

King Edward VI School Lichfield

# Appeals Policy and Process

Summer 2021

Policy and Process approved by	
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## Introduction

King Edward VI School Lichfield will manage the unique arrangements for appeals for the Summer of 2021 in accordance with the **JCQ Guidance on the determination of grades for A/AS Levels and GCSEs for Summer 2021**.

## Purpose of the policy

This policy addresses appeals under the specific arrangements for delivery in Summer 2021.

## General principles

In accordance with the regulations King Edward VI School Lichfield will:

- ensure appeals are handled swiftly and effectively, and in line with JCQ requirements.

## Appeals

This details our approach to managing appeals, including Centre Reviews, and subsequent appeals to awarding organisations.

- All staff involved have been made aware of the arrangements for, and the requirements of, appeals in Summer 2021, as set out in the **JCQ Guidance**.
- Internal arrangements will be in place for the swift and effective handling of Centre Reviews in compliance with the requirements.
- All necessary staff have been briefed on the process for, and timing of, such reviews, and will be available to ensure their prompt and efficient handling.
- Learners have been appropriately guided as to the necessary stages of appeal.
- Arrangements will be in place for the timely submission of appeals to awarding organisations, including any priority appeals, for example those on which university places depend.
- Arrangements will be in place to obtain the written consent of students to the initiation of appeals, and to record their awareness that grades may go down as well as up on appeal.
- Appropriate information on the appeals process will be provided to parents/carers.

## Quality Assurance

- The arrangements for awarding grades to students in summer 2021 include internal and external quality assurance measures which aim to ensure that on results day students are issued with fair and consistent grades that have been objectively reached. We have shared information with students about the evidence being used as part of our grade determination process.
- We have in place an effective [Centre Policy](#) which is adhered to by all centre staff involved in the determination of teacher assessed grades, and which has been reviewed by awarding organisations.
- We have in place a high standard of internal quality assurance both in determining teacher assessed grades based only on student evidence and ensuring that there are no administrative or procedural errors, and accurate recording and effective checking of information on the assessment record for the student to avoid errors in submitting teacher assessed grades.

- Teachers and heads of department have records of the sources of evidence used to support the determination grades for the class/cohort along with a rationale for what was selected including any exceptional circumstances for specific students.
- Our policies, grades and evidence are available for review by the awarding bodies if requested.
- We will share the following information with you:
  - The [Centre Policy](#)
  - The sources of evidence used to determine your grade along with any grades/marks associated with them
  - Details of any special circumstances that have been taken into account in determining your grade, e.g. access arrangements, mitigating circumstances such as illness

## The Appeals Process

Although every effort has been made to ensure students are issued with the correct grades on results day, there will also be an appeals system as a safety net to resolve any errors not identified during the earlier parts of the process. Students who consider that an error has been made in determining their grade will have a right to appeal.

You should use the following information to decide whether to request a review.

- a. the [centre policy](#)
- b. the sources of evidence used to determine the student's grade, along with the marks/grades associated with them
- c. details of any variations in evidence used based on disruption to what that student was taught
- d. details of any special circumstances that have been considered in determining their grade, e.g. access arrangements/reasonable adjustments or mitigating circumstances such as illness.

## Centre Review

The first stage in the appeals process is to request a centre review. Before you start the process, you must consider that your grade can stay the same, it may go up but it may also go down. **When you sign the appeal form, this is confirmation that you understand that your grade could go down.**

- Students can request a centre review on the grounds that the centre
  - failed to follow its procedures properly or consistently in arriving at that result *or*
  - made an administrative error in relation to the result.
- You should request a centre review by completing the 'Stage One – Centre Review A. Student request' page of the [Summer 2021 Student Appeals Form](#) (available on the school website). This should be submitted by email to [appeals@keslichfield.org.uk](mailto:appeals@keslichfield.org.uk) by the following deadlines:
  - Priority Appeals (only available if a university or similar place is at stake) by Friday 13 August 2021 **(however we strongly recommend you do this as soon as possible after receiving results)**
  - Non-priority Appeals (all other cases) by Friday 3 September 2021
- Please note that authority to proceed with a centre review must be given by the candidate not a parent or guardian. Forms can be completed electronically, saved and submitted by email. Where a form is completed electronically, the student can type 'signed by' plus their name in place of their signature to confirm they agree to the appeal.

- If the form is NOT sent from the student's school email account (ie it is from a personal or parent email address), please also include a scan or photo of a note written and signed / dated by the student saying 'I confirm that I am happy for the school to proceed with a centre appeal of my (insert subject) grade'.
- Priority appeals can only be undertaken for students applying to higher education who did not attain their firm choice. UCAS personal ID must be provided. The student should also notify their preferred higher education provider that a review has been requested at the earliest possible opportunity so they can decide how to handle their offer.
- A student may submit a request for a review but subsequently decide they wish to withdraw it. They will be allowed to do so as long as no finding has been made. A centre review application cannot be withdrawn once a finding has been made.
- You will be informed of the outcome of the centre review no later than
  - Priority Appeals (only available if a university or similar place is at stake) by Friday 20 August 2021
  - Non-priority Appeals (all other cases) by Friday 10 September 2021
- Where a procedural or administrative error is identified, this may not result in a change of grade. Grades may also be raised or lowered.
- Requests for appeals on the grounds of academic judgement (unreasonableness) will only be considered by awarding organisations and not by centres. In these cases, an initial centre review must still be completed first to ensure that the centre has not made any procedural or administrative errors. The centre will not review its academic judgements during the centre review stage.
- A centre review must be completed and an outcome reported to the student before an appeal can be submitted to the awarding organisation.
- Whether or not a procedural or administrative failure was found, and whether or not the grade changed as a result, all students have the right to submit an appeal to the awarding organisation as the next stage in the process.

### Appeal to the awarding organisation

- Following the outcome of the centre review, students may wish to appeal to the awarding organisation.
- You should request an appeal to the awarding organisation by completing the 'Stage two – appeal to awarding organisation' pages of the [Summer 2021 Student Appeals Form](#). This should be submitted by email to [appeals@keslichfield.org.uk](mailto:appeals@keslichfield.org.uk) by the following deadlines:
  - Priority Appeals (only available if a university or similar place is at stake) by Friday 20 August 2021
  - Non-priority Appeals (all other cases) by Wednesday 15 September 2021
- **Please note that authority to proceed with a centre review must be given by the candidate not a parent or guardian. Forms can be completed electronically, saved and submitted by email. Where a form is completed electronically, the student can type 'signed by' plus their name in place of their signature to confirm they agree to the appeal.**
- If the form is NOT sent from the student's school email account (ie it is from a personal or parent email address), please also include a scan or photo of a note written and signed / dated by the student saying 'I confirm that I am happy for the school to proceed with an awarding body appeal of my (subject) grade'.
- We will submit an appeal to the awarding organisation if the student considers that:
  - a. the centre did not follow its procedure properly or consistently in arriving at the result, or during the centre review

- b. the awarding organisation 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 information the awarding organisation will require when a student appeal is submitted includes:
  - a. what they consider the centre failed to do, why that was a failure to follow the centre's procedures, and why that failure was important to the determination of the Teacher Assessed Grade
  - b. in what way they consider the awarding organisation made an administrative error, and what difference it made to the determination of the Teacher Assessed Grade
  - c. in what way they consider there was an unreasonable exercise of academic judgement:
    - i. in the selection of evidence used to determine the Teacher Assessed Grade
    - ii. in the determination of a Teacher Assessed Grade from the selected evidence.
- Appeals made on the grounds of a procedural check in relation to mitigating circumstances or access arrangements/reasonable requirements require submission of an explanation.
- Appeals made on the grounds of an unreasonable exercise of academic judgement in the choice of evidence from which to determine the grade require an explanation of the student's concerns.
- Appeals made on the grounds of an administrative error require an explanation of the perceived error.
- A student may submit a request for an appeal but subsequently decide they wish to withdraw it. Awarding organisations will accept requests for appeals to be withdrawn as long as no finding has been made. An application for an awarding organisation appeal cannot be withdrawn once a finding has been made.

### **What happens during the awarding organisation appeal?**

- The board will evaluate the learner's result in light of the grounds of appeal by considering the factors raised.
- The board will consider whether there is sufficiently persuasive evidence that the Centre deviated from its own procedures in the way(s) identified by the Learner in the grounds of appeal. The appropriateness of the Centre's procedure has already been checked by the awarding organisation as part of its external quality assurance. Most procedural errors and centre administrative errors should be rectified at centre review stage.
- Where an appeal is made on the grounds of an unreasonable exercise of academic judgement (either in the choice of evidence from which to determine the grade and/ or the determination of that grade from the evidence), the awarding organisation will take into account Ofqual's guidance which sets out that the starting point is the Teacher Assessed Grade itself and not any alternative grade put forward as part of the appeal. Therefore, the focus of any appeal will be on whether the Teacher Assessed Grade was unreasonable and not that any other grade or mark would have been reasonable.
- As the Teacher Assessed Grade is holistic in nature, the awarding organisation's independent reviewer will take a similarly holistic approach to their decision-making. The purpose of the independent review is not to review the marking of individual assessments.
- The independent reviewer will consider whether the original Teacher Assessed Grade decision was reasonable. The independent reviewer will not consider whether they would have given an alternative grade or whether an alternative grade could also reasonably have been given. There may be a difference of opinion as to the assessed grade without there being an unreasonable exercise of academic judgement.

- The reviewer will only conclude that there has been an unreasonable exercise of academic judgement if the Teacher Assessed Grade was clearly wrong – i.e. there was no basis upon which the grade could properly have been given.
- Where the appeal concerns the selection of evidence, the relevant question will usually be whether an academic decision to depart from, or not to depart from, the evidence used for the main cohort in respect of the particular student was unreasonable.
- Where the student submits an appeal on more than one ground (e.g. the awarding organisation is asked to review both procedures and the exercise of academic judgement), the appeal process is likely to take longer. This could be an important consideration for students who urgently need the outcome of their appeal.
- For appeals on multiple grounds, it is possible that one ground (e.g. a procedural error) could identify an error that impacts the reported Teacher Assessed Grade. The result of this could then be overridden by a second ground of appeal (e.g. the unreasonableness of the Teacher Assessed Grade). An appeal outcome will therefore only be reported when all submitted grounds have been evaluated. It is also possible that the awarding organisation could identify that the grade awarded was not correct on grounds other than the grounds upon which the appeal was submitted. Where this is the case, the awarding organisation will take the appropriate action to correct the grade.

### **Reporting the outcome**

- As a result of the appeal, the case will either be rejected (disallowed) or upheld (allowed) in whole or in part. The fact that an appeal has been upheld (allowed) will not necessarily result in a grade change for the student.
- Where the awarding organisation identifies a procedural error or finds alternative evidence should have been included in the range of evidence and that this may have impacted the Teacher Assessed Grade, they will report these findings to the centre and direct them to review the Teacher Assessed Grade. The centre must then inform the awarding organisation if it believes there should be a change to the grade. An awarding organisation may impose a change to the grade.
- Following final quality assurance checks, where it considers it appropriate to do so, the awarding organisation will make the grade amendment and report the outcome of the appeal, with reasons for its decision, to the centre.
- Where an unreasonable exercise of academic judgement is identified by the awarding organisation, the independent reviewer will determine the alternative grade. The awarding organisation will then report the revised grade and outcome of the appeal, with reasons, to the centre.
- The centre will share the outcome of the awarding organisation appeal, and where appropriate the next stage of the process, with the student promptly.

### **Exam Procedures Review Service**

- Following the conclusion of the awarding organisation's appeal process, a student who remains concerned their grade was incorrect may be able to apply for a procedural review to the Exam Procedures Review Service (EPRS) from the relevant regulator. There are EPRS processes for Ofqual (England) and Qualification Wales. The regulators will provide further details about the EPRS processes for summer 2021 before results days this summer.

- There is no route to Ofqual's EPRS for BTEC students. However, a complaint may be submitted to Ofqual once the appeals process has been completed, where there is reason to believe the awarding organisation has not followed its procedures in handling the appeal.

## **The Appeals Timeline**

### **Results:**

AS / A-level and Level 3 results: Tuesday 10 August 2021

GCSE and Level 2 results: Thursday 12 August 2021

### **Students must request centre review by:**

Priority appeals\*: Friday 13 August 2021

All other appeals: Friday 3 September 2021

### **Centre will inform students of outcome of centre review by:**

Priority appeals\*: Friday 20 August 2021

All other appeals: Friday 10 September 2021

### **Students must request appeal to the awarding organisation by:**

Priority appeals\*: Friday 20 August 2021

All other appeals: Wednesday 15 September 2021

### **Awarding organisation timescales**

Awarding organisations will aim to complete appeals as soon as possible and particular efforts will be made for those appeals that have been identified as priority appeals\* 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. The awarding organisations will aim to complete Stage Two of the appeals process (the awarding organisation appeals stage) within 42 calendar days of the receipt of the application.

\* A priority appeal is only available 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. Student UCAS number must be provided on the appeal form.