

Summer 2021 Student Handout - what to do if you think there has been an error in your grading

This handout is designed to support you in deciding what to do now that you've got your GCSE, AS and/or A Level results.

It outlines what you can do if you don't have the grades you need and includes a flow diagram on the next page to help you decide your next steps.

It also gives you some key information about the appeals process if you believe there is an error with your grade. And it highlights some important dates you need to be aware of now.

The [JCQ Student Guide Summer 2021](#) includes more detailed information about the appeals process including how to request an appeal, some case studies, some FAQs, a glossary and a full list of the qualifications that this handout and the guide support. You can find it here: <https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/JCQ-Student-Appeals-Guide-2021.pdf>

Things to do if you don't have the grades you need

A

Focus on your progression

1. If you haven't got the grades you need, **talk to the school, college, university or employer you're hoping to go to** as soon as possible. They may still accept you. [The Exam Results Helpline](#) offers support for students in these situations.
2. If you can't get onto the course you applied for with your grades, ask if there are other options at the same school, college or university. If not, **talk to other schools, colleges or universities** as soon as possible – they may still have places.

B

Understand the appeals process

3. If you believe there is an error that impacted your grade, talk to your school or college. They can give you more information about how your grade was decided.
4. If you are still convinced that an error has been made that impacted your grade after talking to your school or college, you can first request a review from your school or college (**a centre review**) and after that you may appeal to the exam board (**an awarding organisation appeal**).

C

Consider entering for another exam series

5. If you want to try to improve your grade, you could **consider entering for the autumn exam series or the exam series next summer**. Talk to your school or college about how this will work for you as you may need to revise for those exams and work on your new course at the same time.

Key information about appeals

- If you believe there is an error with your grade, there are **two stages** to the appeals process:
 - » **Stage 1** is to ask your school or college for a centre review. Your school or college will check whether it made a **procedural error**, an **administrative error** or both. This allows them to correct any errors they identify, and must be completed before a stage 2 appeal is made.
 - » **Stage 2** is to ask your school or college to submit an awarding organisation appeal for you. You should only progress to stage 2 if you remain concerned with your grade after the completion of stage 1. At stage 2 you can ask the exam board to check whether the decision your school or college made about your grade was **unreasonable***, or whether the selection of work they used to decide your grade was unreasonable. You can also ask the exam board to check whether the school or college made a procedural error, or whether the exam board itself made an administrative error.
- **Your grade could go down, go up or stay the same** as a result of the appeals processes at stages 1 and 2 so you should consider carefully whether you have a strong case for an appeal.
- Some errors won't lead to a grade change.
- You cannot withdraw your request for a centre review or appeal once your school or college or the exam board has made a decision.
- You can request a **priority** appeal if you have missed out on your firm offer for higher education from a university or college (that is the offer you accepted as your first choice), and you wish to appeal an A level or other Level 3 qualification result.

Important dates

- Schools and colleges must submit priority appeals to the exam board by **23 August 2021** and non-priority appeals by **17 September 2021**. However, your school or college will set its own deadlines for receiving your centre review and appeal, which will be earlier than these dates. This is so they can meet the exam board deadlines. **You must check the deadline your own school or college has set.**
- You should tell your intended university or college that you have requested an appeal as soon as possible so they can decide how to handle your offer. For many universities the conditions of your offer must be met by **8 September 2021**, although **you should check the date set by your university or college** as it may differ.
- A level exams in the autumn start on **4 October 2021**. GCSE exams in the autumn start on **1 November 2021**. Your school or college can provide information on entry deadlines for these.

*Unreasonable exercise of academic judgement appeal:

The focus of this type of appeal will be on whether the selection of evidence and/or the grade you were given was unreasonable. The exam board's independent reviewer will review the selection of evidence used to decide your grade and/or your work. Only if the reviewer decides that the evidence selected and/or your grade were clearly wrong will they decide that your school or college's academic judgement was unreasonable. The reviewer will not uphold (i.e. agree to) your appeal merely because other evidence might have been selected or a different grade could have been given. There is more information about this in the documents listed in the Useful contacts and resources section in the [JCQ Student Guide Summer 2021](#).

Deciding what to do after you've got your results

Start here →

