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**Headteacher:** Mr J Parr BA Hons

6<sup>th</sup> July 2021

Dear Students, Parents and Carers

We are writing to you to let you know what is currently happening with the Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGs) that the school have submitted to exam boards. The school uploaded all the grades for all courses (including BTEC) on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> June. Between 18<sup>th</sup> June and the end of term the exam boards are carrying out quality assurance checks and we have already uploaded in excess of 100 files of evidence to support the grades in two subjects that they have asked us about so far.

We may get a call to provide further evidence or clarification of the evidence already sent. This is entirely expected and there is a lot of paperwork associated with each grade e.g. the grade itself, the candidate's written evidence, the test paper(s) and mark scheme, the internal moderation done by the department and the record of assessments taken. You do not need to worry about any of this, this is all part of the process. What it does mean is that every school in the country will have been checked to see that they have arrived at grades fairly.

Results will be issued electronically via GO4S at 10am on **Thursday August 12<sup>th</sup>**. If you are unhappy with your grade and think that the school have made a mistake you are able to appeal. The finer detail of the appeals process is yet to be released by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ), but they have outlined some details that you can find below in the FAQ appendix. Once JCQ have outlined the full appeals process in more detail we will write to you again to make you aware of this and who to contact in school to lodge an appeal.

It is unfortunate that we have been unable to celebrate the end of the school year with a prom due to the delay in lifting Covid restrictions and the uncertainties that that has brought. This is a great shame as we have not been able to say goodbye to students in the manner that we would have liked, but we do of course wish you all the very best for the future and hope that you can look back at your time at Church Stretton School with a smile on your face.

Wishing you all the very best for the future.

John Parr  
Headteacher

Andy Wood  
Deputy Headteacher

Martyn Longhurst  
Assistant Headteacher

Dan Bird  
Assistant Headteacher

## FAQ:

### How were my / my child's grades arrived at this year?

Grades this summer were based on Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGs). TAGs were submitted to the exam boards by us as a holistic assessment of students' performance in a subject, following a rigorous process of assessment, moderation and quality assurance.

These grades were then approved by the relevant exam board, following external quality assurance checks.

In some cases, the TAGs we submitted may have been reviewed by the exam board, who may have asked us to submit an alternative grade. However, any changes to the grades we submitted were done by professional teachers or reviewers; this year no grades have been changed as a result of an algorithm.

### What do I do if I'm not happy with my / my child's grade?

All students have the opportunity to appeal their grade if they meet the eligibility criteria (see below). It is important to note that an appeal may result in a grade being lowered, staying the same, or going up. So, if a student puts in an appeal and their grade is lowered, they will receive the lower mark.

There is also the option to resit GCSEs in the autumn, which may be preferable to some students. The design, content and assessment of these papers will be the same as in a normal year.

### What are the grounds for appeal?

There are five main grounds for appeal, as dictated by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ). They are:

1. You think we have made an **administrative error**: an example of this would be putting the wrong information into a spreadsheet.
2. You think we have made a **procedural error**: this means we haven't properly followed our own process, as approved by the exam board. An example of this would be where you've been told you should have received extra time for assessments, but this wasn't given in a certain subject.
3. You think the **academic judgement on the selection of evidence was unreasonable**:
4. you think the **evidence used to grade you was unreasonable**.
5. You think the **academic judgement on the grade you were given was unreasonable**.

### What does 'unreasonable' mean?

'Unreasonable' is a technical term in this context and means that no educational professional acting reasonably could have selected the same evidence or come up with the same grade.

This means that just because other forms of evidence may have been equally valid to use, the selection of evidence is not unreasonable. Because of the flexibility of the approach this year, every school and college will have used different forms of evidence.

It also means that the **independent reviewers will not remark or grade students' evidence**. Instead, they will look to see whether any teacher acting reasonably could have arrived at the same grade.

#### Executive Headteacher

Mrs Sarah Godden BA MEd  
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#### Trust Office

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### **What will be the outcome of an appeal?**

At either stage of the appeals process (see 'What are the two stages of an appeal?' below), a student's grade may go up, stay the same, or go down. When placing an appeal, the student will have to sign a declaration saying that they accept the fact their grade may go down and they may get a lower grade than their original TAG.

### **What's a priority appeal?**

Priority appeals will be handled more quickly than other appeals. Priority appeals are only open to **A level students starting university this autumn, who have missed out on the conditions of their firm or insurance offer.**

JCQ cannot offer priority appeals for GCSE students, unfortunately.

### **What should I do before appealing?**

Students must read the JCQ Student and Parent guide before appealing, which will be available on the JCQ website by results day.

We may not be able to offer as much advice and guidance on the likely success of an appeal this summer as we would in normal years, as we have already moderated, and quality assured all the grades ourselves. This means that unless the appeal is for procedural or clerical reasons the grade we have supplied matches the evidence we have in our opinion.

### **What are the two stages of an appeal?**

All appeals, on any of the grounds above, must first go through a **centre review**. At this stage, we will check for any administrative errors, and check that our policies and procedures were followed correctly. Our policy has already been approved by the exam boards, so we are only ensuring that we followed this properly.

The outcome of the centre review will be communicated to students when made.

At the centre review stage, if we find that a grade should go up or down, we will ask the exam board to change it. They will then consider this request.

Following the outcome of a centre review, students may still choose to pursue an **awarding organisation appeal**. They must fill in the form below, which we will then send on their behalf to the exam boards. Students and parents cannot send appeals directly to the exam board themselves – it must come from us.

The outcome of the awarding organisation appeal will be communicated to students when made.

### **How do I make an appeal?**

Following results day, students should fill in the first section of the JCQ form [here](#) and send it to the exams officer, Mrs Keeling (zoe.keeling@csschool.co.uk).

### **What are the deadlines for non-priority appeals?**

Non-priority appeals are any A levels, GCSEs or vocational qualifications, where a firm or insurance university place is not pending.

The deadline for submitting a centre review is 3 September; and the deadline for submitting an awarding organisation appeal is 10 September.

Appeals received after these dates may still be considered.

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