

# **GCSE, AS and A Level; Student and Parent Guide - Summer Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGs) 2021 and Appeals**

## **What is this document for and what will it tell me?**

Following the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic, the UK government has decided that the Summer 2021 examination series will not go ahead as planned. Instead, teachers will determine your grades, based upon a range of evidence verified by the College.

These results will then be reviewed by the exam boards who designed each course, before awarding the final grades which reflect your performance on content you have been taught and allow you to confidently progress to the next stage of your education or into employment.

This guidance document provides an overview of the most important information that you and your parents/guardians need to know about how grades will be awarded this summer. This includes a timeline of what is happening and when, how teachers will determine your grades and when you will receive your results.

## **How will you be assessed?**

Teachers will initially determine your grades, which will then be reviewed by the College. The professional judgement of teachers will only be based on what you have been taught and your teachers will use a range of evidence from across the course of study to make their decision.

Teachers can assess you based on:

- Records of your performance on the content you have been taught over the entire course of your studies.
- Non-exam assessment, often referred to as coursework or internal assessments, even if you have not fully completed it.
- Work you have produced in tasks that reflects the specification, format and marking of exam boards. This could include substantial classwork, homework, internal tests or mock exams. Importantly, any internally set tests that teachers undertake with students are not formal exams, nor are they designed to play the role of the Summer 2021 exams. Your teachers do not need to assess you on every aspect of each subject. They will need a range of evidence that shows your performance on the aspects you have been taught. In most cases, the range of evidence that your teachers use to inform your grade will be consistent across your class or cohort for each qualification. However, the College may decide that a different range of evidence may be more appropriate to fairly inform your grade, if, for example, you have missed significantly more teaching than others in your class.

## **Keeping you in the know**

Your teachers will tell you which pieces of work will be used as evidence to inform your overall grade. You will have the opportunity to raise any concerns about the evidence being used, for example, if the evidence was affected by personal circumstances, such as illness. Your teacher

will make the final judgement about what evidence is to be included - this is not a negotiation. Your teachers will not be able to tell you the grade they have submitted to the exam board.

## **How is the evidence used?**

No single piece of evidence will necessarily be more important than another, as teachers will be assessing you based on a range of evidence that can give an overall picture of your performance. Ofqual has issued separate guidance to schools, colleges and teachers about the submission of teacher assessed grades, including the evidence that can be used and this will be closely followed.

## **Determining grades**

Once all the evidence is selected and assessments are complete, teachers will decide on an overall grade. They will do this objectively – so, if you are performing consistently at a grade B standard in a subject at A Level, you should be awarded a grade B. Exam boards will provide further advice and guidance to show the standard of work expected for particular grades, including additional grade descriptors, to supplement those previously published by Ofqual. It is important to say that much like with exams in normal years, the grades issued by teachers, schools and colleges will not take account of your potential. They will be a snapshot of the standard you are performing at based on a wide range of evidence. It should be no easier or harder for you to achieve a grade this year based on your performance than in previous years.

## **What happens after my teacher determines my grades in a subject?**

Once a teacher has determined your grade, it will be reviewed by other teachers and then confirmed by the Curriculum Lead and Head of Department, so grades are determined consistently and in line with the College's Teacher Assessed Grades procedure. Exam boards check these policies to make sure they meet their requirements. The College will make appropriate arrangements for reasonable adjustments, access arrangements and special consideration if you have special educational needs, and/or are disabled, which will have been approved by the Exams Department in advance following your notification when joining your programme of study. Special consideration requests will not apply in the usual way this summer because you will not be taking exams. If you think that your performance in an assessment has been affected by illness or personal circumstances, you should talk to your teacher about this as soon as possible. It is important that you raise any such instances before your teacher submits your grade. You should not wait until after you get your results.

## **When do I receive my results and what happens next?**

AS and A Level students will receive their results on Tuesday 10 August 2021.

GCSE students will receive their results on Thursday 12 August 2021.

You will be notified nearer the time on when and where you collect your results from College.

## Appeals

Although everyone will be working hard to make sure you are issued with the correct grades on results day, there will also be an appeals system as a safety net to fix any genuine errors that were not identified earlier on.

If you believe an error has been made in determining your grade, you will have a right to appeal. There are two stages to the appeals process:

### **Stage 1: Centre Review**

If you don't think you have been issued with the correct grade, you can appeal to the College if you feel there has been either an administrative or procedural error made. We will review whether:

- An administrative error was made, e.g. an incorrect grade was submitted; an incorrect assessment mark when determining your grade.
- A procedure was not applied correctly, e.g. the Centre Policy was not followed, internal quality assurance was not undertaken, access arrangements or declared mitigating circumstances were not taken into consideration, such as illness.

To help you decide whether to appeal, you can request that the College shares with you the following information on results day:

- 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 considered in determining your grade, e.g. access arrangements, mitigating circumstances such as illness.

### **Stage 2: Appeal to the Exam Board**

If you still don't think you have the correct grade after the centre review is complete, you can ask the College to appeal to the exam board on one of the following grounds, who will review whether:

- The College made an unreasonable exercise of academic judgement in the choice of evidence from which they determined your grade and/or in the determination of your grade from that evidence. A reasonable judgement is one that is supported by evidence. An exercise of judgement will not be unreasonable simply because a student considers that an alternative grade should have been awarded, even if the student puts forward supporting evidence. There may be a difference of opinion without there being an unreasonable exercise of judgement. The reviewer will not remark individual assessments to make judgements but will take a holistic approach based on the overall evidence.
- The College did not apply a procedure correctly, e.g. they did not follow the Centre Policy, did not undertake internal quality assurance, did not take account of access arrangements or mitigating circumstances, such as illness.

- The exam board made an administrative error, e.g. they changed your grade during the processing of grades.

At both stages of the process you will need to submit your appeal to the College and give them your written consent to conduct the appeal, or submit it to the exam board on your behalf. It's important to remember that your grade can go down, up, or stay the same through either stage of the appeals process.

If you have a place at university that is dependent on your appeal, you should tell the university you are hoping to go to so they can decide how to handle your offer. You should also tell the College so they can ask the exam board to prioritise your appeal.

The timelines for priority and non-priority appeals will be as follows:

- » **10 August to 7 September:** priority appeals window
- » **10 August to 16 August:** student requests centre review
- » **10 August to 20 August:** centre conducts centre review
- » **11 August to 23 August:** centre submits appeal to exam board
- **10 August to end October:** majority of non-priority appeals take place
  - » **10 August to 3 September:** student requests centre review
  - » **10 August to 10 September:** centre conducts centre review
  - » **11 August to 17 September:** centre submits appeal to exam board

Finally, if you believe the exam board has made a procedural error in handling your appeal, you can apply to Ofqual's Exam Procedures Review Service to review the process undertaken by the exam board.