

9 July 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

For the second consecutive academic year, pupil's grades have been determined by schools and colleges as the Government felt that, in the absence of public exams, teachers were best placed to do this.

Centre Assessed Grades (CAGs), as they are known in the GFM, are subject to a strict quality assurance process and we can now confirm that our policy has been approved by the Department for Education. All of our students' grades have been submitted and the evidence is now being scrutinised by awarding bodies in cases where we were asked to provide samples of students' work. During the external quality assurance process, taking place in June or July, our submitted CAGs may be moved up or down (although this will always be done through human agency, not by an algorithm).

Parents and students are invited to visit the GFM's website where our Centre Assessed Grades policy can be found, in addition to details of the evidence used for each subject in determining grades. Please contact the school if you have any questions or concerns about the evidence used. We would like to reassure you that, in cases where a student missed an assessment, our teachers were asked to seek alternative sources of evidence so that they could be completely fair and objective in their judgement of a student's capabilities.

Results Days

The results day for Year 11 is Thursday August 12th. We are confident that students will be able to come on site to collect their results but it could be the case that we stagger their arrival, so as to comply with any COVID regulations that may still be in operation. Further details will be published in good time before August 12th. Results not collected on the day will be posted.

Appeals

We sincerely hope that your child feels that their grades are a fair reflection of their capabilities. However, there is provision for appeals this year and we are taking this opportunity to provide you with the broad outline of how that process will work. You may well encounter the term, "priority appeals". This is for Upper Sixth Students only whose results have a bearing on 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) higher education provider.

Unfortunately JCQ has decided that there is no provision for Year 11 students to be treated as a priority appeal. However, there is a non-priority process available to Year 11 which we have outlined below. Additionally, like last year, there will be an opportunity for students to resit exams if they feel unhappy with results or with outcomes from the appeals process.

Stage 1 - Centre Review of Procedure and Administration

A centre review is the first stage of any appeals process and a student must approach the school if they are considering this. If a student would like us to carry out a centre review they can request this within the time frame set out below. The centre review will check:

- that the school applied the correct procedure according to the centre policy
- that there have been no administrative errors. For example, that a grade was wrongly submitted in error

If an error with the grade is identified, the school will submit a revised grade with rationale for the grade change, to the exam board. If the exam board is satisfied that a grade should be changed, it will make and confirm the appropriate changes. The school will inform the student of the outcome of the centre review. Please can we be clear and state that at this stage, and any subsequent appeals stage, grades can go up, stay the same or be lowered as part of the process.

Stage 2 - Appeal to the awarding body

If a school reviews a grade but does not believe an administrative or procedural error has been made, pupils may ask their school to submit an appeal on their behalf to the awarding body (examination board) on any of the following grounds, either in isolation or combination:

- The centre made an unreasonable exercise of academic judgement in the *choice of evidence* from which they determined the grade and/or in the determination of the grade from that evidence.
- The centre made an unreasonable decision in the *choice of a student's grade*. It is worth noting that according to the Joint Council for Qualifications, who oversee the entire process unreasonable, in this case, is defined as a judgement that 'no educational professional acting reasonably could have [made when selecting]... the same evidence or coming up with the same grade.
- The awarding body can also check that no administrative or procedural errors have occurred (as described in Stage 1)

At both stages of the process (centre review and appeal to the awarding body) a pupil/student wishing to appeal a grade needs to submit their request to the school and provide their written consent to conduct the appeal or submit it to the exam board on their behalf. This information will be collected via an electronic form which will be available on the GFM website at the appropriate time <https://gformat.org/centre-assessed-grades> .

Timeline

Date	
12th August 2021	GCSE and Level 2 Vocational results day Online form for requesting clerical checks and appeals opens.
16th August 2021	Online form for requesting clerical checks and appeals closes at 12 noon. Stage 1 - Clerical Checks for non-priority appeals will take place. Outcomes will be communicated to parents and carers on the same day.
17th September	Stage 2 - Appeals to Awarding Bodies Timescales are determined by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) and are not set by GFM Education. The JCQ have advised the following: "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. Due to the nature of appeals this year, awarding organisations may require additional input from centres, and it may not always be possible to meet this target. Stage two appeals will be sent to relevant awarding bodies by 23 August 2021 for 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). For all other appeals, the examination boards will begin to process reviews on the 17th September 2021."

We hope you feel this information is useful. We will be in touch soon with the details of results day.

Yours sincerely

GFM Progress Team