



22 July 2021

Dear parent/carer,

I am writing to you with regards to the summer grading, exam malpractice, appeals process and results day for 2021.

Grading 2021

Grades for GCSEs, A-levels, and most other qualifications including applied generals has been based on a process involving teacher assessment against national standards, internal quality assurance, and external quality assurance by the exam boards.

In our school, we have used a range of evidence to reach a holistic judgement for each student. This includes formal mock assessments sat under exam conditions, additional exam board assessment materials sat under high control conditions and where relevant, non-exam assessment (coursework) and practical performance in some subjects.

Where possible (for mock and full exams), your child has been awarded a grade for each piece of evidence. In some cases where it hasn't been possible to grade each piece of evidence, the marks have been converted into a percentage to show you how much of the assessment your child got right or wrong. It is NOT possible to convert this into a grade as not enough of the exam content was covered. All of the evidence will be available for you to view on results day on Go4Schools and has been considered in the overall TAG.

In line with JCQ guidance we have placed different emphasis on different pieces of work depending on the type of assessment that was taken, how much of the course content it covered, the conditions in which the assessment was sat and when the assessment was taken. Therefore, teachers have created a holistic view of our students to award an overall grade.

You can read our Centre Policy detailing the approach we have taken, which has been approved by the exam boards, on the school website:

<https://www.emmanuel.nottingham.sch.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/9/2021/05/The-Nottingham-Emmanuel-School-TAG-Policy.pdf>

Why have there been so many assessments when exams were cancelled?

National exams were cancelled in January, and all schools and colleges had flexibility about how to arrive at a fair and robust grade for each student.

Throughout the early summer term, we have been using exam-style assessments, drawing on the materials provided by exam boards and/or past exam papers, as we think this will produce the most reliable, and therefore fairest, evidence.

My child usually has access arrangements (e.g. extra time) in exams. Have they this year?

If a student is eligible for any sort of access arrangements as part of their SEND provision, this has been made available to them in the assessments we have carried out since returning to school in March.

If a student who is eligible for access arrangements did not have them for a particular assessment that is being used to inform their grade, this has been acknowledged. This has been recorded and responded to by using an alternative piece of evidence, or adjusting the marks for that assessment.

Can we know the grade submitted now?

No, we are legally obliged not to let students or parents know their submitted grade before results day.

The assessments students have done are different from another school or college. How is this fair?

Schools and colleges have been given a lot of flexibility in how they decide a holistic teacher assessed grade this summer. This means that it is likely the assessments will look different across schools and colleges, even ones in the same area. This is because students should only be assessed on what they have been taught, to account for variations in lost learning due to the pandemic. Therefore, the range of evidence will differ between schools and colleges, and even between students within our school or college.

Our approach has been approved by the exam boards; but many different approaches have also been approved. This does not mean one approach is better than the other.

How will I know that my child's performance has been judged fairly?

All of our staff have undergone objectivity and bias training. This is detailed in our Centre Policy, which has been approved by the exam boards. All of the grades have been signed off by two members of staff, including the Head of Department and a member of the Senior Leadership Team, before final signing off by the Head of Centre and then uploaded to the exam boards. The Exam Boards have requested samples of work to ensure that grades are fair and accurate. If you have a concern about bias please contact jsa@emmanuel.nottingham.sch.uk urgently.

What is exam malpractice?

Exam malpractice this year includes students fabricating evidence (e.g. claiming plagiarised work is their own), undue pressure placed on teachers to submit a certain grade by students or parents, as well as teachers fabricating evidence. If malpractice is proven, the exam boards may decide to withhold the qualification altogether. Our approach to authenticating evidence is set out in our Centre Policy.

How can I appeal?

If your child is unhappy with their grade this summer, they will have the opportunity to resit all GCSEs and A-levels in the autumn. Students should speak to the Exams Officer about entering the autumn series by emailing nes-exams@emmanuel.nottingham.sch.uk.

There is also the option to appeal a grade on the following grounds:

- Administrative error – you think the school or college has submitted the wrong grade for you
- Procedural error- you think the school or college did not follow our process correctly
- Error of academic judgement – you do not think the grade submitted reflects a reasonable judgement on either the evidence that was used, or the grade arrived at.

Stage one appeals will be processed as a centre review, and details of how to request a centre review are available before results days on the school website:

<https://www.emmanuel.nottingham.sch.uk/curriculum/assessment-and-revision/>

Following the outcome of the centre review, students can choose to take forward a 'Stage Two' appeal to the exam board(s), which the school will submit on their behalf.

Please note that at any stage of the appeals process a student's grade(s) could go up or down. If the appeal process reveals that the submitted grade was too high, students will **NOT** be able to keep the higher grade, and we will require students to sign a declaration stating that they understand this before they submit an appeal.

For further information about appeals or results in the Autumn, please email the Exams Officer via nes-exams@emmanuel.nottingham.sch.uk.

Results Day

On results day, students will be able to **log in to their GO4Schools account** to see all marks and grades that contributed to determining their final Teacher Assessed Grades. Any queries about Teacher Assessed grades must be sent to nes-exams@emmanuel.nottingham.sch.uk.

All results will be made available on Go4Schools for parents/carers and students from 9am (**10th August for Year 13** and **12th August for Year 11/Year 12 Level 2 students**). Please contact the school before these dates if you have any concerns regarding logging on to Go4Schools **before** results day. Unfortunately we will not be able to help you with technical difficulties on results day as our resources will be directed to supporting students with their results.

Students will also be able to collect their results on the day and have a face-to-face appointment with a member of staff should they need support either in applying for their next steps or in requesting an appeal. School will be open from 8.30am on 10th August, and 9am on 12th August. Collection will be in the Sixth Form study hub for year 13 and the main school hall for Year 11/Year 12 Level 2 students. We will use a one way entrance and exit system. Please follow staff directions and notices on the day. Only one person from each family may come to school to collect results. If your child is unable to attend and wishes to send someone on their behalf, that person must bring proof from the student stating that they have been asked to collect results. This could be a signed note. We would much prefer that students collect their results in person so that we can support them with any queries they may have.

Careers support will be available from specialist careers advisors from Futures on results day. Into University and Sixth Form staff will be available on A Level results day to support students with the Clearing and Adjustment process from 8.30am.

Year 11 enrolment into Nottingham Emmanuel Sixth Form will take place on Thursday 12th and Friday 13th August in the main hall. Once students have collected their results, they can go over to the Sixth Form team that will be based in the main hall to begin the enrolment process. Sixth Form staff will be available to guide and support.

For more information on next steps once students have received their results, they can also contact the National Exam Results Helpline, run by the **National Careers Service**. They can be called on 0800 100 900. Lines are open from 08:00 to 22:00, 7 days a week. Calls are free from landlines and most mobile numbers.

Many thanks for your ongoing support.

Yours faithfully



Jonathan Saunders
Assistant Principal