

1. Purpose

1.1. On 4 January 2021, the government announced that it was no longer fair for the Summer 2021 examination series for GCSE, A/AS Level, Project Qualifications and Advanced Extension Award in maths to go ahead due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The government set out its policy that centres will be submitting students' grades in a letter dated 25 February 2021 (Direction from the Secretary of State for Education to Ofqual's Chief Regulator). JCQ and the awarding organisations have been working together to prepare guidance and information to support the provision of grades to students this summer by centres. Due to the above now in place by Ofqual this year the appeals process has changed for the summer of 2021 as awarding organisations have in place arrangements to allow a Centre to appeal results on behalf of a student or students and this document explains the grounds of appeal which are available for teacher assessed grade results in summer 2021. These procedures are designed to meet the General Qualifications Alternative Awarding framework for summer 2021 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/general-qualifications-alternativeawarding-framework>

This process applies solely to the appeal of a result issued in summer 2021 and covers the following qualifications:

- GCE AS and A level
- GCSE
- Level 3 Certificate in Core Maths
- Extended Project Qualification
- GCSE English Language, GCSE Modern Foreign Languages, GCE A level Biology, Chemistry, Geology and Physics, the separate endorsements

1.2. Hartlepool College of Further Education will obtain consent from a student before any centre review or awarding organisation appeal is reviewed at any stage to confirm that if you appeal your grade, you understand that it can go up, down or stay the same as part of the appeals process with the awarding Body. If you request a centre review or an awarding organisation appeal there are three possible outcomes:

1. Your original **grade is lowered**, so your final grade will be lower than the original grade you received.
2. Your original **grade is confirmed**, so there is no change to your grade.
3. Your original **grade is raised**, so your final grade will be higher than the original grade you received.

A student may request a review but subsequently decide they wish to withdraw it, however once a finding has been made you cannot withdraw your request for a centre review or appeal. **If your grade has been lowered you will not be able to revert back to the original grade you received on results day.**

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An appeal can only be made against a result issued. Any student who believes that the centre's 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, must raise such concerns through the centre's complaints process.

Stage 1

The first stage of the process is referred to as a centre review. If a student does not consider that they have been issued with the correct grade, they can ask their centre to check if an administrative or procedural error has occurred. A student can appeal if there is evidence that leads a student to believe:

- The Centre made an administrative error in relation to the result (e.g. An administrative error means an error in recording your grade or submitting your grade to the awarding organisation/ the wrong grade/mark was recorded against an item of evidence).
- The Centre made a procedural error (e.g. failed to follow its procedures properly or consistently in arriving at that result/ a reasonable adjustment / access arrangement was not provided for an eligible student).

If Hartlepool College of Further Education identifies an error with the grade submitted, they will submit the revised grade and rationale to the awarding organisation (OCR/Pearson/AQA/WJEC) to review and consider if this is appropriate to correct the result, if so they would issue a revised grade. Hartlepool College of Further Education will inform you of the outcome of this.

After the centre review is completed and the centre does not believe that an error has been made but a student believes that an error persists, a student may ask the Hartlepool College of Further Education to submit an appeal to the awarding organisation on their behalf. Hartlepool College of Further Education will submit the student's appeal if requested and must provide the required full supporting evidence.

Stage 2: Appeal to the awarding organisation

The second stage of the process is referred to as an appeal to the awarding organisation submitted by Hartlepool College of Further Education on the student's behalf. An appeal will be submitted if the student considers that the centre did not follow its procedure properly, the awarding organisation has made an administrative error, or the student considers that the grade awarded was an unreasonable exercise of academic judgement.

A student can appeal if there is evidence that leads a student to believe:

- The centre did not apply a procedure correctly (e.g. such as the centre did not follow its centre policy, did not undertake internal quality assurance, did not take account of access arrangements or mitigating circumstances such as illness).

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- The awarding organisation made an administrative error, (e.g. the grade was incorrectly changed by the awarding organisation during the processing of grades).
- The student considers that the centre made an unreasonable exercise of academic judgement in the choice of evidence from which to determine the grade and/or the determination of the grade from that evidence. (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).

A student may submit a request for an appeal but subsequently decide they wish to withdraw it. Awarding organisations will accept requests for appeals to be withdrawn as long as no finding has been made. An application for an awarding organisation appeal cannot be withdrawn once a finding has been made.

The relevant awarding organisation will review the appeal and consider the factors raised by the appeal and attach such weight to them as it considers appropriate. As a result of the appeal, the case 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.

Hartlepool College of Further Education will share the outcome of the awarding organisation appeal, and where appropriate the next stage of the process.

2. Context

2.1 The arrangements for awarding grades to students in summer 2021 include internal and external quality assurance measures which aim to ensure that on results day students are issued with fair and consistent grades that have been objectively reached.

The need for appeals should be limited as students should be confident in their grades because of the following being in place at Hartlepool College of Further Education:

A transparent approach and communication with students and parents/guardians on the centre's approach outlined in the policy to determining their grades before grades are submitted to the awarding organisations. Including the evidence used and a realistic understanding of the standard at which they are performing.

An effective Hartlepool College of Further Education centre policy in place and has been shared with students, parents and carers on the website, so you can understand the College's approach to assessment. The policy has been adhered to by all centre staff involved in the determination of teacher assessed grades, and which has been reviewed by awarding organisations.

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Hartlepool College of Further Education teachers and managers had made students aware of the sources of evidence used to determine their grade in advance of that grade being submitted to awarding organisations.

Accurate recording and effective checking of information on the assessment record and evidence marks, grades used to form the holistic teacher assessed grades for the student to avoid errors in submitting teacher assessed grades.

Teachers have been able to authenticate students' work from the evidence used to form the teacher assessed grades.

The centre has followed the grading guidance provided by JCQ and made use of the grade descriptors and exemplification evidence.

Conflicts of interest have been identified and appropriately managed as required.

Effective provision of access arrangements in place for all eligible students. Eligible students have been given their access arrangements when completing assessments. If access arrangements and reasonable adjustments could not be provided at the time of an assessment, the lack of them has been taken into consideration in determining the grade or alternative evidence has been used, this has been documented in the centre's assessment variation record.

Effective arrangements in place for students that may have been disadvantaged during an assessment, as special considerations that contributes to their grade either by taking the circumstances into account in determining grades or by using alternative evidence that was unaffected by the adverse circumstances, if possible. This has been documented in the centre's assessment variation record.

Grades have been determined based on a holistic judgement of the evidence and due regard has been taken of Ofqual's Information for centres about making objective judgements.

A high standard of internal quality assurance in determining teacher assessed grades based only on student evidence. The internal quality assurance decisions are documented, stored securely and can be retrieved.

Internal quality assurance has been conducted in accordance with the centre policy.

Each grade for a subject has been signed off by at least two teachers in a subject including the Head of Faculty/Faculty Area Manager.

The Head of Faculty/Faculty Area Manager has completed all checks to enable them to complete the Head of Faculty Declaration.

Effective oversight and clear professional accountability from the Head of Centre who completed the Head of Centre Declaration. The Grades have been checked to ensure that there are no administrative errors. Particular attention has been given to checking students with the same or very

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similar names. Ensuring that there are no administrative or procedural errors during checks prior to submission to the awarding organisations by the 18th June 2021.

Students' work and associated records have been retained and are readily available if requested by an awarding organisation.

3. Procedures

3.1 Pre-results

Hartlepool College of Further Education: Will share the centre policy that has been reviewed by the relevant Awarding Bodies on the [College's website link](#).

Teachers will share information with students about:

- The sources of evidence being used as part of a centre's grade determination process.
- And any marks/grades associated with them, so students have a realistic understanding of the standard at which they are performing, to help to avoid issues that may otherwise arise when results are issued.
- Details of any variations in the evidence used based on disruption to what the student was taught.
- Details of any special circumstances that have been considered in determining their grades (access arrangements/reasonable adjustments/mitigating circumstances such as illness).

Will not divulge provisional teacher assessment grades (with students or parents/carers before the issue of results is confirmed by the relevant awarding organisation).

Understands that any inappropriate disclosure of teacher assessment grades information before the issue of results will be investigated by awarding organisations as potential malpractice.

Follow the information provided by JCQ and awarding organisations to determine the grounds on which an appeal can be made on behalf of a student.

Retain all evidence used to determine grades to be viewed by awarding organisations as part of any appeal review.

Will not share the results with a third party under data protection.

Has completed all the necessary checks that all the data Teacher Assessed Grades submitted to the awarding organisation is correct and accurate.

3.2 Post results

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Will check all the awarding organisation information and final teacher assessed grades to ensure there are no errors.

Will accept appeals form after the results are issued:

GCSE results – 12 August 2021

Will conduct a centre review on any stage 1 appeals submitted.

Will submit stage 2 appeals if the student requests this, following the outcome of the centre view at stage 1, directly with awarding organisation and follow awarding body processes.

4. For a Priority Appeal

A priority appeal identified by JCQ is only for students applying to higher education who did not attain their firm choice the offer they accepted as their first choice) and wish to appeal an A level or other Level 3 qualification result.

For reviews where a higher education place is dependent on the outcome of an appeal, students must include their UCAS personal ID on the Student Appeal Form. The student should also notify their preferred higher education provider that a review has been requested at the earliest possible opportunity so they can decide how to handle their offer.

Request Centre Review Stage 1

Any student concerned with their results when released on ProPortal should discuss this in the first instance with your identified tutor to review your options and opportunities for resits in the Autumn exam series.

We will accept completed Student Appeals Form with Stage 1 section fully completed and submitted by the individual student by Monday 16th August 2021 emailed to exams@hartlepoolfe.ac.uk to review concerns where there is evidence that:

- The centre made an administrative error,
- The centre did not apply a procedure correctly

Hartlepool College of Further Education is only able to review appeals or submit appeals to the awarding organisation with your signed consent.

The grounds for the appeal with the supporting evidence will be reviewed by the exams team/relevant departments Head of School overseen by quality nominee **by Thursday 19th August** and the outcome will be emailed directly to you as the student.

Appeal to Awarding Organisation Stage 2

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Hartlepool College will accept the original Student Appeals Form with Stage 2 section fully completed and submitted by the individual student by Friday 20th August 2021 emailed to exams@hartlepoolfe.ac.uk to request an appeal to the awarding organisation to review concerns where there is evidence that:

- The centre did not follow its procedure properly or consistently in arriving at the result /made an administrative error and are dissatisfied with the outcome of the centre review outcome response and wish to appeal on the basis that the centre has failed to follow the review procedure properly or consistently. (Explaining what they consider the centre failed to do, why that was a failure to follow the centre's procedures, and why that failure was important to the determination of the Teacher Assessed Grade).
- The awarding organisation made an administrative error in relation to the result. (Explaining in what way they consider the awarding organisation made an administrative error, and what difference it made to the determination of the Teacher Assessed Grade).
- The student considers that the centre made an unreasonable exercise of academic judgement in the choice of evidence from which to determine the grade and/or the determination of the grade from that evidence. (Explaining in what way they consider there was an unreasonable exercise of academic judgement: in the selection of evidence used to determine the Teacher Assessed Grade/in the determination of a Teacher Assessed Grade from the selected evidence).

Please note the External deadline for the College to submit your stage 2 requests and submit through to the awarding organisation for Priority appeals only **is Monday 23rd August 2021.**

The exams team will send the confirmation that this has been submitted and emailed directly to you as the student by 24th August 2021.

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.

Hartlepool College of Further Education will email the student directly the awarding organisation appeal outcome letter once received.

5. For none priority appeals

A none priority as students not applying to higher education and wish to appeal an GCSE /A level or other Level 2/3 qualification result.

Request Centre Review Stage 1

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Any student concerned with their results when released on ProPortal should discuss this in the first instance with your identified tutor to review your options and opportunities for resits in the Autumn exam series.

We will accept completed Student Appeals Form with Stage 1 section fully completed and submitted by the individual student by Friday 3rd September 2021 emailed to exams@hartlepoolfe.ac.uk to review concerns where there is evidence that:

- The centre made an administrative error,
- The centre did not apply a procedure correctly

Hartlepool College of Further Education is only able to review appeals or submit appeals to the awarding organisation with your signed consent.

The grounds for the appeal with the supporting evidence will be reviewed by the exams team/relevant Head of School overseen by the quality nominee **by Friday 10th September 2021** and the outcome will be emailed directly to you as the student.

Appeal to Awarding Organisation Stage 2

Hartlepool College will accept the original Student Appeals Form with Stage 2 section fully completed and submitted by the individual student **by Thursday 16th September 2021** emailed to exams@hartlepoolfe.ac.uk to request an appeal to the awarding organisation to review concerns where there is evidence that:

- The centre did not follow its procedure properly or consistently in arriving at the result /made an administrative error and are dissatisfied with the outcome of the centre review outcome response and wish to appeal on the basis that the centre has failed to follow the review procedure properly or consistently. (Explaining what they consider the centre failed to do, why that was a failure to follow the centre's procedures, and why that failure was important to the determination of the Teacher Assessed Grade).
- The awarding organisation made an administrative error in relation to the result. (Explaining in what way they consider the awarding organisation made an administrative error, and what difference it made to the determination of the Teacher Assessed Grade).
- The student considers that the centre made an unreasonable exercise of academic judgement in the choice of evidence from which to determine the grade and/or the determination of the grade from that evidence. (Explaining in what way they consider there was an unreasonable exercise of academic judgement: in the selection of evidence used to determine the Teacher Assessed Grade/in the determination of a Teacher Assessed Grade from the selected evidence).

Please note the External deadline for the College to submit your stage 2 requests and submit through to the awarding organisation for none priority appeals only is **Friday 17th September 2021**.

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The exams team will send the confirmation that this has been submitted and emailed directly to you as the student by 20th September 2021.

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. Hartlepool College of Further Education will email the student directly the awarding organisation appeal outcome letter once received.