



## Centre Review and Appeals Process – 2021

Following the cancellation of public examinations in 2021, schools have been asked to generate Teacher Assessed Grades for students. These grades must reflect a fair, reasonable and carefully considered judgement of the student's performance across a range of evidence on the curriculum they have been taught.

Following release of results on the 10<sup>th</sup> August (for A-Levels) and the 12<sup>th</sup> August (for GCSE) a student can request a review of the grading decision if they feel that the Centre has failed to follow its procedures properly or consistently or that an administrative error has been made.

Summary of the Process	Deadlines for requests to be received by the school
<b>Request Evidence (see details below)</b>	
<b>Request a Centre Review (Stage 1)</b> - Once a student has received their data they can request a Centre Review.	1pm on the 16/8 for priority students 1pm on the 3/9 for non-priority students
<b>Centre Review Decision</b> - We will then respond with a decision on the Centre Review.	From results day to the 20/8 for Priority students  From result day to 10/9 for non-priority students
<b>Submit an appeal (Stage 2)</b> - Following receipt of our Centre Review, students' have the option of requesting that the centre submits an appeal to the Examination Board.	1pm on the 23/8 for priority students 1pm on the 17/9 for non-priority students

Priority students are those applying to higher education who did not attain their firm choice (i.e. the offer they accepted as their first choice) and wish to an appeal an A-Level or other Level 3 qualification result.

***NB. Grades can go up, down or stay the same at either the Centre Review stage or the Appeal stage***

### **1) Request Evidence**

Students will already have received the majority of the data that was included in the evidence mix. However, prior to requesting a Centre Review, students may wish to have access to all relevant information from which teachers arrived at their grading decision.

To request this evidence, the student will need to log into their school email account and complete a form which can be found [here](#) (this form will not be accessible until results day). Once this has been completed we will send the data to the student's school email address. Priority will be given to A-Level students who have not secured their firm choice at university.

### **2) Centre Review process (Stage 1)**

Any student, including a Private Candidate, may submit a request for a Centre Review on the grounds that the Centre has:

- failed to follow its procedures properly or consistently in arriving at that result or
- made an administrative error in relation to the result

The Centre Review (Stage 1) will only cover the two points above. Requests for appeals on the grounds of academic judgement (unreasonableness) will only be considered by awarding organisations. We will not review academic judgements during the Centre Review stage.

In cases of appeal on the grounds of academic judgement (unreasonableness), an initial Centre Review **must** be completed to ensure that there have not been any procedural or administrative errors.

Following the request for evidence, the student will be sent the form which can be found in this [LINK](#). They will need to complete Part A (page 2) of this document and email it to [examsoffice@agsb.co.uk](mailto:examsoffice@agsb.co.uk) by **1pm on the 16<sup>th</sup> August** for Priority students and by **1pm on the 3<sup>rd</sup> September** for non-priority students.

For reviews where a higher education place is dependent on the outcome of an appeal, students must include their UCAS personal ID, and the student should also notify their preferred higher education provider that a review has been requested at the earliest possible opportunity.

Before requesting a Centre Review and any subsequent appeal we advise students and parents to read this [Guidance](#) from the JCQ. We are also expecting the JCQ to produce a student and parent guide to appeals shortly, this will be sent in a separate email.

### **3) Centre Review decision**

We will complete the review in line with JCQ guidance, giving priority to university applicants. We will respond to the student's Centre Review by completing Part B (page 3) and returning this to the student's school email address.

If we identify an error with the grade submitted to the awarding organisation, we will submit a revised grade with rationale for the grade change to the awarding organisation. If the awarding organisation is satisfied with the rationale presented by the Centre and it considers it is appropriate to correct the result, it will issue a revised grade.

If, following a Centre Review, we do not believe that an error has been made but a student believes that an error persists, a student can request that an appeal be submitted to the Examination Board on their behalf.

**4) Making an appeal to the examination board (Stage 2)**

Following completion of a Centre Review, and if requested by the student, we will submit an appeal on their behalf. The student can only request an appeal following completion of a Centre Review and by the deadlines outlined above.

A student should request an appeal to the Examination Board if they consider that:

- a. the Centre did not follow its procedure properly or consistently in arriving at the result, or during the Centre Review
  
- b. the Examination Board made an administrative error in relation to the result
  
- c. the Centre made an unreasonable exercise of academic judgement in the choice of evidence from which to determine the grade and/or the determination of that grade from the evidence. The following document provides useful information on this [HERE](#).

**The Exam Board will carry out an independent review of the process** followed and whether the overall grade awarded was a reasonable exercise of academic judgement based on the evidence or if the selection of evidence used was a reasonable exercise of academic judgement. ‘Unreasonable’ is a technical term in this context and means that no educational professional acting reasonably could have selected the same evidence or come up with the same grade.

This means that just because other forms of evidence may have been equally valid to use, the selection of evidence is not unreasonable. Because of the flexibility of the approach this year, every school and college will have used different forms of evidence.

It also means that the independent reviewers will **not** remark or grade students’ evidence. Instead, they will look to see whether any teacher acting reasonably could have arrived at the same grade.

*Examination Boards will not accept appeals directly from students or parents. Appeals submitted by students or parents directly to an Examination Board will not be processed and will need to be re-submitted via the Centre.*

\*\*\*\*\*

## **Frequently asked Questions**

### ***How were my / my son's grades arrived at this year?***

Grades this summer were based on Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGs). TAGs were submitted to the Exam Boards by us as a holistic assessment of students' performance in a subject, following a rigorous process of assessment, moderation and quality assurance.

These grades were then approved by the relevant Exam Board, following external quality assurance checks. In some cases, the TAGs we submitted may have been reviewed by the Exam Board, who may have asked us to submit an alternative grade. However, any changes to the grades we submitted were done by professional teachers or reviewers; this year no grades have been changed as a result of an algorithm.

### ***What do I do if I'm not happy with my / my son's grade?***

All students have the opportunity to appeal their grade if they meet the eligibility criteria (see below). It is important to note that an appeal may result in a grade being lowered, staying the same, or going up. Therefore, if a student puts in an appeal and their grade is lowered, they will receive the lower mark.

There is also the option to sit GCSEs, A-levels and some AS levels in the autumn, which may be preferable to some students. The design, content and assessment of these papers will be the same as in a normal year.

### ***What are the grounds for appeal?***

The main grounds for appeal, as dictated by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ), are:

- You think we have made an **administrative error**: an example of this would be putting the wrong information into a spreadsheet.
- You think we have made a **procedural error**: this means we haven't properly followed our own process, as approved by the Exam Board. An example of this would be where you've been told you should have received extra time for assessments but this wasn't given in a certain subject.
- You think the **academic judgement on the selection of evidence was unreasonable**: you think the evidence used to grade you was not reasonable.
- You think the **academic judgement on the grade you were given was unreasonable**.

### ***What will be the outcome of an appeal?***

At either stage of the appeals process (see 'What are the two stages of an appeal?' below), a student's grade may go up, stay the same, or go down. When placing an appeal, the student will have to sign a declaration saying that they accept the fact their grade may go down and they may get a lower grade than their original TAG.

### ***What is a priority appeal?***

Priority appeals will be handled more quickly than other appeals, where possible before UCAS's advisory deadline of 8 September.

Priority appeals are only open to **A-level students starting university this autumn, who have missed out on the conditions of their firm or insurance offer.**

If you decided not to confirm a firm conditional offer and to go through clearing instead, JCQ cannot offer you a priority appeal.

JCQ cannot offer priority appeals for GCSE students, unfortunately.

When making a priority appeal, students will have to include their UCAS number so it can be confirmed that it is a genuine priority appeal.

### ***What should I do if I don't get into my first choice of university?***

First, don't panic. Speak to the Sixth Form team about your options. You may wish to go through clearing, or sit the autumn exams or summer exams next year to try to improve your grade.

If you are going to appeal your grade, you must let your university know you are appealing. They will then let you know whether they will hold a place for you pending the outcome of an appeal (note that universities are not obliged to hold a place for you; this is at their discretion).

### ***What should I do before appealing?***

Students must read the JCQ Student and Parent guide before appealing, which will be available on the JCQ website by results days.

We may not be able to offer as much advice and guidance on the likely success of an appeal this summer as we would in normal years, as we have already moderated and quality assured all the grades ourselves.

### ***What are the two stages of an appeal?***

All appeals, on any of the grounds above, must first go through a **Centre Review**. At this stage, we will check for any administrative errors, and check that our policies and procedures were followed correctly. Our policy has already been approved by the Exam Boards, so we are only ensuring that we followed this properly. The outcome of the Centre Review will be communicated to students when made.

At the Centre Review stage, if we find that a grade should go up or down, we will ask the Exam Board to change it. They will then consider this request.

Following the outcome of a Centre Review, students may still choose to pursue an **awarding organisation appeal**. They must fill in the form below, which we will then send on their behalf to the Exam Boards. Students and parents cannot send appeals directly to the Exam Board themselves – it must come from us. The outcome of the awarding organisation appeal will be communicated to students when made.

### ***How do I make an appeal?***

Following results days, students should follow the process outlined in this document.

***What are the deadlines for priority appeals?***

The suggested deadline for requesting a Centre Review is 1pm on the 16 August (students cannot appeal before results day on 10 August).

We will attempt to complete the Centre Review by 1pm on the 20<sup>th</sup> August. If students wish to progress this to an awarding organisation appeal, they must send the completed form to us by 1pm on 23<sup>rd</sup> August for priority appeals.

\*At both stages of the appeals process, there may be the need for specialist, expert knowledge (e.g. subject teachers, SEND knowledge). This may not be possible in August. In such cases, we may have to wait until the start of term, but priority appeals will still be treated as a priority.

***What are the deadlines for non-priority appeals?***

Non-priority appeals are any A-levels, GCSEs or vocational qualifications, where a firm or insurance university place is not pending.

The deadline for submitting a Centre Review is 1pm on the **3<sup>rd</sup> September** and the deadline for submitting an awarding organisation appeal is **17<sup>th</sup> September**.

Appeals received after these dates may still be considered.

***You know my son's grades. Why can't you tell us? What if you know we haven't met our university conditional offer?***

We are forbidden from disclosing the Teacher Assessed Grades to any third party, including students and parents, until results days. Any teacher or member of staff who does this is committing exam malpractice.

Although students may have been given marks or grades on single pieces of evidence, we cannot disclose the final submitted TAG.

During the external quality assurance process taking place in June or July, our submitted TAGs may be moved up or down (although this will always be done through human agency, not by an algorithm).

We only know what a student's conditional offer is if they have chosen to share that information with us. It has not formed part of our objective grading of students. Where we do know this information, we must not let students know their submitted TAGs, even if they haven't met the conditions of their offer.

If you have any questions prior to results day regarding appeals, please contact:

Mr T Murray (Head of 6 <sup>th</sup> Form)	A level	<a href="mailto:tmurray@agsb.co.uk">tmurray@agsb.co.uk</a>
Mrs S Weil (Assistant Head – Curriculum)	GCSE	<a href="mailto:sweil@agsb.co.uk">sweil@agsb.co.uk</a>

\*\*\*\*\*