



Ms Sue Lovecy, Head of School

15 July 2021

Dear Year 10 pupils, Parents and Carers,

I hope this letter finds you all well. This letter provides you with the information you need to know about the GCSE Appeals Process 2021.

Results for Biology, French and Spanish will be emailed to your chosen email at 10 am on Thursday 12 August.

GCSE 2021 Appeals Process

How were 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.

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. Therefore, if a student puts in an appeal and their grade is lowered, they will receive the lower mark. There is also the option to re-sit GCSEs in the autumn at school. The design, content and assessment of these papers will be the same as in a normal year. School may be charged for these exams and may need to pass on this cost to parents. Further information will be available shortly.

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.
- 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.



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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.

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 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.

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. Please note that 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 provided by JCQ (JCQ_Appeals-Guidance_Summer-2021_AppendixB.pdf) 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.

How do I make an appeal?

1. Email sue.lovecy@smartins3-16.org to organise a 'Teams' call.
2. Ms Lovecy and Mr Holmes will be available on 'Teams' between 10am and 12pm on Thursday 12 August to discuss any queries regarding grades.
3. Consider whether you still wish to appeal or would like more information about resitting in the November series (ask in school on first day back in September)



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4. If you still wish to appeal following results day, students need fill in the first section of the JCQ form (needs to have been requested during a Teams conversation) and send the completed form to sue.lovecy@stmartins3-16.org.

What are the deadlines for appeals?

The deadline for submitting an appeal is 1st September 2021.

I very much hope the information is clear and provides you with all the necessary details you need to make an informed choice post GCSE Results day. I also hope that it reiterates how robust our process has been following JCQ's approval of our Policy and approach.

Your sincerely

Ms Lovecy
Head of School