



Guidance for students, parents and guardians GCSEs and AS/A Levels in England Summer 2021

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Introduction

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, they have instructed teachers to determine student grades, based upon a range of evidence which will be verified by schools/colleges.

The results submitted by schools/colleges will be reviewed by the exam boards who designed each course, before awarding the final grades which reflect individual student performance on content that has been taught.

The process outlined has been planned by JCQ and the exam boards who have been working together actively to support teachers, schools and colleges this summer.

As instructed by the Department for Education, OFQUAL and the JCQ, we will be setting our own approach for teachers to follow which will be developed in line with guidance from the exam boards, Ofqual and the Department for Education.

This document provides a range of information:

- A timeline of what is happening and when;
- The process for how teachers, schools and colleges will determine your grades including specific information related to FBA
- Results Day information

You can find more information in the full guidance document, published on the JCQ website

<https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/JCQ-Guidance-on-the-Determination-of-Grades-for-A-AS-Levels-and-GCSEs-Summer-2021.pdf>

Summary Overview

The document that follows provides all the detail and references that you will need; however, below is a simple summary of the key points for you to review and save.

Centre Policy

Using the training and guidance from OFQUAL, the Department for Education and the JCQ, the school writes a Centre (school) Policy for awarding grades this summer

The Centre Policy is submitted to the exam boards for approval

Collection of Evidence

Teachers collect a range of evidence to show your performance in a subject.
Students will be informed of the evidence being used to make grading judgements.

Teacher Assessed Grades

Your teachers will use the evidence to make a holistic judgement of your grade based on your performance.

Moderation and Checking

Subject departments and the school leadership team will moderate and check that:

- Grading is fair and objective
- Grading is based on a range of evidence
- Grading took into account student access arrangements.

Grade Submission

The Head of School will sign off the grades and submit them to the exam boards by the 18th June

Results

The results will be released to students on:

- Year 13 – Tuesday 10th August
- Year 11 – Thursday 12th August

(The details on when and where you collect your results will be communicated closer to the time. Our plans will be informed by any Covid and social distancing measures which are still in place in August)

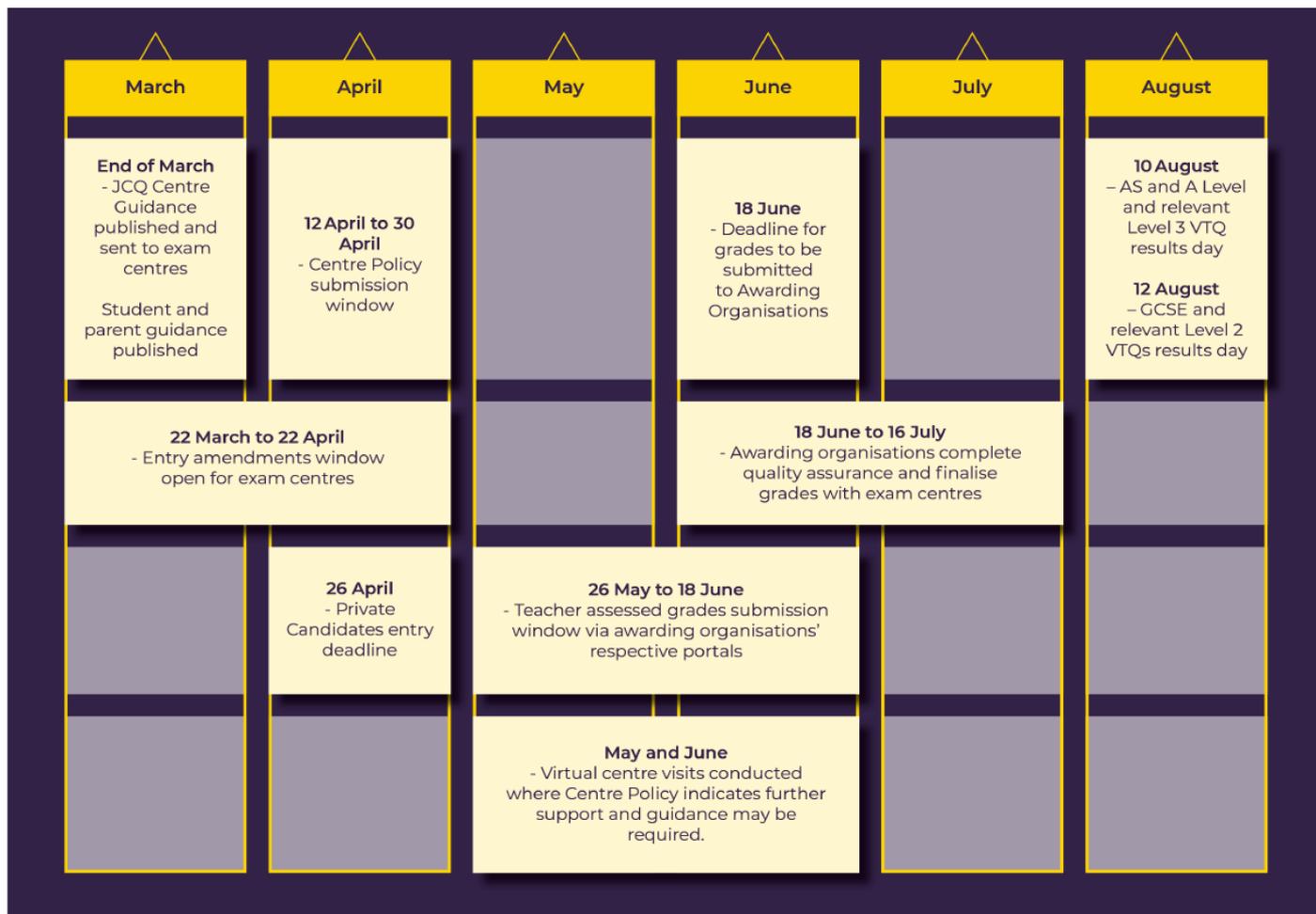
Appeals

There is an appeals process if you believe there has been:

- Stage 1: an administrative error
- Stage 2: the school has made an unreasonable exercise of academic judgement

What is happening, and when?

The diagram below shows the key dates and actions which will take place in schools and colleges across the country



Centre Policy – this is a document written by individual schools/colleges that summarises a centre's approach to assessment and quality assuring the centre determined grades they award to students, based on the evidence they have produced. This has to be submitted to the exam boards for quality assurance and approval.

Awarding organisations – these are the exam boards

Internal Deadlines

Students will continue to complete lessons and a range of assessed work throughout the next half term. This may be in the form of coursework, non-examined assessments (NEA), formal assessments and in-class assessments. The nature of and number of in-class assessments will vary depending on the subject requirements.

Apart from in exceptional circumstances, all assessed work and assessments will be completed by Friday 28th May.

From May 28th – 18th June, the teachers and leaders at the school will be involved in the standardisation, moderation and checking of the teacher assessed grades prior to their submission to the examination boards.

How will you be assessed?

Teachers will initially determine your grades in your individual subjects.

The grades will be discussed and scrutinised at a departmental level before being reviewed by the school leadership team.

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 set by the school that reflects the specification, format and marking of exam boards. This could include substantial classwork, homework, internal tests or mock exams.
- Other tests and assessments which have been developed using exam board material to gather further evidence.

Your teachers do not need to assess you on every aspect of each subject. They just need a range of evidence that shows your performance on the aspects you have been taught.

Wherever possible, the range of evidence that your teachers use to inform your grade will be consistent across your class or cohort for each qualification; however, we 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.

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.

Teachers and departments will follow the advice and guidance to show the standard of work expected for particular grades, including additional grade descriptors which have been provided by the exam boards.

The judgement

The grading process, much like with exams in normal years, will not take account of your potential. Teachers, schools and colleges have been asked to grade you at 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.

Keeping you in the know

- Your teachers will tell you which pieces of work will be used as evidence to inform your overall grade.
- Your teachers will not share the grades for individual pieces of work at this stage.
- 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.

Further information and guidance will be circulated after the Centre Policy has been approved by the examination boards.

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.

The OFQUAL guidance to schools, colleges and teachers about the submission of teacher assessed grades, including the evidence that can be used can be found at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/submission-of-teacher-assessed-grades-summer-2021-info-for-teachers/information-for-heads-of-centre-heads-of-department-and-teachers-on-the-submission-of-teacher-assessed-grades-summer-2021-html>

What happens after my teacher determines my grade in a subject?

Once a teacher has determined your grade, it will be reviewed by other teachers in the school, so grades are determined consistently with the school policy. Exam boards will check these policies to make sure they meet their requirements.

In some subjects, we may partner with other schools/colleges to assist with the moderation of marking to further support the accuracy of the evidence.

Reasonable adjustments, access arrangements and special consideration

If you have special educational needs, and/or are disabled, and require reasonable adjustments, we will ensure that these were in place when evidence was gathered. Where appropriate reasonable adjustments were not in place when you took an assessment that is being used as evidence, your teacher will take that into account when determining your grade. As a school, we may consider whether other evidence could be used instead.

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 the school about this as soon as possible. It is important that you raise any such instances before your school or college submits your grade.

If you have any questions about how your personal circumstances will be taken into account or want to raise anything with the school, now is the best time to speak to us. You should not wait until after you get your results.

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 (school based review)

If you don't think you have been issued with the correct grade, you can appeal to the school. We will review whether we:

- Made an administrative error, e.g. the school submitted an incorrect grade; the school used an incorrect assessment mark when determining your grade.
- Did not apply a procedure correctly, e.g. the school did not follow our Centre Policy, did not undertake internal quality assurance, did not take account of access arrangements or mitigating circumstances, such as illness.

To help you decide whether to appeal, you can request that the school shares with you the following information on results day if not before:

- The Centre Policy (this will be available on the school website after it has been approved by the awarding bodies)
- 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 taken into account 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 (school) review is complete, you can ask the school to appeal to the exam board.

The exam board will review whether:

- The school made an unreasonable exercise of academic judgement¹ in the choice of evidence from which they determined your grade and/or in the determination of your grade from that evidence.
- the school did not apply a procedure correctly, e.g. they did not follow their 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.

Consent: At both stages of the process you will need to submit your appeal to the school and give us your written consent to conduct the appeal or submit it to the exam board on your behalf.

N.B. It is important to remember that your grade can go down, up or stay the same through either stage of the process.

Further information about the appeals process will be published prior to the results days in August on the school website.

¹ 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 fine judgements but will take a holistic approach based on the overall evidence.

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 inform the school so we can ask the exam board to prioritise your appeal.

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

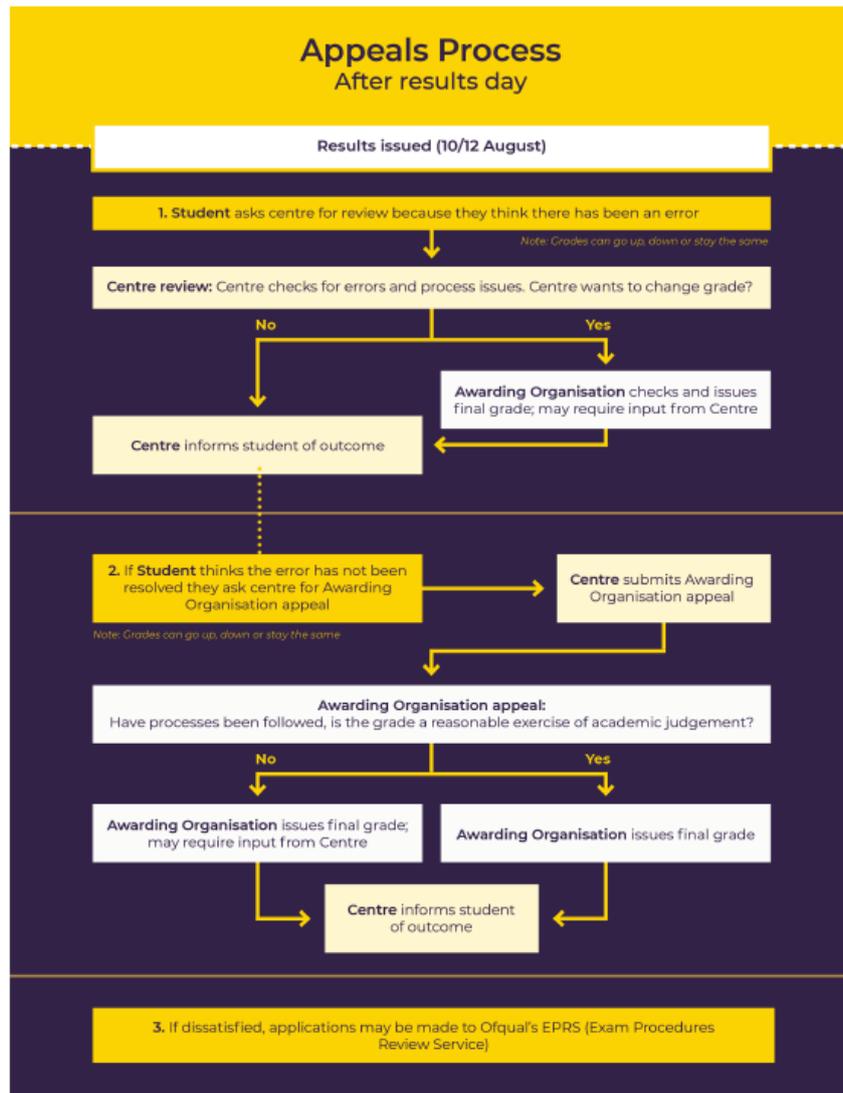
Priority Appeals	FBA	Awarding Body
Stage 1 Centre Review Deadline for a student request	16 th August	23 rd August
Stage 2 – Appeal to Awarding Organisation Deadline for a student request	18 th August	23 rd August

Non- Priority Appeals	FBA	Awarding Body
Stage 1 Centre Review Deadline for a student request	3 rd September	17 th September
Stage 2 – Appeal to Awarding Organisation Deadline for a student request	6 th September	17 th September

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.

Appeals Process

After results day



(This document is based on the guidance from JCQ which can be found in full at: <https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/JCQ-Guidance-for-Students-and-Parents-on-Summer-2021.pdf>)