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Approved by	Education Executive Team	Next review	

## Exams 2021 Appeal Policy

### Introduction

The summer 2021 exam series could not take place because of the COVID-19 pandemic. As many students as possible will now receive qualifications based on Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGs), which are based on the content they have been taught. This policy sets out the exceptional appeals process for results issued in summer 2021.

This policy is based on the JCQ Guidance ‘A Guide to appeals processes Summer 2021’ (‘the JCQ Appeal Guidance’) and is designed to help students and their parents/carers at Oakbank School understand clearly the appeal options and routes for 2021 exam grades.

In summary there are two stages of appeals for exams this year:

- **Stage one** centre review – school level appeal conducted internally by the school
- **Stage two** awarding organisation appeal – appeal submitted by the school on student’s behalf to the awarding organisation (i.e. AQA)

### Scope

This policy applies to all appeals and complaints relating to the award of TAGs as part of the 2021 Summer Exam series, except for complaints relating to:

- any decision to withdraw an entry due to insufficient evidence on which to determine a Teacher Assessed Grade, or not to make an entry in the first place; and
- any failure or delay in offering or following this policy

In which case the School’s Concerns and Complaint’s Policy will apply. Where it is not clear which policy applies, please speak to the School’s Complaints Coordinator Mr Bertrand, [rbertrand@oakbank.anthemtrust.uk](mailto:rbertrand@oakbank.anthemtrust.uk) who will be able to provide guidance.

This guidance applies to all qualifications listed in the JCQ Appeal Guidance all qualifications offered at this school.

## Key Date

Publication of GCSE results – 12 August 2021

## Key dates for appeals

From result day to 3 September 2021	Window for students to request a stage one centre review
From result day to 10 September 2021	Centres (the school) conduct centre reviews
From result day to 17 September 2021	Centres (the school) submit appeals to awarding organisations

## Stage One – Centre Review

### Grounds for appeal

Any student, including a Private Candidate, may submit a request for a stage one centre review on the following grounds:

- **Procedural error** – the school has failed to follow its procedures properly or consistently in arriving at that result; or
- **Administrative error** – the school has made an administrative error in relation to the result.

#### Procedural error

The focus of a review on procedural grounds will be whether the School followed its procedure properly and consistently in arriving at the grade being challenged.

Examples of procedural failure a student may raise could relate to:

- the existence and consideration of mitigating circumstances at the time of an assessment
- the provision of agreed access arrangements/reasonable adjustments for an assessment
- the process for determining and quality assuring grades (for example internal standardisation, authentication of student work).

## Administrative error

An example of an administrative error is the transposing of grades for students with similar names.

## Grounds of academic judgement /unreasonableness

Requests for appeals on the grounds of academic judgement /unreasonableness can only be considered by awarding organisations at stage two and not by schools. If a student wishes to submit an appeal on the grounds of academic judgement/reasonableness, you should still proceed to submit an appeal at stage one, via the request form and as set out in this policy. We will conduct an initial stage one centre review to ensure that the School has not made any procedural or administrative errors. You can then proceed to stage two after stage one has concluded if you wish to do so. We will not be able to review any academic judgements during the stage one centre review stage.

## Deciding whether to appeal / evidence

To decide whether to request a review, students will need access to certain information:

- the centre policy (available on the school website)
- the sources of evidence used to determine the student's grade, along with the marks/grades associated with them
- details of any variations in evidence used based on disruption to what that student was taught
- 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

Records of student evidence will be kept accessible by the School so that they can be used if a student wishes to appeal their grade. Please speak to Mrs Green, Exams Officer [exams@oakbank.anthemtrust.uk](mailto:exams@oakbank.anthemtrust.uk) if you require assistance with getting copies of these records.

## Request form

At Appendix A you can find the JCQ template form which students can complete and submit to request a stage one centre appeal. Students should complete Section A of the form and leave Section B for the School to complete. Please send completed request forms to Mrs Green, Exams Officer.

## Considerations

We will accept and process/investigate any request for a stage one centre review from a student.

In considering stage one centre reviews we will access all relevant records and, as required by the JCQ's Appeal Guidance, we will consider:

- the reason presented by the student for the review, where this has been specified and any evidence provided by the student about issues that were not known about at the time the grade was determined
- the School's approved policy and whether it was followed properly and consistently
- the evidence which was used to determine the student's grade
- any relevant assessment records detailing for the student any amendments to the range of evidence used for the cohort and, where applicable, steps taken to address any known mitigating circumstances/special consideration or approved access arrangements/reasonable adjustments

- a record that the grades had been signed off by at least two teachers in the subject, one of whom was the head of department/subject lead or Headteacher where there was only one teacher in the department/subject.
- the record, where it exists, of any relevant pre-results communications between the School and student (for example, where a student has raised mitigating circumstances earlier in the process).
- relevant School administration records.

In cases where we consider that there has been a procedural failure or administrative error, we will need to decide whether this affected the grade submitted to the awarding organisation. It is possible for a procedural failure or an administrative error to be identified but for this not to have had any impact on the grade awarded. In this case the outcome of the review would be that the grade stays the same.

Please note that where we have completed relevant procedural and administrative checks in advance of an appeal through our own quality assurance or previous appeal, we do not need to repeat the checks as long as the issue raised by the student has been addressed by the checks carried out previously and the records are available and can be provided to the awarding organisation in the event of an appeal to the awarding organisation. In cases where a student raises an issue that hasn't been considered in checks that were conducted in advance of results day, then this new issue will be considered under this policy.

### **Outcome**

The resulting outcome may be that the grade is raised, stays the same or is lowered, depending on the impact of the error or failure.

After concluding the considerations, the School will complete Section B of the JCQ Form at Appendix A. Where an appeal requests a grade change, the form will be reviewed and signed off by a member of the School senior leadership team and checked by the Trust Education Director. The completed form will then be sent back to the student.

If the School identifies an error with the grade it submitted to the awarding organisation, we will submit a revised grade with rationale for the grade change to the awarding organisation. If the awarding organisation is satisfied with the rationale presented by us and it considers it is appropriate to correct the result, it will issue a revised grade.

### **Timescale**

Students must submit stage one appeals from results day to 3 September. The School will aim to complete stage one appeals in accordance with the key dates set out above by 10 September 2021.

### **Withdrawing appeals**

A student may withdraw a request for a review up until the point a finding has been made and signed off in accordance with this policy.

## Stage Two – Awarding Organisation Appeals

### Grounds for appeal

Any student, including a Private Candidate, can submit a stage two awarding organisation appeal on one of the following grounds:

- the School did not follow its procedure properly or consistently in arriving at the result, or during the centre review
- the awarding organisation made an administrative error in relation to the result
- the School 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.

You should not submit a stage two appeal unless you have completed a stage one centre appeal and the relevant results day has passed.

### Request form

At Appendix B you can find the JCQ template form which students can complete and submit to request a stage two awarding organisation appeal. Please send completed request forms to Mrs Green, Exams Officer. The School will then send the form to the awarding organisation on your behalf. The awarding organisations will not accept appeals directly from students and/or their parents/carers.

The School must submit a student's appeal if requested and must provide the required full supporting evidence. Once we have submitted your stage two appeal, we will let you know.

### Evidence

For the JCQ list of evidence required for stage two appeals please see Appendix C of the JCQ Appeals Guidance, also copied at Appendix C of this Policy. The checklist is to be completed by the School and the checklist together with the listed evidence will be submitted by the School at the time of the appeal where at all possible to avoid delays.

If the appeal is solely on the grounds of an awarding organisation administrative error, the appeal need only demonstrate that the final grade the centre submitted to the awarding organisation was different to the grade issued by the awarding organisation.

Please note that the requirements for each ground of appeal are different and not all grounds require any additional rationale:

- appeals made on the grounds of a 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 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 to determine the grade 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.
- a clear statement that grades may be raised, stay the same or be lowered as the result of an appeal, with space to confirm that the student understands this and consents to those outcomes

- relevant accompanying evidence, (centres may find it appropriate to upload the evidence checklist included in Appendix C, alongside their evidence, if they think it would be helpful to the awarding organisation)
- a named contact at the centre who can handle any awarding organisation queries

## Outcome

Appeals 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. The outcome of the appeal may result in your grade remaining the same, being lowered or raised.

## Reviewing the grade

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 TAG,

They will report these findings back to us and direct us to review the TAG. We will then inform the awarding organisation if we believe there should be a change to the grade. An awarding organisation may impose a change to the grade.

Appeals made on the grounds of procedural error will be evaluated by an awarding organisation staff member or an independent reviewer appointed by the awarding organisation. 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, back to us.

Where an unreasonable exercise of academic judgement is identified by the awarding organisation, an independent reviewer appointed by the awarding organisation will determine the alternative grade. The awarding organisation will then report the revised grade and outcome of the appeal, with reasons, back to us.

We will share the outcome of the awarding organisation appeal, and where appropriate the next stage of the process, with students promptly.

## Timescale

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. Requests for appeals should be submitted by schools by 17 September 2021. Students will need to submit stage two request forms in as soon as possible within the above windows to ensure the school can meet these timeframes.

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. The awarding organisation will send the outcome to the School and we will then send this on to you without delay.

A student may withdraw a request for an appeal until the stage when a finding has been made by the awarding organisation.

### **Beyond Stage Two**

After stage two, there is no further opportunity to appeal to the awarding organisation. If you remain unhappy with the TAG or exam process after stage two has concluded, the next step is to contact the regulator. The awarding organisation will include the next appropriate steps, where applicable, in their appeal outcome letter which you will receive via the School.

### **Support and advice**

We understand that the exam period this year is particularly complex. If you have any concerns or questions, or require any further support with your exams or the appeal process, including for example help with completing the stage one or stage two request forms or help getting access to or understanding evidence which TAGs were based on, please speak to our named contact for exam appeals: Mrs Green, Exams Officer.

### **Record Keeping**

The School will keep a record of all appeals made under this policy and will keep the Education Director regularly updated as to the number and progress of appeals.

## Appendix A – Stage One Centre Review Student Request Form

### 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.

*This form is also available here: [JCQ Appeals Guidance Summer 2021 - Appendix B](#)*

Centre Name		Centre Number	
Student Name		Candidate Number	
Qualification title e.g. AQA GCSE English Language			
Teacher Assessed Grade issued			
Choose an item.			
<b>Grounds for centre review</b> <i>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.</i>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Administrative Error by the centre</li> <li>e.g. the wrong grade/mark was recorded against an item of evidence</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Procedural Error by the centre</li> <li>e.g. a reasonable adjustment / access arrangement was not provided for an eligible student</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Supporting evidence</b> <i>Please provide a short explanation of what you believe went wrong and how you think this has impacted your grade.</i>			



## 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		Student signature		Date	
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## B) Centre review outcome

This section should be completed by the centre and shared with the student as a record of the outcome of the centre review.

### Centre Review Outcome

*Please tick the outcome of the review and then record the original grade and the revised grade if applicable.*

Upheld	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not upheld	<input type="checkbox"/>	Partially upheld	<input type="checkbox"/>
Original Teacher Assessed Grade	<input type="checkbox"/>	Revised Teacher Assessed Grade if applicable	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>

### Information considered by the centre

*Please provide a short explanation of the evidence that you have reviewed.*

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### Rationale for the outcome of the centre review

*Outline the centre's findings from the centre review e.g. procedural or administrative error and if relevant, details of the error.*

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**Authorisation and dates of next stages**

*Please complete the boxes as appropriate. Boxes 1 and 2 must be completed in every case. Boxes 3 and 4 need only be completed when requesting a grade change.*

1. Date that the decision and rationale was issued to student		2. Date student informed of how to proceed to stage 2 (appeal to awarding organisation)	
3. Confirmation that a senior leader has authorised any grade change		4. Date that grade change is submitted to awarding organisation	

## Appendix B – Stage Two Appeal to Awarding Organisation Request Form

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.

<b>Grounds for appeal</b>	
<i>Please tick the grounds upon which you wish to appeal</i>	
<b>1) Administrative error by the awarding organisation</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>2) Procedural issue at the centre</b>	
a) Procedural Error	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Issues with access arrangements / reasonable adjustments and/or mitigating circumstances	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>3) Unreasonable exercise of academic judgement</b>	
a) Selection of evidence	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Determination of Teacher Assessed Grade	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Evidence to support an appeal</b>
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.
<b>1) Administrative error by the awarding organisation</b> <i>You must provide a clear explanation.</i>
<b>2) (a) Procedural Error</b>
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.

**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.

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**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.

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**3) (b) Determination of the Teacher Assessed Grade**

You can provide a short explanation of the reason for your appeal if you want to.

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**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	
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## Appendix C Stage Two Evidence Checklist

This is a checklist of the evidence that schools and colleges will be required to submit to the Awarding Organisation in the event of a student appeal to the Awarding Organisation on either procedural or academic judgement grounds. Centres may also find this evidence useful when conducting centre reviews.

We recommend that subject teachers and Heads of Department are asked to review the checklist once teacher assessed grades have been submitted to ensure that all documentation is complete, accurate and easily accessible to staff who will be completing centre reviews and submitting appeals. It may be helpful to note the name and location of relevant documentation so that it can be easily retrieved if needed during the centre review and appeals processes.

We also recommend that you submit the completed checklist along with all required evidence, when submitting an appeal to the Awarding Organisation. This may reduce the need for the Awarding Organisation to contact centre staff with queries about the evidence submitted.

*This form is also available here: [JCQ Appeals Guidance Summer 2021 - Appendix C](#)*

<b>Qualification Level:</b>	
<b>Subject:</b>	

	<b>The cohort assessment record (or equivalent centre documentation) including the following:</b>	<i>If this is not contained in the assessment record, please identify the appropriate document that has the information. This will need to be submitted to the Awarding Organisation in the event of an appeal.</i>	<i>Explanatory notes</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> 1	The roles of the two members of staff who checked and confirmed the grades for this subject.		
<input type="checkbox"/> 2	The evidence selected for the cohort and an explanation of how the evidence has been used to support the determination of grades.		The explanation should be sufficient to enable the Awarding Organisation to understand the approach to the determination of grades at a cohort level. It should specify, for example, if greater weight has been given to one or more assessments and how coverage of the assessment objectives has been achieved.

<input type="checkbox"/> 3	Details of individual variations in the evidence selected for students within the cohort and a rationale for each variation.		This should detail all cases where the selection of evidence for an individual student varies from that selected for the cohort, including variations required as a result of access arrangements, mitigating circumstances, disruption to teaching and learning, concerns about authenticity or because the student is a private candidate.
<input type="checkbox"/> 4	Confirmation of any mitigating circumstances which have been taken into account for individual students, and an explanation of the way in which they have been taken into account.		
<input type="checkbox"/> 5	Confirmation of any access arrangements or reasonable adjustments agreed for individual students, and an explanation of the way in which any failure to provide agreed access arrangements or reasonable adjustments has been taken into account.		
	Additional documentation	<i>Please indicate what documentation is available and its location.</i>	<i>When submitting an appeal to the awarding organisation, you need only upload this documentation for the student who has requested the appeal.</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> 6	Any available additional records relating to the evidence selection for private candidates included in the cohort.		For example, any supporting documentation provided by a third party involved in the grading decision.

<input type="checkbox"/> 7	Any available correspondence or records of discussions with students or parents about concerns related to the grading process.		Teachers are not expected to document all conversations about student or parental concerns, but records that are available should be submitted to the Awarding Organisation in the event of an appeal.
<input type="checkbox"/> 8	A copy of information shared with the student about the evidence selected, and marks or grades awarded for each item of evidence.		
<input type="checkbox"/> 9	Details of any procedural or administrative errors which have come to light since the original submission of teacher assessed grades, and confirmation of action taken to address these.		
	Student performance evidence	<i>Please indicate what documentation is available and its location.</i>	<i>When submitting an appeal to the awarding organisation, you need only upload this documentation for the student who has requested the appeal.</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> 10	All available student evidence which has been used in determining the grade.		
	Centre review documentation	<i>Please indicate what documentation is available and its location</i>	<i>When submitting an appeal to the awarding organisation, you need only upload this documentation for the student who has requested the appeal.</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> 11	A copy of the student's request for a centre review and a copy of the centre's response.		If any procedural or administrative errors were identified by the centre, the response to the student should make it clear what action has been taken as a result.