

Appeals based on mock exams

News story

Ofqual sets out the criteria for what will determine a 'valid' mock for appeals of GCSE, AS and A levels in England, summer 2020.



The arrangements in place this summer are the fairest possible in the absence of exams, however any process for calculating grades will inevitably produce some results which need to be queried. We and the exam boards share the government's desire to do all we can to give schools and colleges every opportunity to appeal

On Tuesday (11 August) the Secretary of State asked us to consider how a valid mock exam result could be considered as part of an appeal. As many across education have confirmed, the approach taken towards mock assessments varies considerably between schools and colleges. Therefore any appeal based on mock assessment evidence must include further safeguards to ensure the process is fair.

We are setting out today, Saturday 15 August, the criteria determining what is a valid mock assessment. Exam boards have confirmed they will be ready to process these appeals from Monday – they will provide further information to their centres and contact details are below. Students seeking advice should first speak to their school or college.

This route of appeal is open to any student whose mock grade is higher than their calculated grade. We want to make sure this opportunity is available to a wide range of students, including those who had not taken a written mock exam before schools and colleges closed. We will therefore allow a non-exam assessment mark to be used too. Successful appeals on this ground will allow the student to receive the mock grade. Mock exams and non-exam assessments do not normally cover the full range of content. Centre assessment grades took into account the student's performance across the whole course. In circumstances where the centre assessment grade was lower than the mock grade, the student will receive the centre assessment grade.

Because of the grade protection in place for students this summer no grades

will go down as a result of an appeal.

This applies to GCSE, AS, A level, Extended Project Qualification and Advanced Extension Award in maths.

Criteria

Criteria	Requirement
1. Assessment conditions	<p>Supervised, unseen and undertaken in conditions that were intended to secure that work was the student's own. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– appropriate invigilation– no access to materials or resources that would not be permitted in exams– no possibility of corrections or revisions <p>Non examination assessment, where applicable, must have been undertaken in the conditions required by the exam board.</p> <p>For private candidates only, mocks undertaken with a private tutor may be used where they were validated by the relevant centre as part of the student's centre assessment grade submission.</p>
2. Form of assessment	<p>Either past assessment(s) produced by the relevant exam board OR assessments developed by teachers to align to exam past assessments e.g. in the curriculum sampled and style of questions.</p> <p>Marked non examination assessment can be used instead or in addition to mock examination results.</p>
3. Specification coverage	<p>Substantial coverage of the content normally assessed, for example assessment equivalent to one paper or one non examination assessment task.</p>
4. Duration of assessment	<p>Taken under timed conditions that align to those in the normal assessment (with suitable adjustments for those students eligible for extra time).</p>
5. Assessment window	<p>Completed within the programme of study, by 20 March 2020 (when schools and colleges were mainly closed).</p> <p>For private candidates only, mocks undertaken later than this date to provide evidence for the centre assessment grade may be used.</p>
6. Marking	<p>Marked using a mark scheme provided by the relevant exam board, or aligned with the exam board's mark schemes.</p> <p>Marked no later than the date of centre assessment grade submission.</p>
7. Final grade	<p>Was graded in line with the exam board's examination standard – for example, where a single past paper has been used applying exam board grade boundaries.</p>
8. Evidence	<p>The following evidence is available for the whole subject cohort if required for inspection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– evidence of the mark given and that marking was carried out by the deadline– the paper and the mark scheme <p>Student scripts do not need to have been retained.</p>

Centres will need to complete and send to the exam board a simple form to confirm each of the criteria has been met, provide the mock exam grade and a signed declaration from the head of centre.

Exam board contact details

Published 15 August 2020