

24<sup>th</sup> June 2021

Dear Parent/Carer and Student/Pupil,

I am writing to provide you with the latest information regarding the grading and appeal process for the summer 2021 examination series for Year 13 students and Year 11 pupils based on guidance published by JCQ (Joint Council for Qualifications).

The guidance gives the following grounds for appeals:

1. Administrative error by the school, e.g. the wrong grade/mark being recorded on a piece of evidence or spreadsheet.
2. Procedural error by the school, e.g. a reasonable adjustment or access arrangement such as additional time not being made available.
3. Academic judgement on the selection of evidence was unreasonable, e.g. not representative of performance.
4. Academic judgement in determining grade awarded was unreasonable, e.g. decisions on the standards of evidence were inaccurate.

All appeals to the examination boards need to come from the school. There are potentially 2 stages to an appeal, firstly a **Centre Review** (covering the grounds 1 & 2 above) and then possibly leading to an **Awarding Organisation Appeal** (covering grounds 3 & 4 above). If you are considering making an appeal please email Mrs Johnson, our Examinations Officer, at [wjohnson@sweynepark.com](mailto:wjohnson@sweynepark.com). The reply to your email will give you additional information to consider, for you to decide whether you do have grounds for making a stage 1 appeal. You will be informed of outcomes at each stage of the process. Please be aware that appeals are a set of objective procedures set by the examinations boards and whilst we are actively involved in the steps, the examination boards are the arbiters in awarding grades.

There is a **priority appeal** just for Year 13 students intending to start Higher Education this autumn whose **grades prevented them from securing an existing offer from their firm choice of university**. The Centre Review (stage 1) appeal needs to be submitted as soon as possible and by **3pm on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> August 2021** at the latest. Priority appeals require a UCAS number and will be handled more quickly, where possible by UCAS's advisory deadline of **8<sup>th</sup> September 2021**.

All other appeals are called non-priority appeals. The Centre Review appeal can be submitted following the publication of results, but must be submitted by **3pm Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2021**. Should the appeal include both stages, outcomes may not be reached until late in September.

Students and pupils are entitled to submit an appeal. Before doing so, please bear in mind the following steps that have been taken to achieve the awarding of fair grades this year.

1. The school has communicated our approach to determining grades, including the sources of evidence that will be considered, so that relevant mitigating circumstances (particularly during the main assessment period after Easter) could be raised prior to final grading.
2. Our 'Assessment Policy for KS4 and KS5 qualifications for Summer 2021' has been shared on the school website in the Exams section, having been verified by the JCQ.

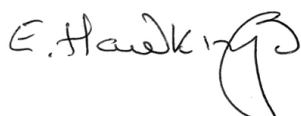
3. Access arrangements, including offering additional time for eligible students/pupils, have been in place for all of the key assessments during the summer term. This is to align arrangements with those when external examinations take place normally.
4. Very importantly, the school has provided information and support to students/pupils to enable them, with suitable efforts on their parts, to succeed in assessments. These assessments have been designed for students/pupils to show what they can do bearing in mind the considerable educational challenges brought about by Covid-19.
5. In order to avoid unconscious bias, assessments have been marked by other staff in departments than the actual teachers where possible.
6. Internal moderation processes have taken place on about 10% of the assessments (in line with the examination board guidelines for NEA work), marks adjusted and any further follow-up action taken to achieve consistency of standards.
7. Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGs) have been determined through aggregation of components, consideration of grade descriptors supplied by examination boards, and vitally a holistic approach applied, allowing for any special circumstances. Curriculum Leaders and the Leadership Team have scrutinised all grades to check for accuracy and that grades are fully justified through evidence.
8. The examination boards have required samples of evidence to verify standards, prior to them publishing final grades.

We are obliged to make you aware that an appeal can lead to a grade being lowered as well as being raised.

One further consideration is that if students/pupils are disappointed with a grade, there will be an opportunity in the Autumn term to take A level, AS level and GCSE examinations. For Year 11 leavers this would most likely take place at the destination organisation.

If you have any questions regarding the contents of this letter or around the assessment process, please email me on [ehawkings@sweynepark.com](mailto:ehawkings@sweynepark.com). The JCQ document 'Guidance for students, parents and guardians: GCSEs and AS/A Levels in England Summer 2021' is available in the Exams area of the school website.

Yours sincerely



Ed Hawkings  
Assistant Headteacher

