

July 2021

Update on Year 11 and 13 Final Grades: Appeals Process

Firstly, we would like to thank all of you for your support throughout the assessment process for our Year 11 and 13 students. Whilst we do not doubt that it was a stressful time for many of our students, every one of them has been an absolute credit to themselves, their families and our school community.

One of the key concerns raised nationally when this process was announced was the extent to which parents may try to put pressure on schools to arrive at certain grades for their child. We are delighted to report that we had no experience of this at all, so again, thank you for your patience and understanding. This meant that our staff were able to fully focus on doing their very best for each student in supporting them to work towards their final grade.

Now that all final grades have been entered, we are in a position to be able to update you on the plans for results days as well as the appeals process. We have also outlined some additional information below as a reminder of the initial process that we worked through as a school. Further detail on everything below can be found in our Centre Assessment Policy which is located in the 2021 GCSE and A-Level Assessment Information section of the school website.

Summary of approach

- We notified all students in Years 11 and 13 of the evidence that would be used to inform their final grade. This was made up from assessments completed before and after March 2021. Each subject has outlined what assessments were used to inform the grade on the website in the final grades section.
- Students who requested special consideration were spoken to individually to outline the process that would be put into place to take into account their individual circumstances.
- Assessments in all subjects were completed in classrooms under high control conditions and the supervision of the classroom teacher.
- Students entitled to access arrangements had these made available to them and a log has been kept to track their use for each assessment.
- Once all assessments had been completed, staff used all of the appropriate evidence to arrive at a final holistic grade

The Quality Assurance Process

- We quality assured all grades at all levels to ensure accuracy and fairness for all students.
- All assessments were set centrally by each department to ensure that they were suitable and assessed students only on material that they had been taught.

- Examination board questions and papers were used which then allowed the application of exam board mark schemes and grade boundaries.
- For every assessment set post-March, a quality assurance document was completed in each department to record when moderation took place and to evidence that the assessment process was checked for consistency.
- Once all assessments were completed, staff within each department worked together to arrive at a final grade for each student. This allowed a further layer of cross-checking and moderation. Each Head of Department (HoD) then agreed the final grades with their teams.
- Following agreement at departmental level, each HoD then met with the Deputy Headteacher to quality assure every single grade. The main intention of this was to ensure that all grades had been assigned fairly, consistently and free from bias. As well as checking grades, evidence files were checked to ensure that moderation work was undertaken correctly.
- The final part of the process was to transfer the grades to the examination board website. The grades were entered by two people so that there was an additional check as information was transferred. Once entered, each grade was again checked individually to ensure that it was assigned to the correct student.
- The examination boards are now undertaking their own quality assurance exercise. By the time we get to results day, our grades will have been externally scrutinised and approved by the exams boards. Please note that no grades will be amended based on any form of algorithm

Appeals

- JCQ have released detailed guidance on the appeals process for this summer
- There will be two stages to the appeals process:
 - Stage 1: Centre appeal
 - Stage 2: Awarding organisation appeal
- For the centre appeal, the school will review the final grade awarded by: checking that the grade was entered correctly; checking that any mitigating circumstances were considered; confirming that appropriate access arrangements were available and that the school policy on determining and quality assuring final grades was adhered to.
- Following the centre review, a decision will be made as to whether the initial grade remains the same, goes down or goes up. **It is important to note that once an appeal has been submitted, it cannot be withdrawn and therefore any 'new' grade will replace that originally awarded, including where it goes down.**
- Following a centre review, if the grade is unchanged and you still wish to continue to pursue an appeal, it can be escalated to a stage 2 awarding organisation appeal. This means that the grade awarded will be referred to an examination board for an independent review.

- The awarding organisation will consider:
 - whether the grade reflects a reasonable exercise of academic judgment
 - whether the centre followed its own procedure
 - If the centre made an administrative error
- When deciding whether or not the grade represents a reasonable exercise of academic judgement, the independent reviewers will **not** re-mark or grade students' evidence. Instead, they will look to see whether any teacher acting reasonably could have arrived at the same grade.
- If an appeal is submitted to the awarding organisation, they have said that they will complete them within 42 calendar days of receipt.
- Our deadlines for appeals are as follows:

Centre Appeals – deadline dates	
Submission Date	Qualification
Friday 13 th August	A-Level and L3 VTQs
Monday 16 th August	GCSE and L2 VTQs

Awarding Organisation Appeals – deadline dates	
Submission Date	Deadline For
Wednesday 18 th August	A-Level and L3 VTQs
Thursday 19 th August	GCSE and L2 VTQs

- The deadlines above are the timeline for submission of your intention to appeal to us. We have a separate timescale for submission of appeals to the examination board which can be found on the JCQ website. We will forward appeals to the awarding organisation on your behalf.
- **Year 13 students starting university this autumn, who have missed out on the conditions of their firm or insurance offer, will be considered priority appeals** and be reviewed first by both the centre and the awarding organisation.
- All appeals will need to be made using a template that will be available in the exams section of our website on results days, and all communication will need to be made through the email address exams2021@chaseterraceacademy.co.uk
- Students must read the JCQ Student and Parent guide before appealing, which will be available on the JCQ website by results days.
- Further detail on the appeals process will be provided with your child's results. Please note that there will also be an opportunity for students to sit examinations in the autumn term – again, further details on this will be provided with your child's results.

Due to the measures outlined in the quality assurance section, it is extremely unlikely that any errors have been made in the award of final grades. The numerous training sessions provided for staff and levels of scrutiny throughout the process, from planning through to review, mean that all grades awarded are a fair and accurate reflection of the evidence gathered for each individual student. We are therefore confident that in the event of an appeal, the grades entered will remain unchanged.

Results for Year 13 students will be issued from 9am on Tuesday 10th August in the Sixth Form Centre. Please use the swimming pool car park to access the Sixth Form building.

Results for Year 11 will be issued from 9am on Thursday 12th August, again, from the Sixth Form Centre. We will send further communication nearer the time should it be necessary to have any additional safety measures in place due to continued Covid-19 restrictions.

For both results days, we would be grateful if only the students enter the Sixth Form Centre to collect their results. Parents are more than welcome to wait on the grass area outside.

Thank you again for your ongoing support.

Yours faithfully,



Nicola Mason
Head of School



Jason Cain
Deputy Headteacher