



## Appeals FAQ 2021

### How were 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.

We asked students to let us know if they had any special considerations or mitigating circumstances. Any information provided was considered before the submission of TAGs. If alternative evidence was used, for example where access arrangements were adjusted, we notified students individually via their school email.

### What do I do if I'm not happy with my grade?

If you have achieved the grades to continue with your post 16 studies, we would encourage you to look forward to your next chapter. If you haven't met the entry criteria for your chosen course, please do call your Post 16 provider using the contact details in your results envelope. They will have admissions teams on standby ready to take your call. Sometimes colleges will contact us for more information and we will liaise with them where required.

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. Students who do not achieve a grade 4 or above in English or Maths will be required to re-sit this at college. If you are considering resitting a GCSE other than English language or Maths please contact us at [examenquiries2021@testbourne.school](mailto:examenquiries2021@testbourne.school)

### 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 policy](#), 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.



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- 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 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 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's a priority appeal?

JCQ cannot offer priority appeals for GCSE students, unfortunately.

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**.

## How much do appeals cost?

Appeals are free of charge in 2021

## What should I do before requesting a centre review/ appealing?

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



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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.

You can find our [centre policy](#) on our website.

## 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 or centre review?

Following results days, students should fill in the first section of the JCQ form [here](#) and send it to [examenquiries2021@testbourne.school](mailto:examenquiries2021@testbourne.school). This must be completed by students and not by parents acting on their behalf.

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

Our internal deadline for submitting a centre review is **1st September**; and the internal deadline for submitting an awarding organisation appeal is **10th September**. We will process any centre reviews once school has reopened in September.

The JCQ deadline for centre reviews is 3<sup>rd</sup> September and appeals is 17<sup>th</sup> September.

## Can I submit multiple appeals for the same qualification?

No, you can only submit one appeal per qualification to the awarding organisation so it is important that all applicable grounds for appeal are selected at the point of the original review/ appeal submission.



## **How long will an appeal take once submitted to the exam board?**

For non-priority appeals awarding organisations will aim to complete the process within **42 calendar days** of receipt of the application.

Where a place depends on confirmation of GCSE results, we advise learners to speak to the institution concerned to let them know an appeal has been submitted.

## **Is there any grade protection this year?**

No, there is no grade protection for students this summer. A centre review or an appeal to the awarding organisation may result in a student's grade going up, staying the same or going down. Students must consent to a centre review or awarding organisation appeal.

It is also worth noting that once a centre review or appeal decision has been made, a student cannot withdraw their application for the centre review or appeal to the awarding organisation.

## **Useful documents**

[Exam Information - Testbourne Community School](#) Results Day Information 2021

[JCQ guidance for parents and students](#)

[Ofqual student guide to summer 2021](#)