



George Stephenson
High School

Exam Appeals Policy for Teacher Assessed Grades

Summer 2021

Governance	NA – Temporary Policy for Summer 2021
Policy Officer	Mr. S. Tyson - Assistant Headteacher
Adopted Date	June 2021
Next Review Date	NA – Temporary Policy

Purpose of the policy

This policy covers the special arrangements in place in relation to student appeals against the Teacher Assessed Grades awarded in summer 2021. This policy takes into account the guidance provided in the document [JCQ Guidance on Appeals Summer 2021](#) and should be read alongside the [GSHS Centre Policy for Teacher Assessed Grades](#) which has been approved by JCQ.

This policy outlines how students can appeal their grade where they believe there has been an error. The aim is not to repeat the appeals guidance available elsewhere, but to provide a practical summary outlining how this process will operate at George Stephenson High School.

Context

Student grades have been determined differently this year and it is important that students receive grades which are a fair and reasonable reflection of their academic performance. The [GSHS Centre Policy](#), approved by JCQ, outlines how this has been achieved in respect to;

- Staff training and guidance.
- How appropriate evidence was selected.
- How grades were determined.
- How grades were moderated and quality assured.
- How access arrangements were accommodated.
- How special consideration and adjustments for differential lost learning were applied.
- The steps taken to ensure objectivity and avoid bias.
- The steps taken to authenticate evidence and sign-off grades.

In addition, the school is subject to the external quality assurance processes in place nationally this year. This includes the requirement to have a Centre Policy approved by JCQ, as well as the sampling of evidence by exam boards to ensure that the selection, marking and grading of evidence has been accurate. The evidence used to determine grades will be retained securely for the duration of the quality assurance and potential appeals processes.

Information shared with students

The school has shared the following information with students;

- [GSHS Centre Policy](#) – available on the school website.
- The evidence used to determine grades in each subject
- The arrangements in place for conducting appeals

The school will not share the final teacher assessed grades with students before results day.

The school will not carry out informal checks at the request of students or parents after results are published.

The school will not enter into discussions with students or parents about the grades awarded, outside of the official appeals process.

Students and parents should not contact their teachers directly about the grades they have been awarded. In some circumstances this could be deemed to be malpractice, which has serious potential consequences.

If the school identifies a grading error

If the school discovers an error between submitting grades on June 18th and results day, the school will contact the exam board to correct the error as outlined in section 4 of the [JCQ Guidance](#).

If the school discovers an error after results day, which is not as a result of an appeal, the school will consider the potential impact of making the grade change before a decision is reached, as outlined in Section 5.25, 5.26 and 5.27 of the JCQ Guidance.

If the student believes there has been a grading error

If the student believes that there has been an error in the grade awarded they must submit an appeal in writing using the [Appeals Request Form](#) which is available on the school website. This form should be completed and returned to school or emailed to examenquiries@gshs.org.uk.

The appeals process is in two stages.

Stage 1(Centre Review)

Stage 1 of the appeals process is for administrative and procedural errors only, and the school cannot review its academic judgements.

A stage 1 request can be made by completing section A of the [Appeals Request Form](#), and must be carried out, before a stage 2 review can take place. The deadlines for students to make a stage 1 request is 13th August for priority appeals (see below), and 3rd September for non-priority appeals.

The school will carry out the review in a timely manner so that the deadlines for submitting appeals to the exam board can be met. The outcome of the review will be reported to the student where the grade is unchanged, and to the exam board if the grade changes.

The grade may go up, go down, or remain unchanged as a result of a stage 1 appeal, and grade protection does not apply, so if the grade were to go down, the original grade could not be reinstated!

Stage 2 (Appeal to the Exam Board)

Stage 2 of the appeals process is an appeal to the exam board and can only take place after a stage 1 appeal has taken place.

A stage 2 appeal can be made by completing the relevant section of the [Appeals Request Form](#) which must then be submitted to the school. The school then submits these to the exam board on the student's behalf. The school has no choice in whether to submit a stage 2 request, provided that stage 1 has already taken place.

Exam boards will not accept any appeals from parents or students directly.

Stage 2 appeals will be investigated by an independent reviewer at the exam board. The reviewer will consider whether the grade awarded was a reasonable exercise of academic judgement. The reviewer will not review the marking of individual assessments. The independent reviewer will not consider whether they would have given an alternative grade or whether an alternative grade could also reasonably have been given. There may be a difference of opinion as to the assessed grade without there being an unreasonable exercise of academic judgement. The reviewer will only

conclude that there has been an unreasonable exercise of academic judgement if the grade was clearly wrong – i.e. there was no basis upon which the grade could properly have been given.

The outcome of a stage 2 review will be reported to the school by the exam board. The school will share this outcome with the student as soon as possible.

The grade may go up, go down, or remain unchanged as a result of a stage 2 appeal, and grade protection does not apply, so if the grade were to go down, the original grade could not be reinstated!

A student can decide to withdraw an appeal at any stage, up until the point at which a judgement has been made.

Priority Appeals

Priority appeals are only available to A-Level or Level 3 students who are applying to higher education and 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 Level 3 qualification result.

All other appeals, including all GCSE or Level 2 students will be treated as non-priority appeals in line with JCQ guidance.

Key Dates

Priority Appeals

For A-Level students who meet the above criteria only

13 th August	Deadline for <u>students</u> to request a Centre Review
20 th August	Deadline for the school to conduct a Centre Review
23 rd August	Deadline for the school to submit appeals to the exam board

Priority appeals submitted by the 13th August will be conducted by the school in time to meet the deadlines outlined above.

Non -Priority Appeals

For all other students including all GCSE appeals

3 rd September	Deadline for <u>students</u> to request a Centre Review
10 th September	Deadline for the school to conduct a Centre Review
17 th September	Deadline for the school to submit appeals to the exam board

Non-priority appeals submitted during the summer holiday may not be conducted by the school immediately, but will be conducted in time to meet the deadlines outlined above. This is so we can focus on dealing with priority appeals.

Exam boards have promised to complete the appeals process within 42 calendar days of the application being received.

Autumn Exams

An alternative option available to students who are unhappy with their Teacher Assessed Grade is to take an exam in the Autumn Term. The exam boards are planning to run a full suite of both GCSE and A-Level exams. A-Level exams will take place before October half term with an entry deadline of 8th September. GCSE exams will take place after October half term with an entry deadline of 4th October. If you are considering entry for these exams please contact us on examenquiries@gshs.org.uk for further details.