

APPEALS PROCESS FOR CENTRE ASSESSED GRADES SUMMER 2020

1. Purpose

1.1.

Due to the Extraordinary Regulatory Framework in place by Ofqual this year the appeals process has changed for the summer of 2020 as awarding organisations have in place arrangements to allow a Centre to appeal results on behalf of a student or students and this document explains the grounds of appeal which are available for calculated results in summer 2020.

1.2. Under the Extraordinary Regulations Framework for Summer 2020

A student can ask their centre to appeal on their behalf to an awarding body if there is evidence that leads a student to believe:

- the centre itself made an error when submitting centre assessment grades or rank order information to the awarding body and has supporting evidence that confirms an error was made (and will submit its supporting evidence at the earliest stage and explain why data which the Head of Centre declared to be accurate is now considered incorrect)
- the awarding body made a mistake in the operation of the standardisation model where the wrong data was used to calculate results/the awarding body made an administrative error in the issuing of results.

A student can appeal against the centre's decision:

- not to seek any information the awarding body holds that would be needed for an appeal; and/or
- not to appeal to the awarding body.

A student cannot:

- appeal against their centre assessment grades and position in the rank order
- appeal in respect of the process or procedure used by Nottingham College in calculating their centre assessment grades and position in the rank order
- appeal directly in any respect to the awarding body.

Nottingham College will obtain consent from a student before any appeal is submitted to the awarding body to confirm that if you appeal your grade, you understand that it can go up, down or stay the same. If someone else in your cohort appeals their grade and the exam board finds an issue that affects other students' results, your grade is protected and will not go down if the appeal was not made on your behalf.

If you have any concerns and evidence about bias or discrimination that suggests the college did not act with care or integrity when determining centre assessment grades

or rank order information, and have evidence of serious malpractice/maladministration by the college please follow the [complaints policy and procedure](#). If you have evidence of serious malpractice/maladministration by the college, it may be appropriate to bring those concerns directly to the relevant awarding body.

2. Context

2.1

Centres were asked to make their best assessment of what grade the student would be most likely to receive and to place candidates in rank order. The purpose of this ranking was to allow adjustments to take place to ensure the distribution of grades at a national level was similar to previous years.

There was certain to be some mismatch between centre assessed grades and the final grades awarded by exam boards to ensure consistency in grade distribution between years, and this was recognised in the process that was used.

This is a process that has never been attempted before and was forced by circumstances which nobody could possibly have foreseen. Staff worked diligently to provide grades for students and to place them in rank order as fairly and accurately as possible.

2.2 Methodology used to award GCSE and A levels

GCE A, AS and GCSE level grades have been awarded by exam boards this summer through a methodology set by the regulators.

As a Centre, Nottingham College was asked to send exam boards two pieces of information for each subject. These were to be solely based on existing evidence:

1. Centre Assessment Grades – the grades they believed students were most likely to achieve in their examinations. Teachers were asked to consider a range of evidence to inform your centre assessment grades and these were not the same as target grades, predicted grades and mock results.
2. Rank Orders – within each subject, the order of students, by performance, for each grade. Teachers were asked to rank based on who they felt was most secure in achieving that grade.

These Centre Assessed Grades and rank ordering were agreed by two teachers and then moderated and approved by the Faculty/Industry area Manager/Head. The evidence and department moderation were then reviewed by a moderation panel including Senior Leadership members to check these results against submitted evidence in place and then were signed off by the Head of Centre/CEO as an accurate and a true representation of your performance.

The Exam Boards consistent standardisation system considered a school or colleges' results over time and students' prior attainment to determine whether the Centre Assessment Grades submitted were more generous or severe than predicted. This process allowed for the standardisation of grades across schools and colleges to ensure that results are aligned across the cohort.

There may be differences in the Centre Assessed Grade submitted by the centre and the final grade as it was not possible to standardise the way teachers generated their Centre Assessment Grades this summer, there simply was not the time. Instead, in the interests of fairness, it was necessary for exam boards to standardise the judgements of centres in order to make sure that, at a national level, grade distributions in summer 2020 were broadly in line with previous years.

Centres may experience some adjustments to their Centre Assessment Grades. The extent of any difference a centre might experience may vary between subjects because standardisation was conducted at a subject level, not at centre level. For example, the standardisation of GCSE English language was not affected by the standardisation of GCSE history.

This was the fairest possible approach available under extreme circumstances. It is a rigorous process which means that grades awarded this year are as valid as in any other year.

This will allow pupils to progress to the next stage of their lives in the normal way.

2.3 Methodology used to award Technical and Vocational qualifications

Calculated results

Vocational and Technical Qualifications (VTQs) come in a range of shapes and sizes, and full a range of purposes, as such they are not all being treated in the same way. You might know them better as Applied Generals, Technical Levels, BTECs, Diplomas, Technical Certificates or Technical Awards.

In all cases, exam boards and awarding organisations have made sure that the qualifications have been assessed in the most fair and consistent way and they will be recognised by educational establishments and employers. The majority of students will receive a calculated grade for most qualifications.

Unlike GCSE, AS and A levels, there is no overarching statistical standardisation model, but Ofqual requires that all Awarding Organisations follow the same broad process to calculate grades. Awarding Organisations are delivering the results and carrying out quality assurance in line with Ofqual's [Extraordinary regulatory framework for VTQ](#), which has been designed to allow the awarding organisations flexibility to determine the most suitable approach for their qualifications.

Different approaches will be taken depending on the evidence available, and the nature and structure of a qualification.

These Centre Assessed Grades and rank ordering (where applicable) were based on a minimum of one trusted source of defined Awarding body evidence types and were agreed by direct delivery teachers and then moderated and approved by the Faculty/Industry area Manager/Head. The evidence and department moderation were then reviewed by a moderation panel including Senior Leadership members to moderate these results against submitted evidence in place and moderation and then were signed off by the Head of Centre/CEO as accurate and a true representation of your performance.

This means that the way your result has been calculated for one qualification, may be different to the way it has been calculated for another. Whatever the exact approach that is taken to issuing a calculated result, awarding organisations have:

- gathered evidence such as previously banked assessment results, centre assessment grades, school or college results from recent years
 - quality-assured the evidence that is to be relied upon
 - ensured that the outcomes are not out of line with expectations
- Ofqual has worked with awarding organisations to support them through the process of applying this to their qualifications.

Adapted assessments

Calculated results aren't appropriate for all qualifications, for example, because there are practical skills that need to be tested or because there isn't enough evidence available for a calculated result to be valid and reliable. Where that's the case, the awarding organisation may have provided adapted assessments. For example, you might have been asked to take assessments online instead of in the classroom or demonstrate a procedure on a mannequin instead of a person. This will allow you to receive a result in the normal way. The normal internal assessment appeals process applies here.

Delay

There are some qualifications where the only option was to delay the assessment. This might be because there was no way to carry out an adapted assessment safely or authentically. If your assessment has been delayed, you may not get a result for that qualification this summer. Your college tutors will be advising you when you can next sit the assessment.

3. Procedures

3.1 Pre-results

Nottingham College:

- Will not divulge provisional centre assessment grades (CAG), nor rank orders, with students or parents/carers before the issue of results is confirmed by the relevant awarding body
- Understands that any inappropriate disclosure of centre assessment grades and rank order information before the issue of results will be investigated by awarding bodies as potential malpractice
- Follow the information provided by awarding bodies to determine the grounds on which an appeal can be made on behalf of a student, or students
- Make students aware of the arrangements in place for appeals prior to the issue of results on the students individual e-ilp for students to directly access
- Will not share the results with a third party under data protection
- Has completed all the necessary checks that all the data Ranking and Centre Assessed Grades submitted to the awarding body is correct and accurate.

3.2 Post results

Nottingham College:

- Will check all the awarding body information and final calculated grades to ensure there are no errors for example where the awarding organisation has used an incorrect data set for the purposes of calculating results/ has introduced an error into the data set it used for the purposes of calculating results.

Nottingham College will raise valid appeals where there is evidence of this directly with awarding body to request awarding body information as relevant and follow awarding body processes.

- Will check whether any student has a valid mock exam result (based on the criteria set by Ofqual) that is higher than their awarded grade. If this is the case, Nottingham College will raise an appeal with the awarding body on behalf of all students affected.
- Will accept completed Exam Internal Appeals Stage 1 forms submitted by the individual student by Thursday 3rd September 2020 to review concerns where there is evidence that:
 - Nottingham College made an error when submitting centre assessment grade or rank order information to the awarding body and has supporting evidence that confirms an error was made (and will submit its supporting evidence at the earliest stage and explain why data which the Head of Centre declared to be accurate is now considered incorrect).

- The relevant awarding body made a mistake in the operation of the standardisation model where the wrong data was used to calculate results/ the relevant awarding body made an administrative error in the issuing of results.
- Will accept Exam Internal Appeals Stage 2 forms submitted by Friday 11th September 2020 if not happy with the outcome of not proceeding the appeal with the relevant awarding body.
- Appeal to an awarding body on a student's behalf before the 17th September 2020 if after an internal appeal and the Centre's internal review outcome finds the centre itself made an error when submitting a centre assessment grade or rank order information or if it believes an awarding body made a mistake when calculating, assigning or communicating a grade.

Nottingham College will not:

- Seek any information the awarding body holds that would be needed for an appeal if it does not believe an awarding body made a mistake when calculating, assigning or communicating a grade.
- Appeal to an awarding body on a student's behalf if it does not believe the centre itself made an error when submitting a centre assessment grade or rank order information or if it does not believe an awarding body made a mistake when calculating, assigning or communicating a grade.

4. Informal Exam Appeal Stage 1

- Any student concerned with their results when released on the e-ilp should discuss this in the first instance with your identified Personal Tutor/Area manager to review your options and opportunities to improve your grade.
- The College will identify where there are valid mock exam results (based on the criteria set by Ofqual) that are higher than the awarded grade. The Exams Team will submit an appeal on behalf of all students affected in this instance by the deadline set by the awarding bodies and will inform those students where an appeal has been made by e-mail.
- If you wish to see your Centre Assessed Grades submitted to the awarding body you can submit a [Centre Assessed Grade request form](#) (accessed from StudentNet) to examappeals@nottinghamcollege.ac.uk **by Thursday 20th August for level 3 qualifications and by Thursday 27th August for level 1 and 2 qualifications.** These can only be requested by you as the student under data protection.
- These requests will be responded to within 3 working days and emailed directly to you as the student.
- If you feel you have evidence of an error as identified in section 1.2 on grounds to appeal and wish to appeal to the awarding body as please submit the [Exam Internal Appeals Stage 1 form](#) (accessed from StudentNet) to examappeals@nottinghamcollege.ac.uk **By Thursday 3rd September 2020** as Nottingham College is only able to submit appeals to the awarding body with your signed consent.

- The grounds for the appeal with the supporting evidence will be reviewed by the exams team and the process overseen by the quality team within 5 working days and the outcome emailed directly to you as the student.
- If the informal appeal is upheld this will be agreed by the Head of Centre and submitted to the relevant awarding body by Thursday 17th September 2020.
- If the appeal is not upheld this outcome will be communicated to you in the response.

5. Exam Appeal Stage 2

- If you remain unhappy with the outcome of the informal exam appeal then you can appeal using the [Exam Results Internal Appeal Stage 2 form](#) (accessed from StudentNet) which must be submitted by **Friday 11th September 2020** to examappeals@nottinghamcollege.ac.uk in order to be reviewed by the quality team within 3 working days and the outcome emailed directly to you as the student.