



The Polesworth School

ENSURING EXCELLENCE

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To: Y11 and Y13 Parents/Carers and Students

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Dear Parents/Carers and students,

Teacher Assessed Grades, appeals and result day arrangements

Please find below the answers to key questions that you may have regarding results this summer.

Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGs)

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 be reviewed by the exam board, who may ask 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 will be changed as a result of an algorithm.

You know my / my child's grades. Why can't you tell us?

We are unable to disclose 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).

Appeals

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 grade. 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. 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 stages of an appeal this year?

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 appeals 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.

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 in the context of appeals?

'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's a priority appeal?

Priority appeals will be handled more quickly than other appeals, where possible before UCAS's advisory deadline of 8 September. We have staff working during the summer to ensure that appeals, particularly priority appeals are handled quickly. 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**. Unfortunately, JCQ cannot offer priority appeals for GCSE students. If you decided not to confirm a firm conditional offer and to go through clearing instead, JCQ cannot offer you a priority appeal. 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 before appealing?

Students should read the JCQ Student and Parent guide before appealing, which will be available on the JCQ website by results days. Hard copies will also be available on results days. Although staff will be available for support on results days, 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.

How do I make an appeal?

If a student decides that they would like to make an appeal either on results day or afterwards then the student should fill in the first section of the JCQ form which we be available as a link on the Exam Information page of our website, on the School Life tab and send it to resultshelp@thepolesworthschool.com. Hard copies of the form will also be available on results days. If following the centre review, a student wishes to pursue an awarding organisation appeal then they would need to be able to sign a hard copy of the form by either making an appointment at school or signing a hard copy at home and arranging for the form to get back to us.

What are the deadlines for appeals?

The suggested deadline for requesting a priority appeal is **16 August** (students cannot appeal before results days). We will attempt to complete the centre review by 20 August*. If students wish to progress this to an awarding organisation appeal, then they must send the completed form including signature to us by **22 August**. The deadline for submitting a centre review for non-priority appeals (any A levels, AS levels, GCSEs or vocational qualifications, where a firm or insurance university place is not pending) is **3 September** and the deadline for submitting an awarding organisation appeal is **10 September**. However, appeals received after these dates may still be considered.

*At both stages of the appeals process, there may be the need for specialist, expert knowledge (e.g. subject teachers, SEND knowledge). This may not be possible in August. In such cases, we may have to wait until the start of term, but priority appeals will still be treated as a priority.

Results day arrangements

Unfortunately, due to the Covid pandemic it is necessary, as last year, to have additional restrictions in place for results days. Students should follow the guidance and the times which will be emailed to their school email account.

Post 16 students

The results day for Post 16 is 10 August in the Goodere building. The timetable for the day is as follows:

8.30 – 9.00 – Year 13 students who have not achieved their firm or insurance offer collect results and access support.

9.00-9.30 – Year 13 students who have not achieved their firm offer but no longer want to take up their insurance offer should collect their results.

9.30-3.00 – Year 13 and Year 12 AS students collect their results at the appointment time which will have been emailed to their school email account.

Please note that 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).

Year 11 students

The results day for Year 11 students is 12 August. Students should collect their results in the Goodere building at the appointment time which will have been emailed to their school email account. Staff will be available to support and students who intend to continue to our Sixth Form should register in the hall once they have collected their results.

Yours faithfully



C Quinney
Deputy Headteacher