

Amy signs up as a community volunteer

A couple of weeks ago we confirmed that Sellafield Ltd employees could, if they were not identified as a key worker, volunteer to support the local community response to Covid-19 during work time.

One of the first people to sign up was Amy Caddy.

Normally a work week manager at Sellafield, Amy is now helping to coordinate help for people living in or around Cleator Moor.

Amy said:

The Cleator Moor support group was set up by two friends of mine, Gary Meagan who works for Kaefer and local councillor Mike Eldon.

Chaired by John Murphy who also works at Sellafield within the supply chain, the group is made up of 6 zones, each of which has a manager.

We manage and allocate requests for help, from posting letters and collecting essentials to collecting and delivering prescriptions, to one of our army of local volunteers.

I am also the lead for the Pharmacy, and it's my job to liaise with the team in Cohens, ensuring that the prescriptions are delivered on time with no problems to the individuals who require them.

Amy has also continued with her role as a Sellafield Ltd mental health champion, and is regularly checking in with colleagues who need her support.

Volunteering gives Amy a real sense of satisfaction, knowing that she is helping people when they need it most.

She added:

I volunteer because I love to help people. It's just in my nature to want to do that. I get a great sense of reward and achievement with all jobs which I carry out, whether that is for the Cleator Moor support group, being a mental health champion or helping out at The Hornets rugby club.

Becoming a volunteer has helped me develop my personality so much and I have gained a lot of confidence working with people from a variety of professional backgrounds.

What I love the most is you're not only made aware of your own strengths, but also get confronted with your own flaws which you have to deal with, getting to know yourself!

If you are a Sellafield Ltd employee, and not a key worker, visit the [employee area](#) of our website for more details of how you could volunteer during work time.

[Ofqual seeks views on GCSE and A level grading proposals for 2020](#)

Following the government's decision to cancel exams to help fight the spread of Coronavirus (COVID-19), and that students should be provided with calculated grades this summer, [we have set out exceptional arrangements for awarding GCSEs, AS and A levels, along with the Extended Project Qualification and the Advanced Extension Award in maths](#), so that as far as possible students are not disadvantaged by these unprecedented circumstances.

We have worked quickly to develop these arrangements so that schools and colleges know what is expected of them and that students can have their results in time to progress to further study or employment as planned. We have consulted with a variety of representative groups, and have sought views from those representing students. We explained when we published our information document that we would consult on some of the implementation decisions we must take, and changes to our regulatory framework. [We have today \(Wednesday 15 April\) launched a consultation](#) seeking views on the following.

Who should receive a calculated grade

Whether students entered for exams in year 10 or below should receive a calculated grade this summer

We set out in our information document that we considered the arrangements should only apply to students in year 11 or above, who needed grades to progress, and that we would consult on this view. We have since received representations from centres, parents and others indicating that the progression of some such students would be disrupted if they were not awarded a grade this summer, and to exclude them would have an unfair impact. We now consider the fairest option is that results should be issued for students in year 10 and below who anticipated sitting exams this summer and we are seeking views on this proposal.

The impact of our proposals on private candidates

In line with our information document, we propose that exam boards should issue results for private candidates for whom a Head of Centre can confidently submit a centre assessment grade and include the student in their centre's rank order. Other private candidates will have studied with an

established provider, such as a distance learning provider that is also an approved exam centre and might similarly be able to receive a calculated grade. However, other private candidates will have no existing association with an exam centre. Exam boards are exploring, with us, whether it might be possible for some centres, such as those with particular experience of working with distance learners, to work with those private candidates who need a grade this summer in order to progress. The centre might be able to submit centre assessment grades and a rank order for those candidates, even though there is no existing relationship between the centre and the candidate by considering a range of evidence about their likely attainment. We do not yet know whether this will be possible, or how many students will be able to receive a grade in this way. Exam boards will continue to work with us to explore all options for how such a process could work and will provide an update on this no later than 30th April

Standardising centre assessment grades

The aims of our approach to standardising grades and the principles which underpin it

For example, the document sets out our proposals to address key questions such as:

- how should we use statistical evidence to identify and adjust overly generous or harsh centre assessment grades?
- should evidence of changes in a school or college's past performance inform our interpretation of this evidence?
- how can any issues of bias be addressed through statistical adjustment?

Our overriding aim is to make sure arrangements this summer are as fair as possible for all students. We are alert to concerns that unconscious bias could influence the grades schools and colleges might have expected their students to have achieved in the exams and assessments. Our consultation includes an equality impact assessment, of which we will take account when finalising these arrangements, and we have separately published [a review of the research literature on bias in teacher assessments](#).

Appealing calculated grades

Whether appeals should include an opportunity to review:

- the centre's professional judgements
- the procedures followed by the centre and/or exam board
- the outcomes of the statistical process

We explain in the consultation why we consider that, in the exceptional circumstances of this summer, appeals should only be allowed on the grounds that the centre made a data error when submitting its information; or similarly, that the exam board made a mistake when calculating, assigning or communicating a grade

The autumn exam series

We explain our proposals to allow exam boards to run an autumn series for those students who were entered for the cancelled summer series. We are still considering with government how the autumn series should operate, and will set out our proposals in a further consultation soon.

Putting in place the regulatory requirements

Proposals to suspend temporarily a number of the provisions in our current rules so that the exam boards can deliver the results in line with the exceptional arrangements necessary this year. We will also put some new regulatory arrangements in place to make sure all exam boards work in line with the agreed new arrangements so that, as far as possible, standards and public confidence in the qualifications are maintained

In light of the speed with which the arrangements must be finalised if students are to receive their results in good time, and no later than the dates originally published, this consultation will close on Wednesday 29 April 2020. We encourage everyone with an interest to read the proposals and respond.

[Response to 31 March direction from Secretary of State for Education](#)

- Only go outside for food, health reasons or work (but only if you cannot work from home)
- If you go out, stay 2 metres (6ft) away from other people at all times
- Wash your hands as soon as you get home

Do not meet others, even friends or family.

You can spread the virus even if you don't have symptoms.

[Environment Minister's letter to the waste sector on the impact of](#)

coronavirus

To those working in the waste sector,

As a nation we are undoubtedly going through one of the greatest health challenges we have faced in a generation, and I want to pay tribute to all of you who are working in such challenging times to protect the environment, local amenity and people's health – your work is vital.

The Government has taken some unprecedented steps; instructing people to stay at home, to protect our NHS and save lives. However, there are many key workers, like yourselves, who are crucial to the health of our country. I am writing to thank you for the vital service that you are delivering. To thank you for keeping waste moving. Maintaining the rates of black bag rubbish collection, working behind the scenes in recycling centres, treatment plants, energy recovery centres and disposal sites despite all the challenges that Coronavirus brings.

As a country we are all facing challenges and I know that you are feeling these too – staff absences, social distancing, a drop off in commercial waste and an increase in household waste. Some of you have had to take difficult decisions to furlough staff or close down your operations. But you have also responded, adapted and maintained an excellent level of service where you have been able which protects public health and is crucial in keeping our society and economy going.

I also appreciate the cooperative spirit with which you are approaching the situation in such testing times. I know you are looking at ways you can work together and have been an invaluable help to us in Government, feeding back important information on the impact of the outbreak. In Government we will continue to do whatever we can to help you. The Government has published guidance on personal protection equipment (PPE) and social distancing at work to provide reassurance for you so that when you're doing your job, you can do so safely.

We have also published guidance to help local authorities prioritise waste services. We know what an excellent and crucial job is being done to keep services running, but due to the impact of the outbreak we understand the additional pressures that you are facing. Our guidance provides advice on how services can be prioritised and underlines how critical black bag household waste collections are to protect people's health and the environment.

Workers in the waste sector may not get the headlines that other workers do during this challenging time, but I want you to know that you are not forgotten within Government. I am enormously grateful for all you are doing, and will continue to do, and proud of your commitment to the services you provide.

Thank you.

Rebecca Pow MP

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for the Environment

Secretary of State hosts virtual roundtable with NI business leaders

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