



## GCSE and A Level Results Days and Appeals Information

12<sup>th</sup> July 2021

Dear Year 11 and 13 parents and pupils,

Firstly, I hope you are all well and, for the students, enjoying life post GCSEs and A Levels. I wanted to update you on the plans for both Results Days, and the appeals process in August.

### Results Days

A reminder that A Level Results Day is Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> August and GCSE Results Day is on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> August. School will be open from 10am on both days for students to collect their results. If restrictions are as we expect currently, parents are also welcome on site, although we encourage mask wearing in indoor spaces. Where possible we will hold the results collection outdoors, and will make a weather dependent decision on this on each of the mornings. There will be clear signage on the day to direct you where to go.

We are only able to hand results out to the students themselves, unless we have received prior permission from the student directly before Results Day. Permission can be given to give results to someone else, to email them or to have them posted. All results that are not collected on Results Day will be posted out that afternoon to the student's home address that we have on file.

### 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.

In some cases, the TAGs we submitted may have been reviewed by the exam board, who may have asked us to submit an alternative grade. However, any changes to the grades we submitted were done by professional teachers or reviewers; this year no grades have been changed as a result of an algorithm.

### 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, 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 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 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 or insurance 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.

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

First, don't panic. Speak to Mr Angell 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).

### **What should I do before appealing?**

Talk to us, your teachers. We will be able to give you a greater understanding on how we determined your grade and the Appeals process itself.

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 days, students should fill in the first section of the JCQ form [here](#) and send it directly to me via [cfsprincipal@chichesterfreeschool.org.uk](mailto:cfsprincipal@chichesterfreeschool.org.uk). Alternatively we will have printed copies of the forms that can be completed on the day.

## What is the timeline for appeals?

### A Level Priority Appeals (for pupil those who have not got into their firm UCAS choice):

- Results Day 10th August
- Hand to me/email me a copy of the appeals form **by 8am on 13th August.**
- We will process all of these Stage 1 centre reviews and inform students of the outcome by the end of **Friday 13<sup>th</sup> August**
- You will then have until **8am on Friday 20th August** to submit a Stage 2 appeal if you wish, using the second half of the same form.
- We will submit any Stage 2 appeals to the exam boards by **23<sup>rd</sup> August**

### All other GCSE or appeals

- Results Day on 10<sup>th</sup> (A Levels) or 12th August (GCSE)
- Hand to me/email me a copy of the appeals form by **8am on Friday 3rd September.**
- We will process all of these Stage 1 centre reviews and inform students of the outcome by the end of **Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> September.**
- You will then have until **8am on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> September** to submit a Stage 2 appeal if you wish, using the second half of the same form.
- We will submit any Stage 2 appeals to the exam boards by **17<sup>th</sup> September**

## Why does it take so long?

We are following the JCQ timeline. Often subject teachers and SEND specialists will be needed to support in the submission of the appeals, and so much of this work will occur at the start of the new term.

## What other information is available to me?

I encourage you to read the following two documents that can be found on our website at <https://www.chichesterfreeschool.org.uk/curriculum/examinations/>

- CFS Centre Policy for TAGs
- CFS Evidence Bank information (as previously issued to parents and students)

## You know my / my child's grades. Why can't you tell us? What if you know we haven't met our university conditional offer?

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).



We only know what a student's conditional offer is if they have chosen to share that information with us. It has not formed part of our objective grading of students. Where we do know this information, we must not let students know their submitted TAGs, even if they haven't met the conditions of their offer.

We are very much looking forward to seeing all students again in August.

With very best wishes,

**Mrs Louise New**

**Principal**