



Tring School

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Mortimer Hill Tring Herts HP23 5JD



9 July 2021

Dear Students and Parents/Carers

Re: Priority Appeals for GCSE

I hope you are all well and enjoying and utilising your time away from your studies.

As we start to prepare for the examination results days, I would like to share with you the latest information from the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) regarding the Appeals process following the release of GCSE results. We are awaiting guidance on the separate information regarding the appeal of a BTEC qualification, which we will share directly with affected students.

As you know, the results for GCSEs and BTECs are being released on Thursday 12 August 2021. Students can collect results from the Desborough Hall from 8.30 am. To ensure that we continue to keep ourselves safe, we will stagger the release of results by houses, as follows -

8.30 - 8.45 am - Ascott

8.45 - 9.00 am - Claydon

9.00 - 9.15 am - Halton

9.15 - 9.30 am - Waddesdon

We ask any accompanying parents to wait in the designated outside area .

We have very closely followed the strict processes directed by JCQ and are confident that all grades awarded have been done with professional knowledge and integrity. Ofqual has produced a [Student guide to awarding summer 2021](#) to help explain the process and I have attached it for you to read as well.

Outlined below is the process of how the students grades were awarded and guidance of what students can do if they are concerned about how a grade was concluded.

How were my child'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.

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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. 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 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.

If a student (including private candidates) feels the grade they have received in any subject is wrong, then they can follow the appeals process which is unique to this series of grades.

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. 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 fill in the first section of the JCQ form [here](#) and send it to examappeals2021@tringschool.org

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**. Appeals received after these dates may still be considered.*

You know my child's grades. Why can't you tell us? What if you know we haven't met the entry criteria for Sixth Form or college?

We are forbidden from disclosing the Teacher Assessed Grades to any third party, including students and parents, until results day. 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).

I hope to see some of you on 12 August when you collect your well earned results.

If I don't see you, I look forward to seeing many of you return to our Sixth Form and if you're leaving to go to college or starting an apprenticeship, then I wish you well with your future adventures!

Kind regards

Mrs S Ambrose
Head of School