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Dear Head of Centre

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OCR GCSE English Literature (J352/02) error – key actions for fair results

We hope your students did well this summer and got the results they deserved for their performance in OCR's new GCSE English Literature exams. We apologise again to teachers and students for the unacceptable error in the *Romeo and Juliet* question (question 4) on the J352/02 paper. We would like to share the actions we have taken to minimise the impact of that error.

To help you and your students understand what we have done, we have included personalised statements and an FAQ document to accompany results. We would be very grateful for your help in sharing this information with your students. Downloadable copies of students' marked exam papers are also available which we are providing free of charge.

Key actions

As we said in our letter at the end of June, first of all we adjusted the mark scheme used by our examiners so they gave marks to students for a variety of approaches to answering question 4. We constantly monitor our examiners when they are marking exam papers. In this instance, we put an additional check in place to ensure their marking was in line with the adjusted mark scheme.

To understand the overall impact of the error, we then compared students' marks for the *Romeo and Juliet* questions (questions 4 and 5) with those achieved by students who answered questions on the other Shakespeare plays in section B of the paper. On average, students who answered questions on the other plays did better by 1 or 2 marks (out of 40).

To give your students the marks that we believe are closest to the marks they would have got without the error, we explored a number of different ways to compensate for the lower marks, in addition to adjusting the mark scheme. We have worked closely with the regulator to determine the most effective solution that gives your students the fairest results overall.

We applied one of the following options – **whichever gave your students the higher mark for their answer:**

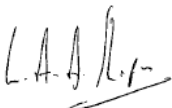
- A statistically calculated mark for their answer to a *Romeo and Juliet* question, based on students' performance on Paper 1 (J352/01) and the first half (the Poetry section) of Paper 2. (Statistically calculated marks are a tried and tested solution used by exam boards if, for example, a student is not able to take a paper in the case of illness.)
- The mark given by the examiner for their answer to a *Romeo and Juliet* question

There is more technical information on how we dealt with the error available on the OCR website.

We hope that this summary of our actions, and the accompanying information, will help to reassure you, your staff, your students and their parents. While the error was unacceptable, we have done all we can to make sure your students have not lost out because of it. The enclosed FAQ document has worked examples of how we decided which option to apply to individual students and details about the free copies of students' marked exam papers which can be downloaded from OCR's secure website, Interchange. Students may also consider applying for a free review of the marking of both papers.

If you have any further questions about your GCSE English Literature results, please call us on 01223 553998 or email general.qualifications@ocr.org.uk.

Yours faithfully



Leo Shapiro
Chief Executive, OCR