

12<sup>th</sup> July 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

### **Re: Year 11 GCSE Results and TAG Appeals**

The process of marking and submitting year 11 Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGs) is now complete. Results for all subjects will be released to students on **Thursday 12 August 2021**. Details will follow regarding timings of this day once we are sure on what the National restrictions will be at the time of results.

As in any normal year, if students are unhappy with their grades then they are able to appeal on certain grounds to see if an error has been made when awarding the grade. Unlike in a normal year, in 2021 the appeals are being made to schools instead of exam boards. This difference is because in 2021 it is schools, and not exam boards, that have awarded the GCSE and vocational (VTQ) grades to students. Please see below for information about the appeals process for 2021. We have laid these out in a 'question and answer' format.

### **How were my / my child's grades arrived at this year?**

Grades this summer were based on Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGs). TAGs 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 / my child's 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 which may be preferable to some students. The design, content and assessment of these papers will be the same as in a normal year.

#### **Oak Academy**

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## 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 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's a priority appeal?

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

JCQ cannot offer priority appeals for GCSE students, unfortunately.

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## 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?

Following results day on 12 August 2021, students and parents should fill in the first section (Stage One Appeals) of the JCQ form [here](#) and send it to Hayley Richley, Vice Principal [oaexamappeals@leaf.bournemouth.sch.uk](mailto:oaexamappeals@leaf.bournemouth.sch.uk)

Appeals can be made at the following times:

### Stage One Appeals

Thursday 12 August 2021 to 27 August 2021 (students cannot appeal before results day on 12 August 2021). Appeals received by 27 August 2021 will be processed at Stage One by Friday 03 September 2021\*.

We will give priority to processing appeals from students whose places at college or sixth-form have been affected by their results. Appeals received by 27 August 2021 will be processed at Stage One by Friday 03 September 2021.

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## Stage Two Appeals

Friday 03 September 2021 to Friday 10 September 2021. If students wish to progress to an awarding organisation appeal (Stage Two), they must send the completed form to us by Friday 10 September 2021.

\*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 urgent appeals will still be treated as urgent. What are the deadlines for appeals? The deadline for submitting a centre review (Stage One) appeal is Friday 27 August 20

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

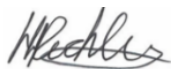
We are forbidden from disclosing the Teacher Assessed Grades to any third party, including students and parents, until results days. Any teacher or member of staff who does this is committing exam malpractice.

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).

I appreciate that there is a lot of information in this letter. If you would like to discuss any of the points above in more detail, please do not hesitate to get in touch at [hrichley@leaf.bournemouth.sch.uk](mailto:hrichley@leaf.bournemouth.sch.uk)

Yours sincerely



Hayley Richley  
Vice Principal – Standards and Curriculum

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