



# Clacton County High School

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Higher Expectations, Raising Aspirations

## **GCSE/Vocational 2021 Results: Information for students (August update)**

### **How were my grades arrived at this year?**

Grades this summer were based on Centre Assessed Grades (CAGs). CAGs were submitted to the exam boards by us as a holistic assessment of students' 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.

### **What do I do if I'm not happy with my 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?**

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 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 is an unreasonable exercise of academic judgement appeal?**

The focus of this type of appeal will be on whether the selection of evidence and/or the grade you were given was unreasonable. The exam board's independent reviewer will review the selection of evidence used to decide your grade and/or your work. Only if the reviewer decides that the evidence selected and/or your grade were clearly wrong will they decide that your school or college's academic judgement was unreasonable.

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. The reviewer will not uphold (i.e. agree to) your appeal merely because other evidence might have been selected or a different grade could have been given.

### **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 CAG. There is no appeal if your grade goes down.

### **What's a priority appeal?**

Priority appeals are only open to A level students starting university this autumn.

### **What should I do if I don't get into my first choice of university?**

First, don't panic. Speak to the sixth form team about your options. You may wish to go through clearing, or sit the autumn exams 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 I appeal a grade?**

Students must read the JCQ Student and Parent guide before appealing, which is available on the JCQ website.

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 JCQ form, 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 the school.

### **How do I make an appeal/raise a query?**

Following results day, students should express a desire to appeal or raise a query via the link to the Google form:

<https://forms.gle/QYXfDG4tf9Hbj3JK7>

Students will then receive the JCQ appeal PDF, they will need to fill in the first section of the and send it back to the email above.

### **What are the deadlines for non-priority appeals?**

Non-priority appeals are for GCSEs or vocational qualifications.

The deadline for submitting a centre review is 3 September; and the deadline for submitting an awarding organisation appeal is 10 September.

From results day to 3 September 2021	Window for students to request a centre review
From results day to 10 September 2021	Centres conduct centre reviews
From results day to 17 September 2021	Centres submit appeals to awarding organisations

**When will I know the outcome of the appeal?**

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.

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.

Due to the nature of appeals this year, awarding organisations may require additional input from centres, and it may not always be possible to meet this target.