



Notre Dame

CATHOLIC SIXTH FORM COLLEGE

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Principal: Justine Barlow

17th August 2020

Dear Student,

I can only imagine how frustrating the last few days have been for you and I hope that you have now managed to progress onto university, apprenticeship or your next stage in your career. If you do not find yourself in this position, please contact Careers at Notre Dame on either 01132946644 or careers@notredamecoll.ac.uk and we will provide you with support.

This letter is to communicate the College release of Centre Assessed Grades to you all.

As you may have seen in the media, evidence is mounting of the systematic failings in how A Level grades have been calculated, and there is mounting pressure to allow Centre Assessed Grades (CAGs) to be counted as official grades. We are led to believe another announcement by the Secretary of State will be made before the end of today.

At the weekend Ofqual published a document which said the Centre Assessed Grades (CAGs) submitted by Centres to exam boards would be allowed to be counted as an official grade, for only hours later this document to be withdrawn!

'The Sixth Form College Association (SFCA) has analysed 65,000 exam entries in 41 A level subjects. Overall, the grades awarded to students this year were lower in all 41 subjects than they were for the average of the previous three years.'

This shows that the statistical model developed by Ofqual, the exams regulator, has failed to meet one of its fundamental objectives "to ensure national results are broadly similar to previous years". Our analysis shows that for sixth form colleges, the model has not only failed to produce "broadly similar" results, but has in fact produced worse results in every single subject.

The SFCA have found that on average, almost a fifth of students (19%) in sixth form colleges have been left with lower grades than they would have received if they had sat their exams in previous years.'

We know that your teachers are best placed to predict the likely grades you would have achieved if you had sat your exams. For information, we followed the Ofqual guidance which asked each teacher to produce a Centre Assessed Grade per student, per subject based upon their professional judgement using the evidence up to March 2020.

The evidence was taken from a range including mock exams, non-exam assessment, homework assignments and any other record of student performance over the course of study. Once these CAGs

were submitted the exam boards, under Ofqual guidance have applied an algorithm in order to create a final grade for students. It is this algorithm which is flawed.

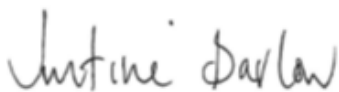
To provide help with progression, we have decided **to release the CAGs through each student's** Cedar with immediate effect. You should be able to see these immediately but there may be a technological delay. At the latest you should be able to see these by 2pm tomorrow Tuesday 18th August

Please note: There is NO Appeals process for Centre Assessed Grades.

Also, Ofqual have not announced how a Centre can appeal for a mock result, we have been informed by the government that details of this will be available this week. Once we know this process we will share this with you.

The College will be offering appointments on Wednesday who want to gain further support. Please keep looking at our website for further updates.

Take care and best wishes

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Justine Barlow".

Mrs J Barlow
PRINCIPAL