

1 July 2021

Dear Student

RE: Appeals for A Levels/GCSEs

I hope that you are enjoying the summer and making plans for next year. This communication is intended to provide you with details of how the appeals system will work for this summer for A Level and GCSE qualifications. We are yet to receive any information about a process for A Level equivalent qualifications such as BTECs. All of the guidance is based on information provided by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ). The College does not make any of the rules or procedures.

General points

- All communications must be via appeals@reigate.ac.uk. The College cannot respond to telephone calls, letters or in-person visits. **This address will be available from the day that results are published**
- Appeals must use the documentation provided and must be fully completed
- Appeals can only be made for the reasons permitted by JCQ
- The College cannot enter into any discussions or give advice about whether an appeal is likely to be successful, you must make that decision yourself
- Appeals must be made by students and not parents, although it would be very sensible to discuss this with them first
- Please bear in mind that your grade **may go down as the result of an appeal**. The exam board may think that the College has been too generous in its marking. If this happens, there is **absolutely no way you can still receive the original, higher grade**. This is the same arrangement as for 'normal' years. The only exception in which a request can be made and then withdrawn is where the request has not yet been actioned. Previous experience suggests appeals are dealt with very promptly, so you must be sure before you submit one
- There are two stages of appeal. The first stage involves a check of the College's administration and procedures to confirm the correct grade has been submitted to the exam board. **Again, if a lower grade should have been submitted, this will become your final grade**. The second stage is where you feel the College has made 'an unreasonable exercise of academic judgement'. This may only be carried out by the exam board and not the College
- You may ask for a stage one appeal without a stage two appeal. If you ask for a stage two appeal, you must have already actioned a stage one appeal first
- In either case, please remember that **your grade may go up, stay the same or go down**
- At present we are not planning a charge for any appeals, **unless the exam boards introduce a charge**

Key dates

Stage One:

10.00am Friday 13 August 2021	Deadline for Centre Reviews for Priority Appeals (for students applying to university who did not obtain a place at their firm choice). This must be submitted by the student.
10.00am Friday 27 August 2021	Deadline for Centre Reviews for Non-Priority Appeals (for all other students who do not meet the criteria for Priority Appeals)



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Principal • Nick Clark BSc
Chief Executive • Christopher Whelan BSc

Stage Two:

Stage two appeals may only be requested if a Stage One appeal has been carried out by the required deadline.

10.00am Wednesday 18 August 2021	Deadline for Exam Board Reviews for Priority Appeals (for students applying to university who did not obtain a place at their firm choice). This must be submitted by the student.
10.00am Friday 10 September 2021	Deadline for Exam Board Reviews for Non-Priority Appeals (for all other students who do not meet the criteria for Priority Appeals)

Procedures

Where a Higher Education place is dependent on the outcome of an appeal, **students must include their UCAS Personal ID** in correspondence. The student should also notify their preferred Higher Education provider that a review has been requested at the earliest possible opportunity, so that they can decide on how to handle the offer. This applies to **both types of appeal**.

You will need to complete the form titled **Appendix B**, which can be found at the end of this document and will also be available on our website **from the day that results are published** at www.reigate.ac.uk/results-dayinfo2021. Although this has the word 'optional' on it, it is not optional, it is a requirement. The word optional simply refers to whether the College uses this template form or designs their own.

It is important that:

- You read all of the information carefully – when you submit this form, you are doing so in the knowledge that your **grade might go up, stay the same or go down**
- Type directly into the spaces on the form in Section A
- If you are requesting a Stage Two appeal, you must also complete the Stage Two part of the form. If you are not submitting this, you should leave it blank
- Regardless of whether you are submitting a Stage One or Two appeal, you must **sign the form at the end**. The College cannot process any appeal unless this is done
- When you return the form, please do not add extra details in the email or other attachments. All of your evidence must be on the form
- In the subject line of the email, please clearly state the subject that you are appealing e.g. French, Geography, Media and whether it is just a Stage One or Stage One and Two appeal

Grounds for appeal

The requirements for each ground of appeal are different and not all grounds require any additional rationale:

- Appeals made on the grounds of general procedural check or on the grounds that there has been an unreasonable exercise of academic judgement in the determination of the grade from the basket of evidence **do not require** submission of an explanation
- Appeals made on the grounds of a procedural check in relation to mitigating circumstances or access arrangements/reasonable requirements **do require** submission of an explanation
- Appeals made on the grounds of an unreasonable exercise of academic judgement in the **choice of evidence** from which the grade is determined **do require** an explanation of the student's concerns
- Appeals made on the grounds of an administrative error **do require** an explanation of the perceived error



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When considering a Stage Two appeal, JCQ have stated:

Where an appeal is made on the grounds of an unreasonable exercise of academic judgement 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 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.

In plain English, this means:

- The emphasis is for **you to show** that the College was unreasonable
- Your work will **not be remarked externally**; the overall set of evidence will be checked to see if it was unreasonable
- You will only have your grade changed if the external reviewer believes that the College could not have had **any reason to give you** the Teacher Assessed Grade

Keeping you informed

The College will complete any Stage One Review as quickly as possible. The time needed for a Stage Two appeal will depend entirely on the exam board, although in previous years, appeals have been processed promptly. The appeals process is likely to be slow if you have not fully completed the forms – this is very important.

As soon as a decision is reached on an appeal, we will send it through to you via email. Once a decision has been made, we will not be able to enter further discussions about the outcome.

Can I ask my teacher about grades or appeals?

Under no circumstances should you or your parents attempt to discuss any grades, appeals or assessments with any of your teachers. This is strictly prohibited by exam boards and Ofqual.

Summary

I hope that this letter provides a clear breakdown of the appeals process for this summer. If you wish, you may read the full guidance here: https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/JCQ_Appeals-Guidance_Summer-2021.pdf.

Chris Whelan
Chief Executive



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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** or **administrative 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.

What is your UCAS personal ID and why is it needed?

Your UCAS personal ID is the 10 digit code included in all correspondence from UCAS. This is needed to confirm that a student's place is dependent on the outcome of the 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	
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Student Name		Candidate Number	
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Qualification title e.g. AQA GCSE English Language			
Teacher Assessed Grade issued			
Is this a priority appeal? <small>A priority appeal is only for students applying to higher education who did not attain their firm choice and wish to appeal an A level or other Level 3 qualification result.</small>	Yes No	If Yes provide your UCAS personal ID e.g. 123-456-7890	

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		Procedural Error by the centre e.g. a reasonable adjustment / access arrangement was not provided for an eligible student	
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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.

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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:

- 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
<input type="text"/>

Student signature
<input type="text"/>

Date
<input type="text"/>

Stage two – appeal to awarding organisation

This section is to be completed by the student. An awarding organisation appeal must be submitted to the centre and the centre will then submit it to the awarding organisation

Grounds for appeal

Please tick the grounds upon which you wish to appeal

1. Administrative error by the awarding organisation	
2. Procedural issue at the centre	
a. Procedural Error	
b. Issues with access arrangements / reasonable adjustments and/or mitigating circumstances	
3. Unreasonable exercise of academic judgement	
a. Selection of evidence	
b. Determination of Teacher Assessed Grade	

Evidence to support an appeal

Please provide a short explanation of what you believe went wrong and how you think this has impacted your grade where that relates to your chosen ground for appeal. In some cases you must provide a clear reason but it doesn't have to be lengthy.

1. Administrative error by the awarding organisation

You **must** provide a clear explanation. There is a 5,000 character limit.

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2 (a) Procedural Error

This is when the centre made a procedural error that has not been corrected at Stage One or the centre did not conduct its review properly and consistently. If you can, please add a further explanation below or alternatively refer to the information that you have already provided above. There is a 5,000 character limit.

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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.

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.

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.

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