



19th August 2020

Dear Parents/carers

I hope you are all well and have managed to enjoy the summer. We completely appreciate that you must be feeling anxious and confused at the government guidance and media storm surrounding the GCSE results and we want to reassure you that we will be here to help, support and guide you in the coming weeks.

Whilst the guidance for institutions is continually changing, we just wanted to ensure you had clarity over what the CAG – Centre Assessment Grade actually means.

The Centre Assessment Grade (CAG) is the school's professional judgement of the most likely grade a student would have achieved if the examinations had gone ahead. The grade submitted to the exams board was based on a range of evidence including mock exams, non-exam assessment, homework assignments and any other record of student performance over the course of study.

In the media, the CAG has often been referred to as a teacher assessment grade, which is not helpful as it can be interpreted that it is the class teacher who has the final say over the grade that was submitted to the examination boards. However, this is not the case.

Within TCAT, the grades which were submitted for all students were robustly scrutinised at both the institution level and at Trust level. Our moral duty was to ensure that each student within our care received the grade we felt they deserved based on a huge raft of evidence. An interim GCSE assessment policy was introduced across TCAT secondary academies to deal with the absence of terminal examination due to the Covid 19 situation. This policy was based on government guidance and was introduced to ensure a consistency of approach to the assignment of GCSE grades and to ensure sufficient challenge was in place to protect the integrity of grade allocation for students.

This process started with Heads of Department in individual academies and involved line manager scrutiny, moderation from TCAT subject leads and hubs, review from members of the TCAT Curriculum, Assessment & Outcomes teams, academy senior leaders and ultimately Headteachers/Principals, who have all endorsed the grades submitted. There was a significant amount of moderation within this process following scrutiny of evidence and it was absolutely



imperative that the grades were as accurate as possible. The whole Quality Assurance process was both rigorous, robust and completed with the upmost integrity.

Our students have worked incredibly hard over the past 5 years leading up to their GCSE examinations and we are extremely proud of how they have handled this very difficult situation. They should be praised for their attitude and they need to know that whatever happens over the next few days that they will have our full support to ensure they are on their appropriate pathway for their future.

We are also here to support the parents/carers as we understand that you will have many questions and worries too. Each individual TCAT institution will be in touch with more details of how they can support you and your son/daughter over the coming days.

Please take care and continue to stay safe.

The Challenge Academy Trust (TCAT)