

# Appeal arrangements for AS, A levels and GCSEs

News story

Arrangements confirmed for appeals on AS, A level and GCSE grading in summer 2020.



Exams and assessments were cancelled this year due to coronavirus (COVID-19) but most students will still receive grades in time to progress to further study or employment.

Where students do not receive the grade they expected, it is important they understand their options – including the possibility of an appeal, where their school or college thinks something has gone wrong in their case. [We have published further information](#) to help students and their families understand how appeals will operate this summer. We have also published our [final statutory guidance for exam boards on appeal arrangements for GCSE, AS and A levels this summer](#). We are confirming the grounds for appeal as set out in our consultation, and following consultation are providing additional examples of the circumstances in which appeals might apply.

## **Appeals**

Students:

- can ask their school or college to check whether it made an administrative error when submitting their centre assessment grade or position in the rank order and if it agrees it did, to submit an appeal to the exam board

Schools and colleges can appeal:

- if they believe something has gone wrong in processing their results – for example, if a centre believes it has made an error when submitting its information; or similarly, that an exam board made a mistake when calculating, assigning or communicating a grade. We expect that any such

mistakes will be quickly found and corrected

- if they can evidence grades are lower than expected because previous cohorts are not sufficiently representative of this year's students

For example:

- if a single-sex school has changed to co-educational
- if the centre has had a significant change in leadership or governance and can provide objective evidence that its previous grades are not a reliable indicator of its 2020 results
- where a centre experienced a monumental event (flooding or fire which meant students has to re-locate) which affected one year's results in the historical data used in the model
- or where – because of the ability profile of the students – a centre was expecting results this year to show a very different pattern of grades to results in previous years. That could include where the grades of unusually high or low ability students been affected by the model because they fall outside the pattern of results in that centre in recent years. In most cases, this will only be apparent by reviewing centre wide data. Therefore centres, rather than individual students, will be best placed to consider whether this has occurred

## **Complaints about bias, discrimination, malpractice or maladministration**

We recognise and take seriously concerns about risks of bias in judgements used this summer. Although our initial analysis of results suggests that at a national level there will generally be no widening of the gaps in attainment between different groups of students, it is likely that at an individual level some students may wish to make a complaint about bias or discrimination. We have previously committed to making the process straightforward for them and the material we have published today includes information to help students understand whether they might have reason to complain about bias or discrimination. While we believe such cases will be rare, this is important to address any such concerns and for the confidence of students in general, in the arrangements this year. Students can also contact the Equality Advisory Support Service for advice if they think they have evidence of discrimination.

Our helpline, along with the National Careers Service Exam Results Helpline, will be available to students and their parents or carers to talk about the appeals process and any other questions they may have about their results this summer. You can find full contact details in our student guide.

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