

8 July 2021



**Saffron Walden
County High School**

Saffron Academy Trust

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Dear Y11 and Y13 Students, Parents and Carers,

Exam Results and the Appeals Process

Now that we have had confirmation from the exam boards about the publication of results, we would like to provide you with information about our results days and the process for reviewing grades.

Publication of results

Results will be emailed to students' email addresses at 8.30am on results day, which is 10th August for Y13 (and those Y12s with certificating courses) and 12th August for Y11.

Please will students check that you can access your email address before the end of term and contact ICT Support if you have any problems (support@saffron.academy).

Sixth Form enrolment and University Clearing

The Sixth Form team will be providing information to Y11 students and parents about enrolment into Sixth Form. They will also be providing information to Y13 students about support with UCAS and clearing.

Quality Assurance

I would like to take this opportunity to reassure students and parents about the checks that have taken place, and are continuing to take place, to ensure the results are accurate and evidence-based and were determined by a process that was fair, consistent and free from bias.

Firstly, our Centre Policy, which is available on our website, was approved by the exam boards. This confirms that they are satisfied that our approach is correct and follows their guidance.

Prior to submitting grades to the exam boards, a rigorous process took place to ensure their accuracy. This followed robust moderation and standardisation activities that had taken place, following the guidance received from the exam boards and including external moderation by other schools. All results were signed off by more than one teacher in each department and I have personally checked the results for each of the 87 qualifications we have submitted.

We have ensured that mitigating circumstances have been taken into consideration when determining the grades and we have followed the exam boards' guidance on this.

Following submission, the exam boards have undertaken an external quality assurance process, including looking at examples of students' work.



We are therefore as confident as we can be that the results that will be awarded by the exam boards are based on a range of evidence, have undergone a thorough process of checking and represent an accurate and fair reflection of the performance of students.

Centre Review and the Appeals process

Although everyone is working hard to ensure students are issued with the correct grades on results day, there will also be an appeals system to act as a safety net to fix any genuine errors that were not identified earlier on. If a student believes an error has been made in determining their grade, they will have the right to appeal. There are two stages to the appeals process:

Stage 1: centre review

If a student doesn't think they have been issued with the correct grade, they can ask us to review their grade to check whether we have made an administrative error (e.g. submitted an incorrect grade) or did not apply a procedure correctly (e.g. did not take account of access arrangements).

Stage 2: appeal to the exam board

After the centre review is complete, if the student still doesn't think they have the correct grade, they can ask us to appeal to the exam board. The exam board will then review whether they themselves made an administrative error; whether we failed to follow procedure correctly; or whether we made an unreasonable exercise of academic judgement in the choice of evidence from which they determined the grade and/or in the determination of the grade from that evidence.

The exam boards have said that they will not consider the reasonableness of our policy, which has already been reviewed and approved, as part of the quality assurance process.

The exam boards have also said that an exercise of judgement will not be deemed unreasonable simply because a student considers that an alternative grade should have been awarded, even if the student puts forward supporting evidence. The boards have said that there may be a difference of opinion without there being an unreasonable exercise of judgement. The teachers' judgement will be considered unreasonable only if it is such that no teacher acting reasonably could have reached the same judgement. The exam boards have said that their reviewer will not remark individual assessments to make fine judgements but will take a holistic approach based on the overall evidence. They have said that a grade will only be considered unreasonable if the reviewer considers that the student's performance evidence is clearly and unequivocally indicative of a higher or lower grade.

What may happen to your grade during the centre review and exam board appeals process?

If a student requests a centre review or an awarding organisation appeal, there are three possible outcomes:

- the original grade may be lowered, so the final grade is lower than the original grade received.
- the original grade may be confirmed, so there is no change to the grade.
- the original grade may be raised, so the final grade is higher than the original grade received.

Once a finding has been made, a student cannot withdraw their request for a centre review or appeal. If the grade has been lowered, they will not be able to revert back to the original grade they received on results day.

What will be checked during a centre review?

Students can ask us to check whether we made a procedural error, an administrative error, or both. A procedural error means a failure to follow the process set out in the centre policy (which is available on our website in the examinations section). An administrative error means an error in recording the grade or submitting the grade to the awarding organisation.

NB A student must request a centre review before they can request an awarding organisation appeal. This is so the awarding organisation is certain that the grade is as the centre intended.



What will be checked during an awarding organisation appeal?

A student can ask the awarding organisation to check whether the centre made a procedural or administrative error - or whether the awarding organisation itself made an administrative error. A student can also ask the awarding organisation to check whether the academic judgement of the centre was unreasonable, either in the selection of evidence or the determination of your grade.

When and how do students submit a request for a Centre Review

Students should submit a request for a centre review by 9am on Monday 16 August 2021 for a priority appeal (see below), or by 9am on 3 September 2021 for non-priority appeals.

Students must use the form that will be available on the SWCHS website in the examinations section in time for results day and email it from their SWCHS email account to CAGappeals@swchs.net

What is a priority appeal?

A priority appeal is only for students applying to higher education who did not attain their firm choice (i.e. the offer they accepted as their first choice) and wish to appeal an A level or other Level 3 qualification result. The student should inform their intended higher education provider that they have requested a centre review or appeal.

When and how do I submit a request for an awarding organisation appeal?

A student must request a centre review before a student can request an awarding organisation appeal.

Once the outcome of the centre review is received (which, in the case of priority appeals, will be by means of a phone call on Tuesday 17 August and, for non-priority appeals, by the end of Tuesday 7 September), if a student wishes to request an awarding organisation appeal, they should do so by 9am on Thursday 19 August (for priority appeals) or by 9am on Thursday 9 September (for non-priority appeals) using the 'Form for Appealing to Boards' (which will be available on the SWCHS website in the examinations section). That form must be emailed to CAGappeals@swchs.net from the student's SWCHS email account. The school will then submit this to the exam board on the student's behalf.

Summary of timescales

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| 10 August | A level Results emailed to students' SWCHS email addresses |
| 12 August | GCSE Results emailed to students' SWCHS email addresses |
| 16 August | 9am deadline for Y13s to submit a priority 'Centre Review' form to SWCHS |
| 17 August | The school will confirm the outcome of the Centre Review by phone on this day |
| 19 August | 9am deadline for submitting a priority 'Appeal to Exam Board' form to SWCHS |
| 3 September | 9am deadline for submitting a non-priority 'Centre Review' form to SWCHS |
| 7 September | By the end of this day, the outcomes of Centre Reviews will be communicated to students. |
| 9 September | 9am deadline for submitting a non-priority 'Appeal to Exam Board' form to SWCHS |



Outcomes of appeals

The exam boards have said that they will aim to complete appeals as soon as possible. They have said that they will aim to complete the appeals process within 42 calendar days of the receipt of the application.

The exam boards have said that, following the conclusion of the awarding organisation's appeal process, a student who remains concerned that their grade was incorrect may be able to apply for a procedural review to the Exam Procedures Review Service from the relevant regulator (Ofqual).

And finally

This year has been a very challenging one for all involved in exams but most especially for our students. I would like to reiterate my admiration for students' efforts and resilience this year as they navigated their way through a most extraordinary time. I would also like to thank parents again for the support that you have provided to both them and to us.

Yours sincerely,



Mr M Norman
Deputy Headteacher

