

20 August 2020



Headteacher:
Dr R P Petrie BSc PhD

Dear Student

Later this morning you will receive an email showing the grades you have been awarded in the summer 2020 examinations series.

In this unusual year, the school had to submit a centre-assessed grade for you in each qualification, a process which began in April with submissions being made in June. After much turmoil, which you will have seen on the news and in the press, on 17 August 2020 the government and Ofqual decided that the higher of either the centre-assessed grade or the exam board grade would be awarded. For ease of reference when you receive your results, the grade awarded by the exam board will be in the first column, and the grade submitted by our centre will be in the second column. Where there is a difference, it will be helpful to understand the process which has taken place.

The grades that we submitted were our best assessment of what you would have achieved if you had taken exams. The exam boards then used a nationally applied 'standardisation model' so that the distribution of grades awarded this year is consistent with those awarded in other years at a national level, therefore having equal value. This process inevitably results in some centre-assessed grades being adjusted and I understand you may find it confusing and unfair where there is a difference between a centre-assessed grade and the final grade awarded by the exam board. I can reassure you that your teachers approached the task of assessing grades with the utmost diligence to ensure that the grades submitted were a fair and accurate reflection of what they expect you would have achieved in the exams.

Our focus for the next few days will be on helping you move to the next stage of your education. If you require any further support in this, please do get in touch using the following booking link: <https://cockermouth.fireflycloud.net/results-day---appointments/gcse-students-appointment-booking> and a member of staff will then get back to you to confirm a meeting. If your results are such that you now wish to consider coming to Cockermouth School Sixth Form, please check the entry criteria on Firefly (both for the Sixth Form and for the courses you are interested in) and then make an appointment as detailed above.

Due to the measures in place during the Covid-19 pandemic, we can only see people on an appointment basis; please remember that if you are coming in for an appointment, you must follow all Covid-19 guidance and if you or anyone in your household have any symptoms of the virus, you should not attend.

As a student, there will be strict criteria by which you will have the right to appeal the grade awarded to you by the exam board. At the time of writing, we are awaiting confirmation of the details of this process from Ofqual and we will update our Firefly pages to communicate that information as soon as we receive it (<https://cockermouth.fireflycloud.net/examinations/results-days-summer-2020-gcegcse-exams>).

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If you are unhappy with any grade awarded, you will have the opportunity to sit your examinations in the autumn. If you are considering being entered for any examinations in this series, details of how to enter are posted on Firefly (<https://cockermouth.fireflycloud.net/examinations/results-days-summer-2020-gcegcse-exams>). We would urge you to take some time to discuss this at home and reflect on the most suitable course of action for your circumstances.

If you have any other queries about the exam process this year, the quickest way to get answers is to access the same Firefly page that collates a range of information that you may find helpful. The links include an explanation of how we conducted the centre-assessed grades process, how we explicitly addressed the risks of bias, and also information from Ofqual and the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) pertaining to centre-assessed grades (these documents were current as at June 2020). If you have any difficulties accessing Firefly, please contact the IT Helpdesk as a matter of urgency at ITHelpdesk@cockermouthschool.org.

I am conscious that this has been a difficult and anxious time for you as a result of the disruption caused by the coronavirus pandemic. The cancellation of the 2020 examination series was not what anybody wanted for you. Not only have you been denied the opportunity to demonstrate your abilities in the formal exams, but you have also missed out on the important rites of passage that mark this stage of your education. We are sad that we have not been able to say a proper goodbye to you and celebrate with you at the usual end of year events. I want you to know that we are very proud of you and everything that you have achieved during your time at Cockermouth School and for those of you continuing on into our Sixth Form, we look forward to welcoming you back on 2 September. For those students who are continuing their education elsewhere, I wish you the greatest success in the future.

Yours sincerely



Dr R P Petrie
Headteacher