

EXAMINATION INFORMATION

Teacher Assessed Grades FAQs

As you are aware, the cancellation of 2021 national exams meant that teachers were required to award Teacher Assessed Grades [TAGs] for GCSEs, A Levels and BTEC qualifications.

1. How were the Teacher Assessed Grades awarded?

The Teacher Assessed Grades are based only on the students' performance in the published sources. The selected sources of evidence were published in May 2021 and students were given the opportunity to highlight concerns. [Link](#)

A TAG Evidence Report has been issued, along with your official results. This gives you an overview of the grades you received in each selected source of evidence. The assessments align with those published on our website. It is important to understand that some assessments were more valid and representative than others and we did not merely award an average grade.

2. What procedures were put in place to ensure students were awarded an accurate and fair grade?

To avoid bias and ensure that each grade was representative of the attainment demonstrated in these assessments, the following measures were implemented:

1. Our Centre Policy and internal protocols were devised following guidance from JCQ, Ofqual, the examination boards and the Association of School and College Leaders
2. All staff participated in compulsory Objectivity and Avoiding Bias training
3. April/May assessments were blind-marked to ensure objectivity
4. Standardisation and moderation of marking took place to ensure mark schemes were applied consistently
5. The selected sources of evidence being used to award grades was published in May and students were given the opportunity to raise concerns
6. All students received their entitled access arrangements
7. Individual student mitigating circumstances were reviewed by a specialist panel and all staff were advised on the correct adjustment to apply
8. The Curriculum Leaders reviewed every grade decision
9. The SENDCo reviewed all grades of students entitled to access arrangements and those with Special Educational Needs
10. The Senior Leadership Team reviewed a large sample of grade decisions in every subject
11. The Curriculum Leaders and the Headteacher signed our declaration to confirm that all Quality Assurance procedures were followed in line with our Centre Policy. [Link](#)
12. Examination boards reviewed and approved our Centre policy and internal Quality Assurance procedures
13. Examination boards reviewed and approved a sample of student work to ensure grades have been correctly assigned

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

Your first step is to review your TAG Evidence Record outlining all the grades that were awarded for each selected source of evidence. Whilst you may be disappointed by your result, you must keep in mind that Teachers could only use data from the selected sources of evidence showing the attainment achieved by each student.

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. The design, content and assessment of these papers will be the same as in a normal year. Students wishing to do Autumn examinations should contact our Exam Officer Mr Rawson, nrawson@hestoncs.org, by 10 September 2021.

4. What are the grounds for appeal?

There are four main grounds for appeal, as dictated by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ). They are:

1. You think we have made an **administrative error**: an example of this would be putting the wrong information into a spreadsheet.
2. You think we have made a **procedural error**: this means we have not properly followed our own process, as approved by the exam board. An example of this would be where you have been told you should have received extra time for assessments but this was not given in a certain subject.
3. You think the **academic judgement on the selection of evidence was unreasonable**: you think the evidence used to grade you was not reasonable.
4. You think the **academic judgement on the grade you were given was unreasonable**.

5. 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.

6. 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.

7. What is a priority appeal?

Priority appeals will be handled more quickly than other appeals, where possible before UCAS’s advisory deadline of 8 September.

Priority appeals are only open to **A level students starting university this Autumn, who have missed out on the conditions of their firm offer.**

If you decided not to confirm a firm conditional offer and to go through clearing instead, JCQ cannot offer you a priority appeal.

JCQ cannot offer priority appeals for GCSE students, unfortunately.

When making a priority appeal, students will have to include their UCAS number so it can be confirmed that it is a genuine priority appeal.

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

First, don't panic. Speak to Ms Hall and Mr Naqvi about your options. You may wish to go through clearing, or sit the Autumn exams or Summer exams next year to try 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).

9. 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. We will send this request 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.

10. How do I make an appeal?

Having reviewed your TAG Evidence Report, if you still feel you would like to appeal you should request a **Stage 1: Centre Review** through this Google Form. [Link](#)

11. What are the deadlines for priority appeals?

The deadline for requesting a priority appeal is **16 August** (students cannot appeal before results day on 10 August).

We will attempt to complete the centre review by **20 August***. If students wish to progress this to an Awarding Organisation appeal, they must send the completed form to the School by **10am 23 August** for priority appeals.

*At both stages of the appeals process, there may be the need for specialist, expert knowledge (e.g. subject teachers, SEND knowledge). This may not be possible in August. In such cases, we may have to wait until the start of term, but priority appeals will still be treated as a priority.

12. What are the deadlines for non-priority appeals?

Non-priority appeals are any A levels, GCSEs or vocational qualifications, where a firm university place is not pending.

The deadline for submitting a centre review is **3 September**; and the deadline for submitting an awarding organisation appeal is **17 September [15 September to the School]**.