



Dear Parent/Carer

RE: GCSE results and appeals

I am writing to inform you that the government has published details regarding the GCSE appeals process. We have put together the following Frequently Asked Questions to help you understand the process. We hope you find this useful.

Senior Leaders will be available to take any questions on GCSE results day.

How were my/my child's grades decided 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.

The relevant exam board, following external quality assurance checks, then approved these grades.

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 child'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**. So if a student puts in an appeal and their grade is lowered, they will receive the lower mark.

There is also the option to resit GCSEs 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?

There are five main grounds for appeal, as dictated by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ). They 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.
- 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**.

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What does 'unreasonable' mean?

'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.

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 stay, 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's a priority appeal?

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**.

JCQ cannot offer priority appeals for GCSE students, unfortunately.

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 day.

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. They must fill in the form attached (section 1). An electronic and word copy of this is on our website under the exams section. 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 attached, 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.

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How do I make an appeal?

Following the GCSE results day, students should fill in the first section of the JCQ form [here or attached](#) and send it to a.hill@mce.hlt.academy. A word version is also available on the exams section of our website.

What are the deadlines for non-priority appeals?

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

The deadline for submitting a **centre review is 3 September**; and the deadline for submitting an **awarding organisation appeal is 10 September**.

Yours sincerely,



Andrew Hill
Vice Principal



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Student Request Form for Centre Reviews and Appeals to Awarding Organisations

Important information for students

What may happen to your grade during the centre review and appeals process?

If you request a centre review or an awarding organisation appeal there are three possible outcomes:

- Your original grade is **lowered**, so your final grade will be lower than the original grade you received.
- Your original grade is **confirmed**, so there is no change to your grade.
- Your original grade is **raised**, so your final grade will be higher than the original grade you received.

Once a finding has been made you cannot withdraw your request for a centre review or appeal. If your grade has been lowered you will not be able to revert back to the original grade you received on results day.

What will be checked during a centre review?

You can ask the centre to check whether it made a **procedural error**, an **administrative error**, or both. A **procedural error** means a failure to follow the process set out in the centre policy. An **administrative error** means an error in recording your grade or submitting your grade to the awarding organisation. You must request a centre review before you can request an awarding organisation appeal. This is so the awarding organisation is certain that your grade is as the centre intended.

What will be checked during an awarding organisation appeal?

You can ask the awarding organisation to check whether the centre made a **procedural error** - or whether the awarding organisation itself made an **administrative error**. You can also ask the awarding organisation to check whether the **academic judgement** of the centre was unreasonable, either in the selection of evidence or the determination of your grade.

When do I need to submit my request?

You should submit a request for a centre review by **16 August 2021 for a priority appeal**, or by **3 September 2021 for non-priority appeals**.

Once you have received the outcome of your centre review, if you wish to request an awarding organisation appeal you should do so as soon as possible. Your school or college will submit this on your behalf. Requests for a priority appeal should be submitted by **23 August 2021** and requests for non-priority appeals should be submitted by **17 September 2021**. Priority appeals that aren't submitted to the awarding organisation by 23 August 2021 will still be treated as a priority but they may not be completed in time for those with a higher education place dependent on the outcome of the appeal.

What is a priority appeal?

A priority appeal is only for students applying to higher education who did not attain their firm choice (i.e. the offer they accepted as their first choice) and wish to appeal an A level or other Level 3 qualification result. You should inform your intended higher education provider that you have requested a centre review or appeal.



Stage one – centre review

A. Student request

This section is to be completed by the student. A request for a centre review must be submitted to the centre, not the awarding organisation. A centre review must be conducted before an appeal to the awarding organisation. This is so the awarding organisation is certain that your grade is as the centre intended.

Centre Name		Centre Number	48375
Student Name		Candidate Number	
Qualification title e.g. AQA GCSE English Language			
Teacher Assessed Grade issued			
Is this a priority appeal?	No	If Yes provide your UCAS personal ID e.g. 123-456-7890	N/A

Grounds for centre review Please tick one or both of the options if they apply to your request. If you don't think either apply, your centre will still conduct a review for administrative and procedural errors so the awarding organisation can be certain that your grade is as the centre intended.			
Administrative Error by the centre e.g. the wrong grade/mark was recorded against an item of evidence	<input type="checkbox"/>	Procedural Error by the centre e.g. a reasonable adjustment / access arrangement was not provided for an eligible student	<input type="checkbox"/>

Supporting evidence Please provide a short explanation of what you believe went wrong and how you think this has impacted your grade. There is a 5,000 character limit.

Acknowledgement I confirm that I am requesting a centre review for the qualification named above and that I have read and understood the information provided in the 'Important information for students' section above. In submitting this review, I am aware that:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The outcome of the review may result in my grade remaining the same, being lowered or raised The next stage (Stage Two, the appeal to awarding organisation) may only be requested once the centre review (Stage One) has been requested and concluded. 		
Student Name	Student signature	Date
_____	_____	_____

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B. Centre review outcome

This section should be completed by the centre and shared with the student as a record of the outcome of the centre review.

Centre Review Outcome					
Please tick the outcome of the review and then record the original grade and the revised grade if applicable.					
Upheld	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not upheld	<input type="checkbox"/>	Partially upheld	<input type="checkbox"/>
Original Teacher Assessed Grade			Revised Teacher Assessed Grade if applicable		

Information considered by the centre
Please provide a short explanation of the evidence that you have reviewed. There is a 5,000 character limit.

Rationale for the outcome of the centre review
Outline the centre's findings from the centre review e.g. procedural or administrative error and if relevant, details of the error. There is a 5,000 character limit.

Authorisation and dates of next stages			
Please complete the boxes as appropriate. Boxes 1 and 2 must be completed in every case. Boxes 3 and 4 need only be completed when requesting a grade change.			
1. Date that the decision and rationale was issued to student		2. Date student informed of how to proceed to stage 2 (appeal to awarding organisation)	
3. Confirmation that a senior leader has authorised any grade change		4. Date that grade change is submitted to awarding organisation	



2. (b) Issues with access arrangements / reasonable adjustments and/or mitigating

Circumstances

You **must** provide a clear explanation of what you believe went wrong and how you think this has impacted on your grade. There is a 5,000 character limit.

Empty text box for providing details of issues with access arrangements.

3. (a) Selection of evidence

You **must** provide a clear explanation of what you believe went wrong and how you think this has impacted on your grade. There is a 5,000 character limit.

Empty text box for providing details of selection of evidence.

3. (b) Determination of the Teacher Assessed Grade

You can provide a short explanation of the reason for your appeal if you want to. There is a 5,000 character limit.

Empty text box for providing details of determination of the Teacher Assessed Grade.

Acknowledgement

I confirm that I am requesting an appeal for the qualification named above and that I have read and understood the information provided in the 'Important information for students' section above.

I am aware that:

- The outcome of the appeal may result in my grade remaining the same, being lowered or raised
- I understand that there is no further opportunity to appeal to the awarding organisation and that the next stage would be to contact the regulator. The awarding organisation will include the next appropriate steps, where applicable, in their appeal outcome letter which you will receive from your school/college.

Student Name

Student signature

Date

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