



Friday 25th June 2021

Dear Year 13 Students, Parents and Carers,

We are writing to you to confirm that the Sixth Form Results Day is on Tuesday 10th August 2021. You will receive your results via your school e-mail account from 9.00am.

If you wish to discuss the results with Mr. Couttie he will be available in the Sixth Form from 9.30am until 11.30am along with a small number of the Senior Leadership Team on results day.

Due to the process of awarding results this year there is also an appeals process that is available for all students.

The school has followed a rigorous process as set out in our Centre Assessed Grades Policy and is currently involved in the final quality assurance stage that is being carried out by the examination boards. The final grades that will be awarded will have been through a process that ensures accuracy and fairness.

The appeals process is summarised below with supporting guidance from the Association of School Leaders. All of the relevant documentation can also be found on the school website.

There are two stages to the summer 2021 appeals process:

Stage 1: Centre review

If a student does not consider that they have been issued with the correct grade, they can ask the school to check if an administrative or procedural error has occurred. The centre will need to ensure the student is aware that their grade could go down, up or stay the same. If the centre finds that an error has occurred, they will be able to submit a request to the awarding organisation to correct the error and amend the grade without the need to make an appeal to the exam board.

Stage 2: Appeal to the awarding organization

An appeal should be submitted if the student considers that the centre did not follow its procedure properly, the awarding organisation has made an administrative error, or the student considers that the grade awarded was an unreasonable exercise of academic judgement. The centre will need to ensure the student is aware that their grade could go down, up or stay the same. The appeal will be made by the school on the student's behalf.

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Grounds for Appeal

In summary there are four grounds upon which a centre review or an appeal to an awarding organisation may be requested:

- At stage 1: The centre made an administrative error, e.g. an incorrect grade was submitted; an incorrect assessment mark was used when determining the grade.
- At stages 1 and 2: The centre did not apply a procedure correctly, such as the centre did not follow its Centre Policy, did not undertake internal quality assurance, did not take account of access arrangements or mitigating circumstances such as illness.
- At stage 2: The awarding organisation made an administrative error, e.g. the grade was incorrectly changed by the awarding organisation during the processing of grades.
- At stage 2: The student considers that the centre made an unreasonable exercise of academic judgement in the choice of evidence from which to determine the grade and/or the determination of the grade from that evidence. A student will first need to be informed of the outcome of the centre review. If they wish to appeal to the awarding organisation, they must then submit a request to their centre to proceed. The appeal must be submitted according to the requirements of the awarding organisation to which it is being submitted.

Appeals Process

If a student wishes to lodge an appeal they should email CAG@maghullhigh.com to obtain the relevant request form. Alternatively, students can obtain the request from the school's webpage. Paper copies will be provided on request. Students must lodge any appeal by Friday 13th August. Appeals should be submitted electronically and sent to CAG@maghullhigh.com. Paper forms can be handed in at reception.

Below is a guidance document provided by the Association of School Leaders:

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 have been reviewed by the exam board, who may have asked 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 have been changed as a result of an algorithm.

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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 mark.

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 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?

'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 will be the outcome of an appeal?

At either stage of the appeals process (see 'What are the two stages of an appeal?' below), a student's grade may go up, stay the same, or go down. 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.

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What's a priority appeal?

Priority appeals will be handled more quickly than other appeals, where possible before UCAS's advisory deadline of 8th September.

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.**

If you decided not to confirm a firm conditional offer and to go through clearing instead, JCQ cannot offer you a priority appeal.

JCQ cannot offer priority appeals for GCSE students, unfortunately.

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 if I don't get into my first choice of university?

First, don't panic. Speak to Mr. Couttie about your options. You may wish to go through clearing, or sit the autumn exams or summer exams next year to try to improve your grade.

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).

What should I do before appealing?

Students must read the JCQ Student and Parent guide before appealing, which will be available on the JCQ website by results day.

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.

What are the two stages of an appeal?

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 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.

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How do I make an appeal?

Following results days, students should fill in the first section of the JCQ form (available via request and also located in the appeals section of the school website) and send it to CAG@maghullhigh.com. Paper copies can be collected from the school reception and also returned to the school reception.

What are the deadlines for priority appeals?

The deadline for requesting a priority appeal is Friday 13th August (students cannot appeal before results day on Tuesday 10th August).

We will attempt to complete the centre review by Friday 20th August*. If students wish to progress this to an awarding organisation appeal, they must send the completed form to us by Monday 23rd August for priority appeals.

*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.

What are the deadlines for non-priority appeals?

Non-priority appeals are any A levels, GCSEs or vocational qualifications, where a firm or insurance university place is not pending.

The deadline for submitting a centre review is Monday 3rd September; and the deadline for submitting an awarding organisation appeal is Monday 10th September.

You know my / my child's grades. Why can't you tell us? What if you know we haven't met our university conditional offer?

We are forbidden from disclosing 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.

We only know what a student's conditional offer is if they have chosen to share that information with us. It has not formed part of our objective grading of students. Where we do know this information, we must not let students know their submitted TAGs, even if they haven't met the conditions of their offer.

Yours Sincerely,

Ms. Davina Aspinall
Headteacher

Mr. Peter Hitchen
Assistant Headteacher – Assessment and Teaching and Learning

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