

Coronavirus: Public Exam Grades – the JCoSS system for 2020

Principles:

- I. We will operate a fair, rigorous and robust system to determine the most likely grades and rank order for students. It will combine a solid basis in evidence with mature professional judgment.
- II. This is an opportunity to demonstrate the trustworthiness and integrity of the profession. Done well, it could yield huge benefits for student assessment and school accountability in the future.
- III. This is not an opportunity to right the wrongs of the public exam system or address the inequalities of society, even though we know there are many of both.
- IV. We endorse the guidance from ASCL given [here](#)
- V. **The grades generated by the school process must not under any circumstance be shared with students or parents.** Doing so will undermine the integrity of the process and risk huge confusion and anxiety.
- VI. We will treat final grades awarded by exam boards in the same way as normal public exam grades

Process

1. Class teacher provides a grade for each student, answering the question, “What would this particular student most plausibly have achieved if they were taking the exam?”
 - Grades should be evidence-based, but be as positive as possible given all you believe about the student’s capability.
 - Students peak at different points, often making rapid progress in the last few weeks, or doing better in exams than in anything before...all that needs factoring in.
 - Grades should take account of all SA data, internal/mock exams, coursework, class and home learning and NEAs (if handed in before Friday 20 March and within set deadlines). There is no need to do detailed marking of NEAs but we should be ready for our judgments to be influenced by them
 - Where a student has agreed Exam Access Arrangements (e.g. extra time) as detailed on the Student Support Register and used in mocks, assume these would have been in place - but obviously not any one-to-one support from LSAs.
 - These are not ‘target’, ‘predicted’ or ‘forecast’ grades as normally understood. We need to minimise any inflationary effect, however well-meaning.
 - For GCSE grades should be expressed as a number with a decimal to indicate ranking e.g. 7.0 – scraped a Grade 7; 5.9 – close to a Grade 6; 8.5 – solid Grade 8. The object is to be as fine-tuned as possible to assist with ranking
 - For AL, Technicals and Nationals, they should be expressed as a grade number with a decimal as per the spreadsheet on SIMS – to be clarified
 - Students who had dropped a subject and been withdrawn from an exam when school closed (Friday 20 March) do not require a grade
2. Departments moderate teacher grades and rank all students into a single list (altering grades and decimals as required).
 - There will be tight deadlines for this, to allow quality assurance at Faculty and School level
 - This will be a challenging process whilst remote working. Zoom meetings may be the best way (the school now has a licence for this), as they allow a screen to be shared. It is not possible to share Excel files via MS Teams.
 - There needs to be double and triple checking to ensure no errors are made, in view of the critical importance of this data to students’ futures

3. The School quality assures the process and submit the grades (without decimals) and the rank order as required to Ofqual, exam boards, etc
 - **We will not publish these grades to parents: it is vital that all staff hold to this** or the system will unravel.
4. Exam Boards and Ofqual operate a moderation process to ensure that grades are awarded fairly and consistently. This will take into account:
 - the student's prior attainment at KS2 and KS4, where available
 - the school's record of raw results, added value and accuracy in forecasting grades
 - the national historic distribution of grades in each subject
5. Grades are published to students in July
 - There is talk of an opportunity for students to sit some form of assessment once schools reopen. We **speculate** (but we do not know) this may be:
 - externally set and marked, so as to ensure objectivity
 - aimed at limited numbers so as to be manageable
 - perhaps offered in a small range of subjects (with grades extrapolated from them)?
 - capable of delivering a rapid result – perhaps instantly, like CAT tests, so that opportunities that depend on them are not delayed
 - **JCoSS does not expect teachers to continue teaching exam courses to Y11/13 this academic year.**
 - While we will advise against 'cosmetic' attempts to improve on grades that are already adequate for the next step, we will support students who wish to sit this exam as far as we are able.

JCoSS 6th Form entry process

- We will operate the process for admission to JCoSS 6th form as soon as practicable after GCSE results are published
- The system will operate as usual based on the grades awarded in July.
- We may need more staffing to support and advise those disappointed by their grades, especially if this has to happen online
- Entry criteria for courses will remain in place, as will limits on class sizes and numbers of groups. Priority will go to applicants from JCoSS Year 11 who have met the entry criteria for each course.
- Students who wish to improve on their July grades by taking the autumn exam will be offered conditional places where possible, but limits on class sizes must be respected, and those who have started a course will not be removed from it in order to offer a place to a late entrant.
- As always, if it is possible to run viable extra groups to accommodate additional numbers we will do so, but this cannot be guaranteed

UCAS and Careers process: Class of 2020

- We will run our usual system for supporting students with UCAS entry and any other pathways.
- This will start as soon as practicable following publication of results in July
- We may need more staffing to support and advise those disappointed by their grades, especially if this has to happen online
- We will keep up to speed with developments from UCAS and universities during the summer

UCAS Process: Class of 2021

- We will run internal exams for current Y12 on their return to school, to inform the setting of UCAS predicted grades.
- Elements of the Higher Education Programme missed during the academic year 2019/20 will be made good as far as possible, using videoconferencing as necessary
- The process of writing references and supporting students with personal statements may need to be altered and/or use videoconferencing