

# Teacher Assessed Grades: St Helen's Guide to Appeals 2021

In this document you will find detailed information about the Teacher Assessed Grade Appeals process this year, and what to do if you think that one or more of your grades is wrong. Please read the 'Frequently Asked Questions' below very carefully.

## What do I do if I am not happy with my / my daughter's grade(s)?

If you think that one or more of your grades are wrong, then you have the right to appeal. There will be no charge for this service. **It is important to note that your grade may be lowered, raised or left unchanged as a result of any appeal** and that once a decision has been reached about your appeal you may not withdraw your appeal if you do not like the outcome. This means that if you put in an appeal and the grade is lowered, you will receive the lower grade.

There is also the option to re-sit GCSEs, A Levels and some AS levels in the autumn, which may be preferable to some students. The design, content and assessment of these papers will be the same as in a normal year.

## What should I read to help me decide whether to make an appeal?

In order to help you to decide whether to appeal, and the grounds on which you wish you appeal, you should refer closely to the following documents:

- The JCQ Guidance for Students and Parents which can be found at <https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/JCQ-Guidance-for-Students-and-Parents-on-Summer-2021.pdf>
- The St Helen's 'Centre Policy for A/AS Levels, GCSEs and IGCSEs for Summer 2021',
- Your personalised Teacher Assessed Grade marksheet, which will be sent via SchoolPost to your school email address on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> August, in which you will find details of the marks and grades which you were awarded for each assessment when we determined your Teacher Assessed Grade, and details of how we took any adverse circumstances or special consideration requests into account.

Please note that 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.

## How do I appeal?

- Follow the process outlined in the St Helen's Guide to Appeals 2021.
- Complete the appropriate section of the Appeals Form which you can find [here](#)
- Sign the Appeals Form and send it as a Word document to [appeals@sthelens.london](mailto:appeals@sthelens.london). You can sign the Appeals form by:
  - Inserting your normal signature electronically; or
  - Digitally signing the document by typing your name and sending it via your school email account so that we can authenticate that the appeal came from you

## What are the grounds for appeal?

There are five main grounds for appeal, as announced 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**.
- You think that the awarding organisation (the exam board) has made an **administrative error**.

## 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** re-mark or re-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 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 are in this position and 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).

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

Unfortunately, JCQ cannot offer priority appeals for GCSE students.

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.

## What are the 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.

Following the outcome of a Centre Review, students may still choose to pursue an **Awarding Organisation Appeal**. They must fill in the second section of the 'Student Request Form', 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 the appeal has been considered.

If you are still concerned about your grade after the outcome of the Awarding Organisation Appeal you may be able to apply for a procedural review to the Exam Procedures Review Service from the relevant regulator. The exam board will tell you how to do this when they send you their appeal outcome letter.

## How do I make an appeal, and what exactly will happen?

Following results days, students should fill in the first section of the Appeals Form and send it to our dedicated email address [appeals@sthelens.london](mailto:appeals@sthelens.london).

An Appeals Form must be completed for **each** of the grades against which you wish to appeal. So, if you want to appeal against four subject grades, you must fill in four 'Student Request' forms.

Each Appeals Form must be completed **in full** and it must be signed by the student. You can sign the Appeals form by:

- Inserting your normal signature electronically; or
- Digitally signing the document by typing your name and sending it via your school email account so that we can authenticate that the appeal came from you

Incomplete forms, incorrectly filled forms, unsigned forms and forms signed by parents will be returned to you for amendment.

At the Centre Review stage you may appeal against one or more of your grades for the following reasons:

- An Administrative Error was made by the School
- A Procedural Error was made by the School

We will acknowledge receipt of your request for a Centre Review, and will do our best to respond within the timescales suggested by JCQ (please see below).

The outcome of a Centre Review will be one of the following:

- **Upheld** in cases where we discover an Administrative or Procedural Error which led to an incorrect grade being issued. The revised grade may be higher or lower than the original grade. In these cases we will apply to the examination board to have the grade corrected. They will then consider this request.
- **Partially Upheld** in cases where we discover an Administrative or Procedural Error which did not lead to an incorrect grade being issued. In these cases your grade will be unchanged.
- **Not Upheld** in cases where the Centre Review discovers no Administrative or Procedural Errors.

We will inform you of the outcome of the Centre Review in the appropriate section of the Appeals Form, which we will return to you.

If after a Centre Review you are still unhappy with your grade you may proceed to Stage two: **the appeal to the awarding organisation** (i.e. the exam board).

At this stage you may appeal against your grade for the following reasons:

- Administrative error by the awarding organisation
- Procedural issue at the School:
  - Procedural Error
  - Issues with access arrangements / reasonable adjustments and/or mitigating circumstances
- Unreasonable exercise of academic judgment by the School in either:
  - The selection of evidence used to determine your grade
  - The determination of the Teacher Assessed Grade

You should use the 'Stage two' section of the Appeals Form to identify the grounds on which you are appealing and (if required) an explanation of what you believe went wrong and how you think this has impacted on your grade. This section of the Appeals Form must also be signed by the student (not a parent). In signing this section of the form you will again be acknowledging that you understand that your grade may be raised, lowered or remain the same as a result of this appeal. You must send this form by email to **appeals@sthelens.london**.

Once we have received your Appeals Form, we will send it to the examination board along with all the evidence which we used to determine your Teacher Assessed Grade, and we will tell you that we have done so. The board will decide whether to accept your application for an appeal. If your request for an appeal is accepted the exam board will appoint an independent reviewer to assess your appeal.

We have been informed that awarding organisations will aim to complete appeals as soon as possible, and particular efforts will be made for those appeals that have been identified as priority appeals for students applying to higher education who did not attain their firm choice (i.e. the offer they accepted as their first choice) and wish to appeal an A Level or other Level 3 qualification result. 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 but say they may not always be able to meet this target.

Once this review has been completed the exam board will report the outcome of the appeal, with reasons for the decision, to the School; we will share this information with you promptly.

### **What are the deadlines for priority appeals?**

The suggested deadline for requesting a priority appeal is 16 August (students cannot appeal before results day on 10 August). Year 13 students can request a priority appeal if they have missed their firm or insurance offer and the university has not confirmed their place. If you are a Year 13 student and your preferred university has confirmed your place, then you are not eligible for a priority appeal.

We will attempt to complete the Centre Review by 20 August for priority appeals. **If students wish to progress this to an Awarding Organisation Appeal, they must send the completed form to us by 9.00am on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> August for priority appeals** so that we can meet the JCQ deadline of 23<sup>rd</sup> August on your behalf.

## What are the deadlines for non-priority appeals?

Non-priority appeals are any A levels, GCSEs or EPQs, where a firm or insurance university place is not pending. The deadline for submitting a centre review is 3 September. If students wish to make a non-priority Awarding Organisation Appeal, they must send the completed form to us by **9.00am on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> September**, so that we can meet the JCQ deadline of 17<sup>th</sup> September on your behalf.

Appeals received after these dates may still be considered.

## SUMMARY OF KEY DATES – POST PUBLICATION OF RESULTS

Publication of GCE AS and A-level results and EPQs – 10 August 2021

Publication of GCSE results – 12 August 2021

### Key Dates for priority appeals\*

10 August to 16 August 2021	Window for students to request a Centre Review
10 August to 20 August 2021	Centres conduct Centre Reviews
10 August to 23 August 2021	Centres submit appeals to awarding organisations. <b>Requests for priority appeals to awarding organisations must therefore be received by the School by 9.00am on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> August.</b>

\* A priority appeal is only for students applying to higher education who did not attain their firm choice (i.e. the offer they accepted as their first choice) and wish to appeal an A Level or other Level 3 qualification result.

### Key dates for non-priority appeals

From result day to 3 September 2021	Window for students to request a Centre Review
From result day to 10 September 2021	Centres conduct Centre Reviews
From result day to 17 September 2021	Centres submit appeals to awarding organisations. <b>Requests for non-priority appeals to awarding organisations must therefore be received by the School by 9.00am on Wednesday 15th September.</b>