

Update on CAG Appeals

If you have submitted an appeal to the College, following the release of your CAG results this has been recorded and is now in the process of being investigated by the Deputy Principal and members of the college's College Leadership Team. You will be contacted individually by the College with the outcome of your appeal. Thank you for your patience, whilst this important process is undertaken.

There are limited routes of appeal open to you and the college:

- **You can ask us to check that there has not been an administrative error. In other words, to check that the grade entered for your CAG was the grade that we arrived at through the internal standardisation process.**
- **You could appeal but only on the basis of bias or discrimination. You would need to show evidence of this.**

Please find below a summary of Ofqual's latest statement published on 26th August 2020, which we hope will help you to further understand the process by which CAGs were arrived at and how these grades are different from other types of assessment grades, as well as the appeal routes available.

How grades were determined in summer 2020

Exams were cancelled this year following the closure of schools and colleges to most students, as part of the response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Students have nevertheless received GCSE, AS and A level grades as well as grades for the Extended Project Qualification and Advanced Extension Award.

Colleges submitted to the exam boards their judgement of the grade a student would most likely have received if the exams (and any non-exam assessments) had taken place. The exam boards asked colleges to develop these centre assessment grades (CAGs) in line with Ofqual's published guidance for heads of centre, heads of department, subject leads and teachers.

Colleges were asked to make holistic, professional judgements about a student's likely grade taking into account evidence such as any mock results, other assessments, assignments, performances in subjects such as music, classwork and homework. To help them make realistic judgements, Colleges were asked to take into account how this year's students compared to those of previous years, the prior attainment of this year's students relative to that of previous students and previous results in the school or college in the subject (noting that Ofqual's data shows that for most centres any year-on-year variation in results for a given subject is normally quite small).

For A levels, these judgements were taken at a different time and made to a different set of expectations than predicted grades provided to UCAS in support of university applications. **CAGs and predicted grades provided to UCAS were legitimately different for some students, as were mock exam grades and predicted grades used in progress reviews.**

The range, nature and amount of evidence available to inform the judgements varied both within different subjects in colleges and between different colleges. We asked schools and colleges to balance the different sources of evidence available to them.

We also suggested that at least 2 teachers should consider each grade, 1 of whom should have been the head of department or subject lead.

The head of centre (for example the college principal) then submitted the grades to the exam board with a declaration that the grades honestly and fairly represented the grades the student would have been most likely to have achieved, if the exams had taken place.

Ofqual made clear that CAGs would be subject to a process of standardisation that would combine a range of evidence including:

- **expected grade distributions at national level**
- **results in previous years at individual centre level**
- **the prior attainment profile of students at centre level**

We also made it clear that, if the profile of grades submitted by a centre was substantially different from what might be expected based on that centre's historical results and the prior attainment of that year's students, the grades for the centre would be adjusted to bring them into line with national standards.

Following concerns about the standardised results, students have received the higher of the grade their school or college expected them to receive (the CAG) or the standardised grade. Given the exceptional way grades were determined this year, more high and fewer low grades have been issued this year than in previous years. The data shows that, on average, students have received higher grades than they would have been most likely to have achieved had they taken their exams. Nevertheless, as in any year, some students will be disappointed with their results. Some will wish to question them.

Grounds for appeal

Following our consultation on [exceptional arrangements for exam grading and assessment in 2020](#), we published the grounds on which a college can submit an appeal to an exam board. These grounds include where the exam board did not apply its procedures properly and fairly or where the data used by the exam board to calculate results contained an error.

- **A student cannot appeal, because they disagree with their college's professional judgement of the grade the student would most likely have achieved if exams had taken place.**
- **We confirmed in April, following consultation, that students would not be able to appeal against the judgement of their school or college about the grade they would most likely have achieved had the exams taken place.**
- **A student cannot appeal directly to an exam board.**
- **Appeals must be made by the college to the exam board by 17 September.**

Concerns about malpractice, including bias or discrimination

If a student thinks their grade might have been affected by wrongdoing or a lack of care taken by their college (malpractice or maladministration) they should first discuss this directly with their college and, if appropriate, raise a complaint through the school or college's complaints policy. If a student feels their concerns have not been addressed, they could then consider raising their concerns about malpractice or maladministration with the exam board.

A student who has evidence of bias or discrimination and who does not wish to raise this with their college should give the evidence to the relevant exam board directly. If malpractice is proved, the exam board will consider whether the student's grade should be changed.