

## Written evidence submitted by Parents

We are among many, many parents consoling a child who faced bitter disappointment on receiving their grades, having never been given the opportunity to sit his exams.

Our son was downgraded from a B at mocks to a D in his chosen university subject. He was never predicted below a C in the subject throughout his two years in sixth form. This is because, in the face of conflicting advice from OFQUAL, we fear his school was one of those who chose the path of deliberately downgrading some students in order to match historic trends. It is clear from correspondence that they employed the ranking order, which should have been for the purposes of external moderation, to arbitrarily award him the grade despite all the evidence he was stronger.

There are many thousands of such students, I believe. They are now summarily disadvantaged as other schools who chose to predict accurately each individual student's grades have seen their students protected. The students who had their grades inflated by schools in the expectation of some degree of lowering have benefitted to a huge degree. Our son is now placed at a substantial disadvantage as he competes against those peers both academically and eventually in the workplace. We had held hope that this situation could have been resolved by the 'triple' lock pledged by Gavin Williamson where students could resort to their mock grades but this has now been retracted, without explanation. It needs to be reinstated as a matter of urgency.

The terms fiasco and disaster have endured a heavy workload in this process but their use is not unwarranted. A picture is clearly emerging of widespread unfairness and there is a growing acknowledgement that student grades in 2020 were predicated more on their school's decision in relation to OFQUAL guidance rather than student ability. That cannot be right.

There is a moral failure at the heart of this. Forcing teachers to submit incorrect grade predictions has resulted in some considering leaving the profession, and others facing real anger from parents.

We are in the process of engaging with the school's complaints procedure as we scour the internet for means of redress or avenues of appeal but OFQUAL's announcement today (27 August) of the limitations of appeals is, given the chaos they have caused and the genuine pain and anxiety, cowardly.

We would ask for urgent review for those students who have been penalised through no fault of their own.

August 2020