.
- You think we have made a procedural error: this means we haven't properly followed our own process, as approved by the exam board. An example of this would be where you've been told you should have received extra time for assessments but this wasn't given in a certain subject.
- You think the academic judgement on the selection of evidence was unreasonable: you think the evidence used to grade you was not reasonable.
- You think the academic judgement on the grade you were given was unreasonable.

### **What does 'unreasonable' mean?**

'Unreasonable' is a technical term in this context and means that no educational professional acting reasonably could have selected the same evidence or come up with the same grade.

This means that just because other forms of evidence may have been equally valid to use, the selection of evidence is not unreasonable. Because of the flexibility of the approach this year, every school and college will have used different forms of evidence.

It also means that the independent reviewers will not remark or grade students' evidence. Instead, they will look to see whether any teacher acting reasonably could have arrived at the same grade.

### **What will be the outcome of an appeal?**

At either stage of the appeals process (see 'What are the two stages of an appeal?' below), a student's grade may go down, stay the same, or go up. When placing an appeal the student will have to sign a declaration saying that they accept the fact their grade may go down and they may get a lower grade than their original TAG.

### **What's a priority appeal?**

Priority appeals are only open to A level students starting university this autumn, who have missed out on the conditions of their firm or insurance offer.

JCQ cannot offer priority appeals for GCSE students, unfortunately.

### **What should I do before appealing?**

Students must read the JCQ Student and Parent guide before appealing, which will be available on the JCQ website by results days.

We may not be able to offer as much advice and guidance on the likely success of an appeal this summer as we would in normal years, as we have already moderated and quality assured all the grades ourselves.

### **What are the two stages of an appeal?**

All appeals, on any of the grounds above, must first go through a centre review. At this stage, we will check for any administrative errors, and check that our policies and procedures were followed correctly. Our policy has already been approved by the exam boards, so we are only ensuring that we followed this properly.

The outcome of the centre review will be communicated to students when made.

At the centre review stage, if we find that a grade should go up or down, we will ask the exam board to change it. They will then consider this request.

Following the outcome of a centre review, students may still choose to pursue an awarding organisation appeal. They must fill the relevant section of the JCQ form (available on our website) which we will then send on their behalf to the exam boards. Students and parents cannot send appeals directly to the exam board themselves – it must come from us.

The outcome of the awarding organisation appeal will be communicated to students when it is released to school.

### **How do I make an appeal?**

Following results days, students should fill in the first section of the JCQ form (available on our website) and send it to [examsresults@lhs.aspireplus.org.uk](mailto:examsresults@lhs.aspireplus.org.uk).

### **What are the deadlines for non-priority appeals?**

Non-priority appeals are any A levels, GCSEs or vocational qualifications, where a firm or insurance university place is not pending.

The deadline for submitting request for a a centre review is 1st September; and the deadline for submitting an awarding organisation appeal is 10th September.

Appeals received after these dates may still be considered.

### **You know my / my child's grades. Why can't you tell us?**

We are forbidden from disclosing the Teacher Assessed Grades to any third party, including students and parents, until results days. Any teacher or member of staff who does this is committing exam malpractice.

Although students may have been given marks or grades on single pieces of evidence, we cannot disclose the final submitted TAG.

During the external quality assurance process taking place in June or July, our submitted TAGs may be moved up or down (although this will always be done through human agency, not by an algorithm).

Any students wanting to be entered for resit examinations in autumn 2021 will need inform us of this by 3:00pm on Friday 11th September. This request would need to be sent through to [examsresults@lhs.aspireplus.org.uk](mailto:examsresults@lhs.aspireplus.org.uk). If a student did not achieve a grade 4 or higher in English or math's, students will be entered for these GCSE examinations by their post 16 provider.

The local colleges will be contacting students with enrolment invites over the summer period. It is important that students arrive on time for these appointments; if there are any issues with the time and date of appointments, please contact the admissions team at the appropriate college as soon as possible so alternative arrangements can be made.

Thank you for your ongoing support and please get in touch if you have any questions or queries.

Kind regards



Miss Ayre

Deputy Headteacher