



Thursday 15th July 2021

Dear Parents, Carers and Students

Following an extensive process, I can confirm that all the grades were submitted to the exam boards duly on time, and that materials were shared with exam boards for moderation as requested. I would like to express my gratitude to all your class teachers and Heads of Department for their incredible efforts in devising and implementing this process. I further wish to thank all the students for their efforts and enthusiasm from their return in March, all the way through to their final assessments.

I would like to take the opportunity to outline for you how the process of appealing a grade will work.

How were my / 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 student 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 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, 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 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 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.

 01252319211

 allhallows.net

 admin@allhallows.net

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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 that their grade may go down and they may get a lower grade than their original TAG.

What's 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, do not 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 both JCQ and the exam boards, so we are only ensuring that we followed this properly. It can be found on the school website. The outcome of the centre review will be communicated to students when made. Following a centre review, a student may request an awarding body appeal.


How do I request a centre review or make an appeal to the awarding body?

Following results days, students should fill in the first section of the JCQ form [here](#) and send it to the Examinations officer at exams@allhallows.net. 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 relevant section of the JCQ form linked above, 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.

What are the deadlines for priority appeals?

The deadline for requesting a priority appeal is 13th August (students cannot appeal before results day on 10th August). A priority appeal is only available for students applying to Higher Education who did not meet the requirements of their first choice institution and wish to appeal the result of an A Level or other Level 3 qualification. We will attempt to complete the centre review by 17th August*. If students wish to progress this to an awarding organisation appeal, they must send the completed form to us by 19th August for priority appeals.

 01252319211

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*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 3rd September, and the deadline for submitting an awarding organisation appeal is 10th September. Appeals received after these dates may still be considered.

You know my / my child'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.

Certificates

Certificates, when received from the awarding organisations, will be issued to you. Certificates need to be collected in person and signed for, we will contact students before the end of the Autumn Term to confirm they are ready to collect. Certificates are kept for two years, after this point they are destroyed. Duplicates can only be requested from the awarding body and can cost up to £50 per certificate. Certificates are only replaced without charge if they have been damaged by fire, flood or have been stolen

As a final reminder:

- A Level results will be available at 8:30 am on Tuesday 10th August
- GCSE results at 9:00 am on Thursday 12th August.

We look forward to seeing you all on these dates to celebrate the hard work that everybody has put in under the most trying of circumstances over the last 16 months. As well as being around to advise Year 13 students about their next steps, the Sixth Form team will be available to offer advice to students wishing to discuss their post GCSE options.

Yours faithfully



M A Baines
Headteacher

 01252319211

 admin@allhallows.net

 allhallows.net

 @allhallows

