



Ratcliffe College

Examinations Awarding Grades Policy 2020

GCSE and A level Examinations: Process for Awarding Grades, Summer 2020

Criteria as laid out by Ofqual and Examination Boards for the allocation of grades of external examinations Summer 2020.

Rationale

The GCSE and A level Examinations: Process for Awarding Grades, Summer 2020 is designed to reflect the aims of the College's Mission Statement.

We aim to help students develop their gifts and talents: spiritual and social; intellectual and emotional; aesthetic and physical through the provision of a broad and balanced curriculum, which is responsive to, and supportive of, their needs and aspirations, fosters intellectual curiosity and academic achievement, and motivates them to grow to their full potential. Our Mission Statement is distilled into our Vision Statement, and our aim is to develop our children, pupils and students so that they have *"Strength of Mind, Strength of Values, Strength of Purpose"*.

The College understands the importance of fairness, objectivity and transparency when allocating centre assessed grades and ranking of students.¹

Context

Ofqual have been tasked by the Secretary of State for Education to devise a methodology for allocating GCSE and A Level grades for the summer of 2020. The documents outline the detail of the information Ofqual required from schools and then how this will be used to allocate grades to students. The documents confirm that there will be an appeals process should students be dissatisfied with their allocated grade(s) and that there will still be GCSE and A Level examinations for students who wish to sit them, at the beginning of the next academic year. The rationale for this document is to guide Heads of Department and teachers through the process of allocating centre assessed grades and rankings as requested by Examination Boards for the allocation of final GCSE and A Level grades.

Data requested from Ofqual

"Exam boards will ask exam centres to generate, for each subject, centre assessment grades for their students, and then to rank order the students within each of those grades. Given the current challenging circumstances, Ofqual and the DfE believe that providing these two key pieces of information will enable exam boards to issue the fairest possible results." Ofqual, April 2020.

The School, as the exam centre, will, therefore, provide two pieces of data for each student in each of their subjects. A centre assessed grade and a ranking for that student within the subject.

"A centre assessed grade - the judgement submitted to the exam board by the Head of Centre about the grade that each student is most likely to have achieved if they had sat their exams. This professional judgement is derived from evidence held within the centre and which has been reviewed by subject teachers and relevant heads of department."

¹ For IGCSE, ICT: their documentation refers to centre assessed grades as 'predicted grades'.

"Awarding grades for Cambridge International qualifications in the June 2020 series".

“Centre assessed grades - This should be a holistic professional judgement, balancing the different sources of evidence. Teachers and heads of department will have a good understanding of their students’ performance and how they compare to other students within the department/subject this year, and in previous years. We want heads of department and teachers to consider each student’s performance over the course of study and make a realistic judgement of the grade each student would have been most likely to get if they had taken their exam(s) in a subject and completed any non-exam assessment this summer. This could include U (ungraded).”

“The rank order of students within each grade – for example, for all those students with a grade of 5 in GCSE maths, or a grade B in A level biology, a rank order where 1 is the most secure/highest attaining student, and so on.”

Evidence that Departments should use to award centre assessed grades and Ranking of Students

Ratcliffe College Studies Grades, generated every half-term, are already based on pre-existing data of class work, assessments and tests, prior to school closure.

The guidance states that:

“Teachers should draw on existing records and available evidence (as far as possible in the context of current public health advice). It is important that the judgements are objective, and they should only take account of evidence about student performance. This will include the following, where it is available:

- *Records of each student’s performance over the course of study, including for example progress review data, classwork, bookwork, and/or participation in performances in subjects such as music, drama and PE*
- *Performance on any non-exam assessment (NEA), even if this has not been fully completed. You should not ask students to complete their NEA work and you do not need to submit marks for any completed NEA. But you will need to bear in mind that many students achieve a higher grade on their NEA than in their exams, so you should not base your judgment on NEA alone. You should balance it with your judgement about their likely performance in the written paper(s), where appropriate. In case students decide that they want to enter in a subsequent exam series, you should retain any NEA work completed to date*
- *For re-sitting students, any information about previous grades achieved or NEA marks that would, under normal circumstances, have been carried forward*
- *For A level students who took AS in 2019, their AS results in that subject*
- *Performance on any class or homework assessments and mock exams taken over the course of study*
- *Tier of entry in tiered subjects – centre assessment grades must reflect the tier of entry (9 to 3 for higher tier; 5 to 1 for foundation, as well as U)*

· *Previous results in your centre in this subject – these will vary according to a number of factors, including prior attainment of the students, but our data shows that for most centres any year-on-year variation in results for a given subject is normally quite small*

· *The performance of this year's students compared to those in previous years.*

The College retains significant evidence on all of the above points and will direct Heads of Department to the appropriate information, together with guidance (as within this document and links below) on how this information should be interpreted and used to allocate grades and rank students.

Heads of Department have the above evidence and data available. If they require further support accessing the data, they should contact Sue Clark, Data and SIMS co-ordinator or Dr Stephen Jones, Academic Data Co-ordinator.

SEND

Heads of Department should also take into account students with SEND, referring to the updated register of access arrangements.

'Where disabled students have an agreed reasonable adjustment (for example a reader or scribe), or other students have an agreed access arrangement, the judgement should take account of likely achievement with the reasonable adjustment/access arrangement in place.'

Heads of Department and subject teachers may, where necessary, liaise directly with the SENDCo and relevant staff from the Learning Support Department to discuss students' work and other relevant data in light of the advice. HoDs are reminded that there is a small number of students who were granted special arrangements post-mock examinations or with recent diagnosis of SEND.

Special Consideration

'Special consideration requests, in the event that a student is unable to take an assessment or suffers a traumatic event that might affect their performance, will not apply this summer. Instead judgements should reflect how the students would have performed under ordinary circumstances. Where illness or other personal circumstances might have affected performance in mock exams, centres should bear that in mind when making their judgements.'

Heads of Department and subject teachers will reflect on what the outcomes should have been for students without disruptions to their learning. At all times teachers should use their professional judgement, for example taking into account their performance across the two years, as well as taking into account that some students took mock examinations at other times.

Non Examined Assessment - NEA - Coursework

A number of students in both Year 11 and Year 13 were not able to complete all of their coursework in some subjects before the College closed. Despite this fact, the guidance makes provision for this and the College will ensure that judgements are made on the appropriate evidence available.

'Given the timing of the announcement, we recognise that centres will have incomplete evidence, and that the range and amount of evidence will vary between different subjects. Judgements should be made on the evidence that is available.'

'In some subjects students will have completed, or nearly completed, non-exam assessment. This will be helpful to schools and colleges in deciding each student's grade and rank order. Where there are several subject teachers within a school or college, this work might also be helpful in standardising teachers' approach to determining the rank order and awarding grades. Schools and colleges do not need to ask students to complete any unfinished non-exam assessment work for the purposes of grading.'

Consideration of work completed since school closures.

As you are aware, the College encouraged students to continue working towards their GCSE and A Level courses, following the announcement that there would be no public examinations this summer. The guidance suggests that work produced since the 20th March can be considered in the final analysis but that Schools should *'exercise caution where that evidence suggests a change in performance'* and, therefore, use their professional judgement.

'There is no requirement to set additional mock exams or homework tasks for the purposes of determining a centre assessment grade and no student should be disadvantaged if they are unable to complete any work set after schools were closed. Where additional work has been completed after schools and colleges were closed on 20 March, Heads of Centre should exercise caution where that evidence suggests a change in performance. In many cases this is likely to reflect the circumstances and context in which the work is done.'

Deadlines for the process and when students will know the outcome.

The deadline for schools to enter all the data will *'not be before 29th May.'* Centres will have a window of at least two weeks in which to submit the data. It is currently expected that the examination results will be published before the original scheduled dates (Thursday 13th August for A Levels and 20th August for GCSEs) but the dates of this have not been confirmed yet.

The Examinations Officer will share with all HoDs the appropriate software to input student data. The College is still waiting to be sent information from the Examination Boards how the data is to be uploaded. Before meeting as a department to discuss the centre assessed grades and rankings, HoDs are requested to wait until the Examinations Officer has contacted them regarding how to input the data.

Sharing information regarding ranking and centre assessed grades.

No information can be shared with parents or students. Ofqual stated, *“Centres must not, under any circumstances, share the centre assessment grades nor the rank order of students with students, or their parents/carers or any other individuals outside the centre, before final results have been issued. This is to protect the integrity of teachers’ judgements, and to avoid teachers, heads of department, senior leaders or Heads of Centre being put under pressure by students and parents, to submit a grade that is not supported by the evidence.”*

Teachers and HoDs are therefore asked not to share rankings or centre assessed grades with students, parents or any other parties. The information should only be shared amongst relevant department members, the Assistant Head Academic, Senior Deputy Head and Examinations Officer.

In this instance, the Senior Deputy is acting in the place of the Head of Centre and the information should therefore not be shared with the Headmaster.

Departmental Awarding of Centre Assessed Grades and Ranking.

Ratcliffe College Procedure

The Senior Deputy and Assistant Head Academic will meet with Heads of Department to explain the procedures as outlined in the Examinations Awarding Grades Policy 2020 and answer queries regarding the process (see also Letters in Appendix A – Letter sent to parents in Years 11 and 13; Appendix B – Letter to Year 11 students and Appendix C – Letter to Year 13 students/parents).

Following the initial meetings, the Heads of Departments will be asked to arrange departmental meetings with the relevant members in their departments who were involved in teaching Year 11 students and/or Year 13 students. Each department should have two meetings:

- the first to discuss GCSE grades
- the second to discuss A level grades. (In departments where there are different qualifications such as IGCSE or Level 3 qualifications, there will be addendum notes at the end of this document.)

Exam boards will provide detailed information after Easter about how to submit the data.

Based on all the advice above, relevant Ofqual documentation (see links below) as well as all relevant Departmental and College data (including individual, cohorts and **previous cohorts**), centre assessed grades and ranking will be allocated.

Grades:

The Senior Deputy Head will emphasise the need for judgements to be objective and fair. Teachers will use their professional experience to make a fair and objective judgement of the grade they believe a student would have achieved had they sat their exams this year. Teachers will use the full range of available evidence when grading students - including non-exam assessment; the results of any homework assignments or mock exams; and any other records of student performance over the course of study, as outlined above.

In the case of tiered GCSE subjects, *'schools and colleges should only provide centre assessment grades which reflect the tier of entry of the individual student (9 to 3 for higher tier; 5 to 1 for foundation tier).'*

Ranking:

Departments will provide a rank order of students within each grade.

'For example, if you have 15 students for GCSE maths for whom you have given a centre assessment grade of 5, you should then rank them from 1 to 15, where 1 is the most secure/highest attaining, 2 is the next most secure and so on.'

'Where a centre has a large entry for a subject, with many different teachers, we recognise that this will be challenging. There are a number of ways in which this could be done, including for example, for each teacher initially to grade and rank order their students; discuss and compare the qualities of students at the top and bottom of the rank order within each grade to ensure that a consistent standard is being applied; adjust the grades accordingly; and then integrate the rank orders by discussing individual students beginning at the top of the rank order and working down. Where a centre uses more than one specification for a subject, they should go through the process of ranking all students within each grade, for the whole cohort, and then submit the rank order according to the guidance produced by each exam board.'

The record of the meeting will be a **completed table that includes the names of all candidates, grades and ranking**. A HoD, who does not have another member of the department, will meet with the Head of Faculty to hold the departmental meeting and award grades/ranking.

'Each set of centre assessment grades for a subject must be signed off by at least two teachers in that subject, one of whom should be the head of department (or where if there is only one teacher or only one is available, by the Head of Centre)². Where a staff member might have a personal interest in a candidate (for example as a relative), Heads of Centre³ should make sure that additional controls are put in place, as appropriate.

Once the table is completed, the HoD will contact the Assistant Head Academic, Senior Deputy Head, Management Assistant and Examinations Officer. The Management Assistant will then organise individual meetings with the HoD, Assistant Head Academic and Senior Deputy Head.

² Head of Centre is replaced by Senior Deputy Head

³ Head of Centre is replaced by Senior Deputy Head

At these meetings, the HoD will explain the process taken within the department to allocate the centre assessed grades and ranking. The HoD will be asked if all the members of staff involved in the meeting are in agreement with the data submitted. If not, the member of staff can lodge an appeal to the Senior Deputy Head and Assistant Head Academic. The Senior Deputy Head will have the final say. All Senior School teachers will be made aware of the policy. They should contact the Management Assistant after their Departmental meeting if they have any issues with the process or the outcomes.

The Senior Deputy Head, before meeting the HoDs and receiving the data, will send a random set of numbers to the Assistant Head Academic and Examinations Officer. These numbers will refer to rankings within each subject and will be a way to ensure objectivity and transparency in the process of sampling.

The Senior Deputy Head will then take the random sample of GCSE and A Level students for each subject. The Senior Deputy Head will ask further questions about the sample, with each HoD, to confirm that the processes outlined by Ofqual have been followed. At the end of the meeting, the Senior Deputy Head will ask the HoD to confirm that they are certain that the process for awarding the centre assessed grades and ranking was fair and they are confident that the data submitted is accurate. They will be asked to sign off on the data (two teachers per department) and the process undertaken. The Senior Deputy Head will then confirm with the Assistant Academic Head, before the meeting ends, that the Senior Deputy Head has followed the process, as outlined above.

Therefore, the Senior Deputy Head⁴ will be required to submit the following declaration when the data is submitted.

'I confirm that these centre assessment grades, and the rank order of students are accurate and represent the professional judgements made by my staff, and that entries were appropriate for each candidate. Having reviewed the relevant processes and data, I am confident that they honestly and fairly represent the grades that these students would have been most likely to achieve if they had sat their exams as planned, and that they have not been disclosed to either the candidate or their parent/guardian. I understand that exam boards will conduct a statistical standardisation exercise, using a model developed with Ofqual, and that, if the profile of grades submitted is Summer 2020 grades for GCSE, AS and A level, Extended Project Qualification and Advanced Extension Award in maths 12 substantially different from what might be expected based on my centre's historic results and the prior attainment of this year's students, the grades for my centre will be adjusted to bring them into line with national standards.'

Conflicts of interest involving teaching staff.

This is likely to occur if a teacher has a son/daughter taking external examinations in the College. This will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. The College will ensure that staff members who have a conflict of interest will not be involved in the discussion of grades or ranking that involve class sets that include their child/children. Furthermore, staff members, who have a conflict of interest, will not have access to the grades or rankings

⁴ If the Senior Deputy is unwell, the Assistant Head Academic will be the replacement Head of Centre. The second checker will be the Assistant Head, Head of Sixth Form.

allocated to any of their child's groups, before, during or after the process of awarding grades and rankings. It remains the College's responsibility to ensure that all other processes are followed, as outlined in this policy.

Head of Centre

As the Headmaster is conflicted in his role during this academic year, Ratcliffe College will nominate the Senior Deputy Head to ensure the process is followed and sign-off on the data submitted. **The Headmaster, or any other staff member who has a conflict of interest, will not have any access to centre assessed grades or rankings during or after the process.**

APPENDIX A: LETTER SENT TO PARENTS IN YEARS 11 AND 13

Monday 6th April 2020

Dear Parent/Guardian,

How GCSE and A Level Grades will be awarded in summer 2020

I hope my letter finds you and your family well?

Following the Government's decision in March to cancel all GCSE and A Level examinations in the summer of 2020 due to the Coronavirus outbreak, we have been waiting to find out what process the Government will use to decide how grades were going to be awarded. On Friday 3rd April, Ofqual made a formal announcement and set out the details for schools, teachers, students, parents and carers on the detail of how GCSEs and A levels will be awarded. Links to the relevant Ofqual papers can be found at the end of this letter. Further to my holding letter to parents on Friday, the Senior Leadership Team has now reviewed Ofqual's documentation. The purpose of this letter is to explain to students, parents and guardians/carers what the Ofqual announcement means in practice.

Context

Ofqual have been tasked by the Secretary of State for Education to devise a methodology for allocating GCSE and A Level grades for the summer of 2020. The documents outline the detail of the information Ofqual require from schools and then how this will be used to allocate grades to students. The documents confirm that there will be an appeals process should students be unhappy with their allocated grade/s and that there will still be GCSE and A Level examinations for students who wish to sit them, at the beginning of the next academic year. We have created some questions and answers below, which we hope will help explain to you the process that the School will be following.

What data is Ofqual requesting from schools?

*"Exam boards will ask exam centres to generate, for each subject, **centre assessment grades** for their students, and then to **rank order the students within each of those grades**. Given the current challenging circumstances, Ofqual and the DfE believe that providing these two key pieces of information will enable exam boards to issue the fairest possible results." Ofqual, April 2020.*

The School, as the exam centre, will, therefore, provide two pieces of data for each student in each of their subjects. A centre assessed grade and a ranking for that student within the subject.

How will the School award centre assessed grades and rank students?

There is much information on this particular point within the Ofqual announcement. Ratcliffe College has a significant amount of data on each student to draw upon, and decisions will be made based upon this data and the professional judgment of the subject teachers. Heads of Department will discuss with their colleagues each student's data and his/her performance, to ensure that the subject teachers are able to allocate centre assessed grades and rankings as accurately as possible. The Senior Leadership Team will

assist teaching staff in this process, carefully monitoring the method which subject departments follow. This monitoring will include meetings with all Heads of Department to ensure they understand the criteria and that there is parity in the way that it is interpreted. There is a list of information that the Heads of Department should consider which is set out in the Ofqual documentation:

- ***“A centre assessed grade - the judgement submitted to the exam board by the Head of Centre about the grade that each student is most likely to have achieved if they had sat their exams. This professional judgement is derived from evidence held within the centre and which has been reviewed by subject teachers and relevant heads of department.”***
- ***“Centre assessed grades - This should be a holistic professional judgement, balancing the different sources of evidence. Teachers and heads of department will have a good understanding of their students’ performance and how they compare to other students within the department/subject this year, and in previous years. We want heads of department and teachers to consider each student’s performance over the course of study and make a realistic judgement of the grade each student would have been most likely to get if they had taken their exam(s) in a subject and completed any non-exam assessment this summer. This could include U (ungraded).***
- ***“The rank order of students within each grade – for example, for all those students with a grade of 5 in GCSE maths, or a grade B in A level biology, a rank order where 1 is the most secure/highest attaining student, and so on.”***

Furthermore the guidance states that:

“Teachers should draw on existing records and available evidence (as far as possible in the context of current public health advice). It is important that the judgements are objective, and they should only take account of evidence about student performance. This will include the following, where it is available:

- *Records of each student’s performance over the course of study, including for example progress review data, classwork, bookwork, and/or participation in performances in subjects such as music, drama and PE*
- *Performance on any non-exam assessment (NEA), even if this has not been fully completed. You should not ask students to complete their NEA work and you do not need to submit marks for any completed NEA. But you will need to bear in mind that many students achieve a higher grade on their NEA than in their exams, so you should not base your judgment on NEA alone. You should balance it with your judgement about their likely performance in the written paper(s), where appropriate. In case students decide that they want to enter in a subsequent exam series, you should retain any NEA work completed to date*
- *for re-sitting students, any information about previous grades achieved or NEA marks that would, under normal circumstances, have been carried forward*
- *for A level students who took AS in 2019, their AS results in that subject*
- *performance on any class or homework assessments and mock exams taken over the course of study*
- *tier of entry in tiered subjects – centre assessment grades must reflect the tier of entry (9 to 3 for higher tier; 5 to 1 for foundation, as well as U)*

- *previous results in your centre in this subject – these will vary according to a number of factors, including prior attainment of the students, but our data shows that for most centres any year-on-year variation in results for a given subject is normally quite small*
- *the performance of this year's students compared to those in previous years*

The School retains significant evidence on all of the above points and will direct Heads of Department to the appropriate information, together with guidance on how this information should be interpreted and used to allocate grades and rank students.

SEND

"Where disabled students have an agreed reasonable adjustment (for example a reader or scribe), or other students have an agreed access arrangement, the judgement should take account of likely achievement with the reasonable adjustment/access arrangement in place."

For those students with SEND, Heads of Department and subject teachers may, where necessary, liaise directly with the SENCo and relevant staff from the Learning Support Department to discuss students' work and other relevant data in light of the advice.

Special Consideration

"Special consideration requests, in the event that a student is unable to take an assessment or suffers a traumatic event that might affect their performance, will not apply this summer. Instead judgements should reflect how the students would have performed under ordinary circumstances. Where illness or other personal circumstances might have affected performance in mock exams, centres should bear that in mind when making their judgements."

A small number of students in Year 13 were unable to take some or all of their A Level mock examinations as they were self-isolating on their return from the School ski trip. Again, Heads of Department and subject teachers will review their performance across the two years, as well as taking into account that some students took mock examinations at other times.

"Given the timing of the announcement, we recognise that centres will have incomplete evidence, and that the range and amount of evidence will vary between different subjects. Judgements should be made on the evidence that is available."

A number of students in both Year 11 and Year 13 were not able to complete all of their coursework in some subjects before the School closed. Despite this fact, the guidance makes provision for this and the School will ensure that judgements are made on the appropriate evidence available.

"There is no requirement to set additional mock exams or homework tasks for the purposes of determining a centre assessment grade and no student should be disadvantaged if they are unable to complete any work set after schools were closed. Where additional work has been completed after schools and colleges were closed on 20 March, Heads of Centre should exercise caution where that evidence suggests a change in performance. In many cases this is likely to reflect the circumstances and context in which the work is done."

As you are aware, the School encouraged students to continue working towards their GCSE and A Level courses, following the announcement that there would be no public examinations this summer. The guidance suggests that work produced since the 20th March can be considered in the final analysis but that Schools should 'exercise caution where that evidence suggests a change in performance' and, therefore, use their professional judgement.

Is it possible for the grades that Ratcliffe College send off to the Examination Boards to be adjusted?

Yes. The grades that the School sends off can be changed by the exam boards. However, the rankings we provide to the boards will **not** be altered. Below is what Ofqual say on the matter:

"Exam boards, using a model developed with Ofqual, will use a statistical model to standardise grades across centres in each subject. We are working with technical experts within exam boards and others to develop this model, which will combine a range of evidence including:

- *expected grade distributions at national level*
- *results in previous years at individual centre level*
- *the prior attainment profile of students at centre level*

This statistical standardisation process will not change the rank order of students within your centre. Nor will it assume that the distribution of grades in each subject and/or each centre should be the same. If, when compared to the evidence above, your judgements are more generous than would be expected, then the final grades for some or all of your students will be adjusted down. On the other hand, if it appears that your judgements are more severe, then the final grades for some or all of your students will be adjusted up. We will do this to align the judgements across centres, so that, as far as possible, your students are not unfairly advantaged or disadvantaged this summer. This means that the centre assessment grades you submit and the final grade that students receive could be different."

Is there still an opportunity for students to appeal their grades?

Yes. As of now, this has not been formalised:

"More information will be made available to centres, students, parents and carers at the time final results are issued, to facilitate any appeals against the process."

Furthermore, Ofqual have stated on appeals:

"Centres should expect the possible grounds of appeals to be relatively narrow and based on application of the process"

Will there still be GCSE and A Level examinations available at the start of the new academic year?

Yes. No other information about these examinations has been made available yet, such as dates or which papers will be available. It has been stated that if students do decide to take these examinations then **both** the grades the students receive (the one allocated by the boards and the one awarded following taking the examination) will stand.

Can students in Year 10 who were sitting examinations early apply for a grade?

No.

Can students in Year 12 who were sitting A Level examinations early apply for a grade?

Yes.

What are the deadlines for the process and when will students know the outcome?

The deadline for schools to enter all the data will ***“not be before 29th May.”*** Centres will have a window of at least two weeks in which to submit the data”. Examination results will be published before the original scheduled dates **(Thursday 13th August for A Levels and 20th August for GCSEs).**

What information regarding ranking and centre assessed grades can be shared with students and parents?

None. Ofqual stated, *“Centres must not, under any circumstances, share the centre assessment grades nor the rank order of students with students, or their parents/carers or any other individuals outside the centre, before final results have been issued. This is to protect the integrity of teachers’ judgements, and to avoid teachers, heads of department, senior leaders or Heads of Centre being put under pressure by students and parents, to submit a grade that is not supported by the evidence”.*

In the documents, it states the Head of Centre will be required to sign-off on the data submitted to the Examination Boards. Will Ratcliffe College be following this process, given there may be a possible conflict of interest for the Headmaster?

No. This is because the Headmaster is conflicted in his role this academic year. *“If the Head of Centre is unavailable to do this, it may be delegated to a Deputy”.* Ratcliffe College will nominate the Senior Deputy Head to ensure the process is followed and to sign-off on the data submitted.

We hope we have been able to take the most salient information from the Ofqual documents and to have provided some clarity as to what is a unique set of circumstances and something that is, no doubt, an anxious time for all students and their parents. Please do read through the attachments via the links below. At the time of writing to you, there is no additional paperwork for parents or students to complete. The School will confirm with students and parents once the data has been uploaded and notify you of any other announcements made by the boards.

UCAS

The School will be writing to parents of students in Year 13 separately to provide an update on applications to higher education. UCAS have stated that they will be writing to students individually.

If you have any questions on the process after reading the documents, please do not hesitate to contact Mrs Tracey Nightingale: tnightingale@ratcliffecollege.com who will ensure that the relevant staff member is notified.

Kind regards.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Kevin Ryce,
Senior Deputy Head.

APPENDIX B: LETTER SENT TO YEAR 11 STUDENTS

Monday 6th April 2020

Dear Year 11 Student,

How GCSE Grades will be awarded in summer 2020

I hope you are all well during these testing times?

I have written separately to your parents a letter sent via the Ratcliffe App that explains how Ofqual and the Examination Boards will award GCSE grades this summer. Please read that letter in conjunction with what follows below:

Your teachers will provide for all of your subjects the following information:

- centre assessed grades
- a ranking in each subject

There is nothing you need to do as part of this process, your teachers will collate this information. Department meetings will be held to agree the grades awarded and the ranking of students. The process followed by Departments will be checked by Ms Davis and Mr Ryce, before sending the data to the relevant Examination Boards. As outlined in the letter to your parents, we are not permitted to share any of this information with you or your parents.

Ofqual have said that students do not need to complete their Non-Examined Assessment (NEA coursework).

What should Year 11 students do next?

During the Summer Term, it is important that you focus on the following two areas of work:

Continued preparation for your GCSE examinations. For students who would still like the opportunity to sit GCSE examinations, Ofqual have indicated that you will be able to do so at the start of the next academic year. We do not have the dates for these examinations yet and will let you know as soon as we have them. Your teachers will continue to set GCSE work on the VLE, via e-mail and Google Classroom, as normal.

A Level Introductory Packs. We will be putting together Introductory Preparation Packs for your chosen A Level subjects to send to you during the Summer Term and arrange opportunities for you to discuss the work and ask questions of your teachers. We will send out packs for all subjects. This enables you to complete pre-reading, develop relevant skills and get ahead for a positive start in September 2020.

At this early stage, we will be guided by the Option Forms that you handed in; your choices may change following the publishing of GCSE results in August, however, we do encourage you to try the A level Introductory Packs for your chosen A level subjects.

We will also be offering preparatory work for the Extended Project Qualification: developing understanding of the EPQ; exploring the academic skills involved; possible topics for research, and choosing your own area for exploration.

We realise this has been a very difficult time for you but, if we use the time productively to get ahead for September, it will be well worth the effort now.

Kind regards.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Kevin Ryce,
Senior Deputy Head.

APPENDIX C - LETTER SENT TO YEAR 13 STUDENTS/PARENTS

Dear Student/Parent,

Year 13 UCAS Update

Further to the Ofqual announcements on Friday 3rd April relating to the awarding of A Level grades, UCAS has also provided the following information relating to university admissions.

UCAS has suggested that the admissions process to confirm students' places at universities and colleges will remain broadly similar to previous years, stating:

'Here at UCAS, we will receive regulated exam results from awarding bodies and match these to students' applications, to send on to the universities and colleges that are holding offers for them. Their chosen universities and colleges are expected to consider these grades in the same way as any other qualifications. We will also continue to offer our Clearing service over the summer, giving students the flexibility to make choices throughout the rest of the year. The Universities Minister, Michelle Donelan, wrote to all students on Friday to explain the following key information:

- 'You will still receive a grade with the same status as grades awarded in any other year. Your hard work will be rewarded and fairly recognised.*
- Universities and colleges have been asked to temporarily pause making unconditional offers, or changing conditional offers to unconditional [until 20th April]. Conditional offers are still being made as usual.*
- Universities or colleges will treat your application fairly and consistently, and will consider these grades in the same way as any qualifications from previous years.*
- There are plenty of higher education places available. A level results and the usual Clearing period will also go ahead, giving you more opportunities to explore your choices.'*

For those wishing to enter Clearing, students will again have the option to self-release from a place they have previously accepted (from July 6th onwards). It is no longer a requirement to contact your chosen university or college before being released into Clearing. Any decision to enter Clearing should be considered carefully before proceeding. If any student is at all unsure, please do feel free to e-mail me for advice nearer the time. For your convenience, here is further information on Clearing from the UCAS website:

<https://www.ucas.com/undergraduate/results-confirmation-and-clearing/what-clearing/declining-your-firm-place-track>

UCAS has dedicated advice and support pages for students at this time: <https://www.ucas.com/coronavirus>

The latest UCAS Coronavirus updates are also available via: <https://www.ucas.com/coronavirus-updates-hub>



[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)
[latest updates for students |](#)
[Undergraduate,](#)
[Conservatoires | UCAS](#)

Following the recent government announcements of the closure of schools and the cancellation of examinations and assessments in the UK, organisations involved in the higher education admissions process are working flat out to find a solution that's efficient, fair, and in your best interests.

wwwucas.com

At this challenging time, I hope the reassurance that the university admissions process will function in a similar way to previous years will be welcome news.

With every good wish for Easter.

Yours sincerely,

James Neville
Assistant Head, Head of Sixth Form

LINKS:

1. Summary from Ofqual:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/how-gcses-as-a-levels-will-be-awarded-in-summer-2020>

2. Link to pdf documents that sets out the details for centres, heads of centres, teachers, parents, carers and students:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/gcses-as-and-a-level-awarding-summer-2020>

3. Letter from the Secretary of State for Education:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/877611/Letter from Secretary of State for Education to Sally Collier.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/877611/Letter_from_Secretary_of_State_for_Education_to_Sally_Collier.pdf)

4. Guide for teachers, parents and students

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/877842/Summer 2020 grades for GCSE AS A level EPQ AEA in maths - guidance for teachers students parents.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/877842/Summer_2020_grades_for_GCSE_AS_A_level_EPQ_AEA_in_maths_-_guidance_for_teachers_students_parents.pdf)

5. Letter for students from Ofqual

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/877830/Letter to students - Summer 2020 grading.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/877830/Letter_to_students_-_Summer_2020_grading.pdf)

6.

IGCSE, AS and A Level ICT:

“Awarding grades for Cambridge International qualifications in the June 2020 series”.

This policy applies to the Senior School and was updated by:

K Ryce, Senior Deputy Head

J Davis, Assistant Head Academic

D Charlish, Examinations Officer

23/06/2020

Examinations Grades Awarding Policy 2020– Addendum

Heads of Departments (HoDs) had an additional meeting with the Senior Deputy, Assistant Head Academic and Academic Data Co-ordinator on Monday 11th May, 2020.

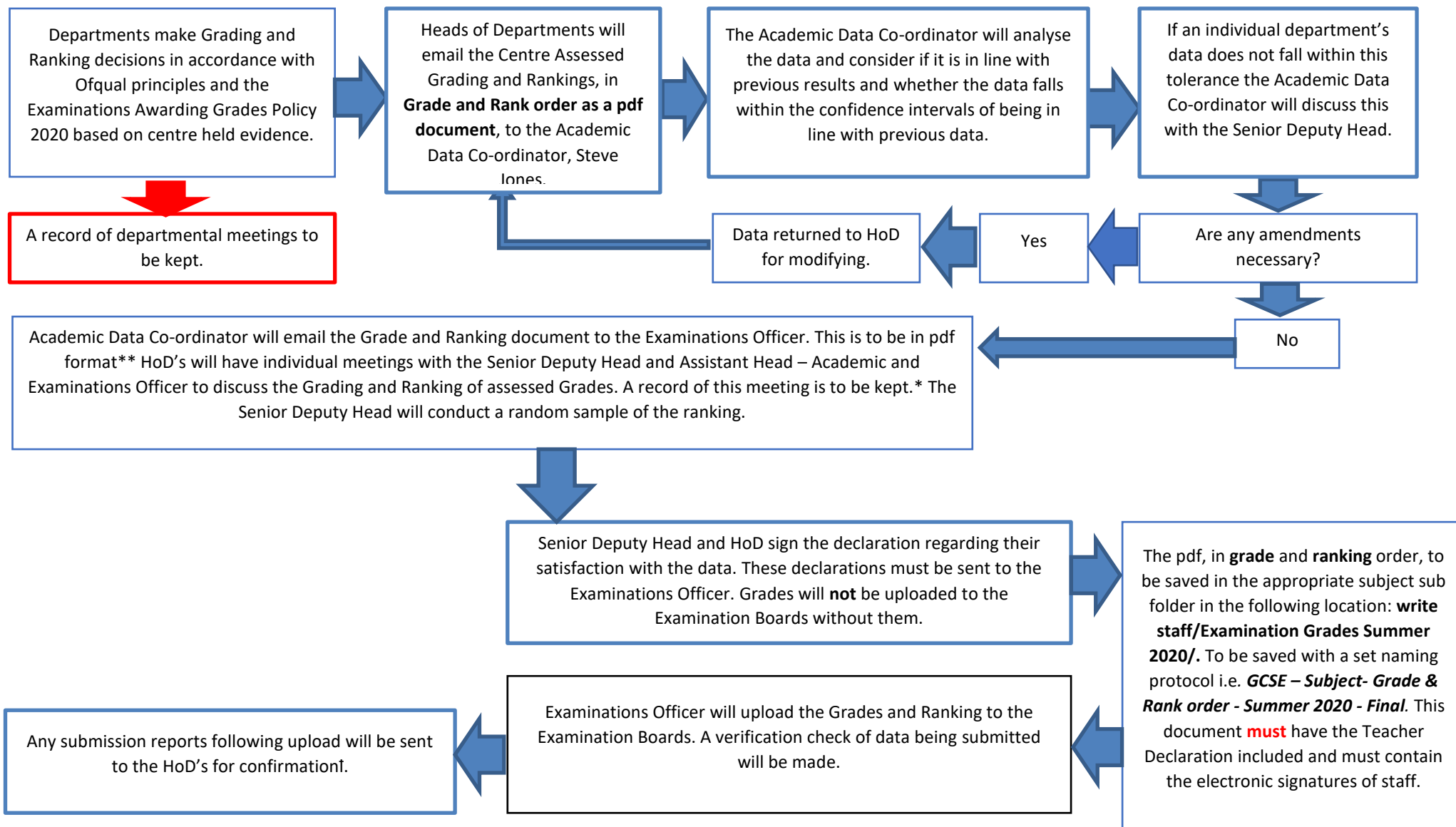
The purpose of the meeting was to outline in more detail the process of how the data meetings with the Senior Deputy Head (who is acting as Head of Centre) would run with regard to the Centre Assessed Grades and Rankings. The flow chart, 'The Internal Process', attached was amended at the meeting. The process is:

1. The HoDs will agree the Centre Assessed Grades and Rankings with the relevant teachers in their departments as outlined in the Examinations Awarding Grades Policy 2020. The teachers are asked to sign a declaration form that they agree with the Rankings and Centred Assessed Grades (see appendix 1).
2. The HoDs will then email the Academic Data Co-ordinator, Steve Jones, the Centre Assessed Grades and Rankings in a pdf format.
3. The Academic Data Co-ordinator will then analyse the data and consider if it is in line with previous results. The Academic Data Co-ordinator will do this by looking at whether the data falls within confidence intervals of being in line with previous data.
4. If an individual department's data does not fall within this tolerance the Academic Data Co-ordinator will speak to the Senior Deputy Head. The Senior Deputy Head and Academic Data Co-ordinator will then discuss if the data should be returned to the department for modifying or should stand as is.
5. The HoDs will have individual meetings with the Assistant Head Academic, Examinations Officer and Senior Deputy Head to discuss the Rankings and Centre Assessed Grades as allocated by the department. After discussing the process through a random sample of the rankings (see appendix 2) which was allocated in advance then the Senior Deputy Head and HoD can sign the declaration regarding their satisfaction with the data.
6. A pdf in **Grade** and **Ranking** order, will then be saved by the relevant HoD, in the appropriate subject sub folder in the following location: **write staff/Examination Grades Summer 2020/**. To be saved with a set naming protocol i.e. **GCSE – Subject- Grade & Rank order - Summer 2020 - Final**. This document **must** have the Teacher Declaration included and **must** contain the electronic signatures of staff.

7. The data is only to be uploaded by the Examinations Officer. Depending upon the platform provided by the relevant Examination Board, the Data and SIMs Manager will carry-out a check that the data has been inputted correctly. The Senior Deputy Head will make a final check of the data with the Exams Officer before the data is sent off.

We have also had updates regarding GCSE, AS and A Level ICT and I have attached the letters that have been sent to the relevant parents in appendices 3 (Years 11 and 13) and 4 (Year 12). In appendix 5 we have included the letter that has gone to the parents and students of EPQ.

The flow chart on the following page outlines this process



Notes: *Provides evidence of due diligence by the College and that grades and ranking have been discussed with SLT., **Prevents any alteration to the grades and ranking. Spreadsheets are open to data manipulation.
 ***This is an Ofqual requirement and may be subject to inspection. †Responsibility remains with HoD's to double check these reports and to notify any error.

Appendix 1



Summer 2020 Centre Assessed Grades and Ranking for GCSE, A Level, IGCSE, International A Level, EPQ and BTEC

Subject	
Qualification Level	

Head of Department declaration

I confirm that these centre assessment grades, and the rank order of students are accurate and represent the professional judgements made by teachers within my department, that entries were appropriate for each candidate and that they have not been disclosed to either the candidate or their parent/guardian.

Name:	
Signed:	
Date:	

The Head of Centre or nominated Deputy Declaration

I confirm that these centre assessment grades, and the rank order of students are accurate and represent the professional judgements made by my staff, and that entries were appropriate for each candidate.

Having reviewed the relevant processes and data, I am confident that they honestly and fairly represent the grades that these students would have been most likely to achieve if they had sat their exams as planned, and that they have not been disclosed to either the candidate or their parent/guardian.

I understand that exam boards will conduct a statistical standardisation exercise, using a model developed with Ofqual, and that, if the profile of grades submitted is Summer 2020 grades for GCSE,

AS and A level, Extended Project Qualification and Advanced Extension Award in maths 12 substantially different from what might be expected based on my centre's historic results and the prior attainment of this year's students, the grades for my centre will be adjusted to bring them into line with national standards.

Name:	
Signed:	
Designation:	
Date:	

Teacher's Declaration (to be included on each list of grades and ranking).

*Grades will **not** be submitted to Examination Boards if this declaration is not signed by at least two subject specific teachers. In the case where there is only one subject teacher, the second signature must be either Head of Centre or nominated Deputy.*

We confirm that these centre assessment grades, and the rank order of students are accurate and represent the professional judgements made by teachers within the department.

Names:		
Signed:		
Designations:		
Date:		

Appendix 2

GCSE and A Level Examination Entries 2020.

Year 11 GCSE 2020		
Subject	Number of Entries 2020	Sample selected (random numbers from total subject entry)
Art and Design	26	2,3,13,25,26
Biology IGCSE	33	1,4,16,18,32
Chemistry IGCSE	33	2,5,14,18,31
Chinese IGCSE	0*	
Computer Science	13	1,5,12
D & T Timbers	31	2,3,15,17,29
Drama	27	1,4,14,15,24
English Language	89	1,3,5,7,35,37,39,67,83,85,87
English Literature	46	2,4,6,21,25,27,44,46
Food Preparation	13	2,4,13
French Foundation	6	1,3,6
French Higher	13	3,7,11
Further Mathematics	23	2,4,10,11,23
Geography	28	1,3,15,27,28
German Foundation	2	2
German Higher	4	1,4
History	19	2,5,10,18,19
Information Technology	8	1,3,8
Latin	2	1,2
Maths Foundation	28	1,5,10,22,28
Maths Higher	61	1,5,7,10,29,40,59
Media	26	4,5,11,21,26
Music Studies	7	1,3,7
Physical Education	24	1,2,10,14,22
Physics IGCSE	33	2,5,13,19,30
Religious Studies	89	1,3,5,7,20,37,80,89
Science Double IGCSE	43	2,6,19,27,42
Science Single IGCSE	13	1,4,12
Spanish Foundation	17	3,4,9,16
Spanish Higher	18	1,5,10,18

*Only entries were Year 10 students.

Year 13 A Level 2020		
Subject	Number of Entries 2020	Sample selected (random numbers from total subject entry)
Art & Design	9	1,4,9
Biology	28	4,5,7,18,27
Business Studies	19	3,7,13,17
Chemistry	20	1,5,9,19
Chinese	2	Not entering?
D&T Product Design	11	2,5,10
Drama	4	2,3
Economics	13	2,7,13
English Literature	11	1,6,10
Food science	6 (all Yr 12)	2,5
French	5	1,4
Geography	10	2,5,10
German	3	2
History	8	2,7
Information Technology	4 (1 AS resit)	1,3
Latin	1	1
Mathematics	31 (11 Yr 12)	4,5,18,28,30
Mathematics Further	7	1,3,6
Media Film and TV Studies	11	3,5,10
Music	2	2
Physics	14	1,5,13
Religious Studies	11	3,5,11,2
Spanish	2	2
Sport/PE Studies	9	3,5,9
Extended Project	2	1

Appendix 3

ICT Letter to Years 11 and 13 students and parents

4th May 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians of Year 11 and Year 13 Students,

The Examination Board for ICT IGCSE and A Level examinations, Cambridge International Examinations (CIE), has published information on the awarding of grades. Students studying the IGCSE will be treated as per the GCSE students for all other subjects - Centre Assessed Grades and Ranking. This will also be the same for the Year 13 students and their A Level Centre Assessed Grades and Ranking. We have attached the **Examinations Awarding Grades Policy 2020** which outlines these procedures. Furthermore, the AS grades achieved by the Year 13 students can be used as evidence when assessing their likely A Level grade.

Please contact me via Mrs Tracey Nightingale (tnightingale@ratcliffecollege.com) if you have any further questions regarding this.

Best wishes.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Kevin Ryce

Senior Deputy Head

Appendix 4

5th May 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians of Year 12 Students,

The Examination Board for ICT IGCSE and A Level examinations, Cambridge International Examinations (CIE), has published information on the awarding of grades.

The position of the Year 12 students does not follow the procedure outlined by Ofqual. CIE fall outside Ofqual's regulatory structure and have chosen a different path. **AS grades assessed this summer cannot be carried over as such to the A Level in June 2021** as there are no marks being issued this year. Instead, the students will have their A Level awarded solely on the basis of the A2 components taken next year, summer 2021.

However, students do have the option to enter the AS in November 2020 and carry those marks forward to the A Level in June 2021. If they choose to sit in November 2020, then the award for June 2020 becomes a standalone qualification and has no bearing on the A Level awarded in 2021.

We have attached the Examinations Awarding Grades Policy 2020 which outlines these procedures.

Please see below for the relevant text from CIE's update:

Carrying forward Cambridge International AS Level results from the June 2020 series
In the June 2020 series, Cambridge International will award grades to students for each syllabus in which they have been entered. These grades have the same currency and value as grades we award in any other series in any other year. On 7 April, we published the process for awarding grades here.

One necessary change for June 2020 is that we will issue grades but not calculate marks. This does not affect the value of the qualification, because a grade is the standard outcome of our exams, and the outcome universities use to assess student applications.

For students who want to carry forward their Cambridge International AS Level result from June 2020 to a future Cambridge International A Level, we have looked at a specific technical challenge: it is the AS Level mark students normally carry forward, not the grade. In the absence of AS Level marks in June 2020, students will receive an AS Level grade but will not be able to carry forward their AS Level result to A Level in the usual way. Therefore, we have put in place alternative arrangements.

Students who enter for AS Level and receive a grade from the June 2020 series may choose to:

- *Take only the second stage (A2) of the A Level in that subject in the November 2020 or June 2021 series, and receive an A Level grade based solely on their performance in A2*. In other words, we will consider that a candidate with an AS Level grade from June 2020 has met the requirement to complete the AS Level stage before obtaining an A Level grade. Candidates who withdraw from the June 2020 series will not have this option.*
- *Take all components of the A Level in a future series, and retain the AS Level from June 2020 as a standalone qualification, without carrying the result forward.*

**For example, if a student obtains a grade C in their AS Level in June 2020, takes A2 components in that subject in June 2021 and performs at the level of grade B, we will award them an A Level at grade B. By the same principle, if a student obtains a grade B in their AS Level in June 2020, takes A2 components in that subject in June 2021 and performs at the level of grade C, we will award them an A Level at grade C.*

This extract can be found within the article at:

<https://www.cambridgeinternational.org/news/news-details/view/update-for-cambridge-schools-on-june-2020-series-22-april-2020/>

[Update for Cambridge schools on June 2020 series – 22 April 2020](https://www.cambridgeinternational.org/news/news-details/view/update-for-cambridge-schools-on-june-2020-series-22-april-2020/)

Find out about the latest news and media coverage from Cambridge International Examinations.

www.cambridgeinternational.org

We must now ask you and your son/daughter to make a decision on whether you would like the College to enter him/her for a grade this summer. You will have the opportunity to sit the AS examination in November regardless of your decision. Could you please contact Mr David Charlish, Examinations Officer: dcharlish@ratcliffecollege.com with your decision **by 4pm on Monday 11th May 2020**.

If you have any questions regarding this, please do not hesitate to contact Mr David Charlish, or myself, via Mrs Tracey Nightingale (tnightingale@ratcliffecollege.com).

Best wishes.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Kevin Ryce

Senior Deputy Head

Appendix 5

24th April 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Extended Project Qualification

I hope you are well?

In my e-mail to parents of 20th March, I explained that, owing to partial school closure, Year 12 would now not be able to complete the presentation for the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) by the original May deadline. We suggested at the time of writing that, consequently, Year 12 EPQ entries for May would be withdrawn and re-entered for November and that teaching and support would continue in the usual way via Google Classroom.

Ofqual Guidance on Centre Assessed Grades for EPQ

Since my email, subsequent Ofqual guidance has been issued which makes provision for centre assessed grades to be generated for students studying the Extended Project Qualification. These are based on students' work completed up to 20th March.

Ofqual defines a centre assessed grade in the following terms:

'A centre assessed grade - the judgement submitted to the exam board by the Head of Centre about the grade that each student is most likely to have achieved if they had sat their exams. This professional judgement is derived from evidence held within the centre and which has been reviewed by subject teachers and relevant heads of department.'

The Ofqual guidance also states:

'Given the timing of the announcement, we recognise that centres will have incomplete evidence, and that the range and amount of evidence will vary between different subjects. Judgements should be made on the evidence that is available.'

In light of this provision for centre assessed grades, it is important to make you aware as parents, that it would be possible for those students studying the Extended Project Qualification in Year 12 to also have centre assessed grades generated for the May 2020 sitting if they wish. Students who opt for this would be ranked in order based on their work completed up to 20th March. If the student felt that the centre assessed grade did not match their expectations, he / she would have the option to 're-sit' the qualification in the Autumn Term (as for other qualifications).

At the same time, the nature of the Extended Project Qualification is such that the assessment objectives are usually judged holistically and, for example, Assessment Objective 4 (the review) is customarily appraised only once the entire project and presentation are

completed. Thus, the available evidence for students having fulfilled this assessment objective by 20th March would be very limited.

Consequently, students may still wish to follow our original advice before the Ofqual guidance was issued (in my email of 20th March) to withdraw from May entry and opt for November entry. This would allow students the opportunity to fully complete their Extended Project Qualifications and for these to be marked and moderated in the usual way, based on their completion of the entire project.

How would this affect UCAS applications?

For students entering EPQ in May 2020, their result would be declared on their UCAS applications in autumn 2020. For students entering in November, a predicted grade would be entered on their UCAS applications in autumn 2020 and their actual EPQ result would be issued by January 2021. As an internally assessed qualification, students may complete the EPQ at a time that suits the centre. I should make you aware that only a minority of students sit the EPQ in Year 12 and that a large proportion of schools only enter students for EPQ in Year 13. Therefore, it is very usual for universities to make offers on predicted EPQ grades.

In our estimation, entering for November entry would give all students the benefit of completing their projects and the satisfaction that their results would be based on their actual completed projects rather than on work completed up to 20th March. In my experience, university offers take equal account of EPQ on UCAS applications, whether EPQ is a prediction or an achieved result. Thus, the decision over May or November entry need not be swayed by UCAS application considerations.

I would be very grateful if parents could **complete and submit the following Google Form by 12.00pm on Wednesday 29th April** (please click on the following link):

<https://forms.gle/aZqNNJAVmq5D6Sj38>

This reply form will be submitted to the Examinations and Data Manager, Mr David Charlish, and will enable you to state your decision as to whether your son / daughter would like to be entered for the following:

- **May 2020** (centre assessed grade)
- **November 2020**

If you would like any further guidance, I would be very happy to discuss this further with you by telephone or email: jneville@ratcliffecollege.com.

Yours sincerely,

Mr James Neville
Assistant Head, Head of Sixth Form

