

## NCFE/Cache qualifications

Dear Parents and Carers

I hope this letter finds you and your families well. We are so pleased to have our students back in college and whilst we are still all very respectful of the health and safety measures we all must continue to follow, there is a definite sense of our moving out of a period of uncertainty and a return to the normality we have all craved for so long.

Our college culture remains as ambitious, exciting and supportive as always, timetables have actively continued throughout and our students are aware that there is a full and rewarding term ahead.

With this in mind, we are aware that you will have questions about how we will grade and claim for our students this year and so want to draw your attention to a letter below from Ofqual, which outlines the process that will be followed this term in relation to awarding qualification grades:

In light of the numerous lockdown situations and disruptions to education experienced this year the usual assessment and examination schemes have been amended and adapted where required to ensure that all students are treated fairly and provided with an opportunity to complete their qualifications. This process has been developed at a national level by Ofqual, the regulatory body, and each awarding body has then determined detailed guidance for Colleges and other providers to follow. I am writing to explain to you how grades for NCFE/Cache vocational qualifications will be awarded this summer. I have also included a link at the bottom of this letter to background information from OfQual, along with information from NCFE/Cache, for your further interest and information. All of this background information supports the process and reasoning behind how grades will be awarded.

As NCFE/Cache qualifications are largely based on assignments and assessments completed throughout the year, and graded through a rigorous marking and standardisation process quality assured by the awarding body, the majority of contributing assessed work and grades will be no different to normal. However, the exams for a small number of units have not taken place and are therefore eligible for a teacher assessed grade. In addition, some individual students may have special circumstances due to Covid related issues that means their assessment evidence is incomplete. It is for those missing or only partially complete units that the special procedures exist.

Each centre is required to put in place an internal quality assurance process, including internal standardisation of marking and grading judgements, which will be checked by the exam board. There will be sampling of evidence and marking to ensure consistency and strict adherence to the marking schemes.

### **Assessment evidence that will be used in determining your NCFE/Cache grade**

Wigan & Leigh College teachers will use the following key criteria to determine final qualification grades. The College will submit grades to the awarding body who will undertake their own quality assurance checks before publishing grades on results day in August.

1. Completed units that have been marked and assessed and submitted to the awarding body in the normal way. These unit grades appear on ProMonitor mark book, as always they are provisional until verified by the exam board, but this year they will not appear individually on certificates as only overall grades will be awarded.

2. Units for which the original assessment has not taken place or has been curtailed (e.g. the January exam units), will be evidenced by other work. This might include homework tasks, partially completed assignment work, project work, mock exams, witness testimonies or specific teacher observation of practical work. Course teachers will be explaining to students which tasks will be considered. These alternative sources of evidence for the missing unit(s) will be graded against the same criteria and marking schemes as the original assessment.
3. The overall grade will be determined in a similar way to normal and will use the teacher assessed grades that have been submitted and aggregated alongside existing banked evidence.

*Note: Assessments missed due to confirmed isolation or sickness periods can be scaled due to mitigating circumstances so as not to disadvantage students.*

### **Making sure grades reflect student ability**

- The majority of the contributing unit grades will be the same as normal and totally unaffected by the special circumstances of 2020/21.
- For those units delivered in 2020/21, students will only be assessed on what they have been taught.
- Once marked, using the normal award marking schemes, cross standardisation of teacher grades will take place within the department to ensure consistency of marking and awarding of grades between students/cohorts for those few units that alternative assessments have been required.
- All evidence will be kept in College in locked cabinets and grades and papers will not be returned to students from any assessments in accordance with Ofqual guidance.

For published information from Ofqual and awarding bodies please follow the following links:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/awarding-qualifications-in-summer-2021/awarding-qualifications-in-summer-2021>

<https://www.ncfe.org.uk/covid-19-response-for-2020-21>

Please note that the date of national release and publication of NCFE/Cache grades is 10<sup>th</sup> August for Level 3 qualifications and 12<sup>th</sup> August for Level 2.

We want to reassure you that we are fully committed to helping our students reach or exceed their full potential. Wellbeing and academic support is available to all students and we are very mindful of what a challenging and difficult year it has been for many individuals and families.

Thank you once again for your continued support and cooperation. The last year has certainly reminded us all that we have a college community to be proud of and served as an important reminder of our culture of kindness and of what can be achieved when we work together.

Kind regards

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