



# Haslingden High School and Sixth Form

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Dear Parents/Carers of students in Year 11

I write further to my letter on 3 April 2020. Having carefully read through all the guidance provided by Ofqual in relation to awarding GCSE (and A-level grades) I feel that the methodology they have decided to employ is probably the best and fairest way of trying to resolve this unprecedented issue. Clearly this is not perfect, however, the process of students sitting GCSE examinations (these have been designed to be more 'unpredictable') and those examinations being marked fairly and consistently, has meant that there is always a degree of uncertainty and unpredictability in students being awarded GCSE results. As such, there are never any guarantees about GCSE grades that are awarded through the usual exam processes.

It has been made very clear to headteachers that schools must ensure there is a robust, moderated process, as the grades submitted **'must reflect a fair, reasonable and carefully considered judgement of the most likely grade a student would have achieved if they had sat their exams this summer and completed any non-exam assessment.'** It has been made equally clear that each school's submission will be reviewed individually to check that these grades are 'fair and reasonable' given the prior attainment of the year group as a whole and the past performance of the school. If this is not deemed to be the case, grades will be adjusted by the moderators to ensure that the national results reflect those of previous years. Whilst this may sound worrying, it is essential to ensure the integrity of the exam system and the credibility of the grades awarded in 2020. If this did not happen, it would disadvantage students who would genuinely have achieved the grade awarded and would be equally unfair on students who sat their exams previously and will do so in the future. I have no doubt that our school will undertake this process with honesty, diligence and professionalism, ensuring that 'fairness' for all students is at the heart of it.

Under the circumstances, the normal arrangements for reviews of marking and appeals will not apply. Ofqual are working on proposals for appeals, but they are likely to be narrow and based on how the process was applied, rather than simply a student not being happy with the grade awarded. Ofqual has stated there will be resit opportunities in the autumn term for those students who wish to try and improve on the grade they have been awarded.

The vast majority of subjects have completed all units of work for Year 11 but where they haven't, colleagues will make this work available. This only applies to a small number of subjects as most had completed the specification prior to the school closure on 20 March. It is important that students complete this if they feel they may want to re-sit in this subject. In addition each subject area will then set 'bridging units' to support students who are transitioning to A-level courses and those students will be expected to complete this work in subjects they are considering in the sixth form. We strongly recommend that students complete work in at least five subjects to ensure that this reflects the four subjects they will eventually choose to study. The ability to work independently is a vital ingredient for success in the sixth form and this will provide a real opportunity to develop these skills. These bridging units will be available on our school website from Monday 4 May.

Best wishes

Mark Jackson  
Headteacher

*'Achievement for All'*