3 June 2025

Dear Parent/Carer,

<u>End of Year 10 MFL Exam Grading – Summer 2025- Information for parents and students</u>

The Modern Foreign Language (MFL) GCSE specification that your child will be sitting in summer 2026 will be different to that of the current Year 11 cohort. This guide will explain how your child's National Distribution Grade (NDG) has been awarded in their End of Year 10 MFL exam.

Changes to the specification:

There are some major changes to the GCSE MFL exams for summer 2026 compared to the current specification that are designed to make the GCSE "more accessible" (DfE, 2022). These include:

- The reading and listening exams only testing the top 1,200 words at foundation tier and 1,700 words at higher tier
- All reading and listening questions will now be written in English, removing the need to understand and respond in Spanish/French in the listening and reading papers
- All tasks in the writing and speaking exams will be set in English

The problems of a new specification and awarding grades:

Assigning grades to students following their final exams is known as awarding. During this process, depending on the performance of students nationally on the exam, how difficult the exam was, and to maintain standards year-on-year, grade boundaries are assigned after the exam has been taken and marked. Individual grade boundaries are specific to that year's exam for this reason.

Your child's End of Year exam replicates the number of papers and question types that they will face in Year 11, but will only test content that has been covered in lessons until this point. Therefore, we cannot apply previous grade boundaries to this series of End of Year exams as they will not match the papers they have sat. As the new papers are substantially different to the old ones, past grade boundaries are very unlikely to be a reliable guide to the standard of the new qualification.

Awarding your child's End of Year 10 exam grade – National Distribution Grades (NDGs)

To award your child's End of Year 10 grade, we have followed a process similar to the awarding process. Due to the size of the trust, we can compile all the results across each language, rank them from highest to lowest before assigning grades based on how many students nationally achieve each grade, which is reasonably stable over time. Grading this way is known as national distribution, and is similar to the process that exam boards use.

Principal: Mrs Janine McCann BA MEd NPQEL

Because National Distribution Grades (NDGs) are awarded based on how many students nationally achieve each grade in their GCSEs, the NDG acts as an indicator of how we might expect the student to perform in the final GCSE. For example, if a student has an NDG of 6, we might expect them to achieve a grade 6 in their GCSE.

This is different to the 'Working At' Grades provided in some subject areas, as those are based on past grade boundaries and would generally be lower than a student's expected GCSE grade. For example, if a student has a 'Working At' grade of 4 in their End of Year 10 assessment, we might expect them to achieve a final GCSE grade of 6.

As such, NDGs can be a useful indicator of how we might expect students to perform in the GCSE. They are indicators, *not* predictions, as they are only based on one assessment, and assume that the student continues to make progress at the same rate as the rest of the cohort.

We hope that you have found this to be useful, if you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me via the enquiries email address: enquiries@stockport-academy.org.

Yours faithfully,

K Rowley

Mrs K Rowley

CAL for Languages