

27 June 2021

Dear Parents / Carers,

**RE: Process for Appeals – GCSE and Vocational Awards Summer 2021**

We are delighted that after an extensive period of assessment, marking and stringent moderation, all GCSE and vocational grades have now been sent to the exam boards. We are enormously proud of the way the students approached this process of rigorous assessment and hope they are now enjoying a period of well-earned rest before moving on to the next stage in their education or training.

**Results Day this year is on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> August. We will be open from 8.30am until 12.30pm on this day for all students to collect their results.**

If, on the day, your child does not feel the grades they receive are a true reflection of their achievements, please encourage them to speak to me directly.

If we are unable to resolve any concerns on this day, the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ), *have set out the process for all stakeholders to follow.* This is detailed below:

**What do I do if I'm not happy with my / my child's grade?**

All students can 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, 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 incorrect 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.

### 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 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?

If students still wish to appeal following discussion with myself on results day, students should fill in the first section of the JCQ form found here: [https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/JCQ\\_Appeals-Guidance\\_Summer-2021\\_Appendix-B.pdf](https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/JCQ_Appeals-Guidance_Summer-2021_Appendix-B.pdf) and send it to [ntreacy@cityofpeterboroughacademy.org](mailto:ntreacy@cityofpeterboroughacademy.org) from 31<sup>st</sup> August.

### What are the deadlines for appeals?

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 / my child's grades. Why can't you tell us?

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).

If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind Regards,



Nicola Treacy  
Deputy Principal (Quality of Education)



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