

15th July 2021

Dear Students and Parents

With the release of the Year 11 / Year 13 grades less than one month away, I wish to take this opportunity to explain the process that has taken place to finalise our Centre Assessed Grades (CAGs), and the options that will be available to students after they have received their results.

Context and Background:

Our Centre Policy for Teacher/Centre Assessed Grades was submitted to the Exam Boards at the end of April, and explains how grades have been awarded. A copy of this remains available, along with all previous letters on our web site.

For each qualification that our students have taken the Head of Department, supported by class teachers and the Senior Leadership Team have produced an assessment record. This details the specific assessment used to determine grades, when these assessments took place and the level of control each assessment was completed under.

Each Head of Department, working with the Senior Leadership Team then reviewed any variations students may have regarding their assessment record. This includes:

- any disruption to assessments for COVID-19 related absence;
- ensuring access arrangements were available for students when completing assessments;
- confirming any matters that would normally be addressed by the Exam Board's Special Consideration process have been considered;
- highlighting any students who had missed assessments for other reasons.

By completing this process, we are confident that all grades are based on an appropriate range of evidence. During the first two weeks of June our Data and Exams Teams submitted over 4,300 grades to our Exam Boards. This included a computer checking process to ensure the submitted grades were accurately entered.

This was followed by Exam Boards sampling the evidence from a range of subjects to check our assessments and the evidence we had collected.

Collecting Results:

Students will be able to collect their grades on:

- Year 13 Tuesday 10th August from 8.30am in the school library
- Year 11 Thursday 12th August from 8.30am in the school library

Appealing Results:

It is important that there is an appeals process in place for students to challenge their results if they feel this is necessary.

We appreciate appealing an exam grade can be stressful, however, it is important to remember that we must follow a very prescribed process determined by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ). Therefore, any appeal

must be directed to the Exam Team, which will then be investigated by members of the Senior Leadership Team. Please do not approach individual teachers or heads of department as this may be viewed as malpractice by JCQ and could put your appeal at risk.

Furthermore, it is critical that all students and parents appreciate that during the appeal process:

- **Grades can go down**
- **Grades can go up**
- **Grades can remain the same**

Therefore, I must urge you to give careful consideration when deciding whether to appeal once results are released.

Submitting an initial Appeal Inquiry:

In order to submit an appeal, the JCQ have stated that a student must have access to:

- The School's Centre Policy for Teacher Assessed Grades (on our web site)
- The Assessment Record for that qualification (on our web site from result day)
- The marks for each assessment noted on the Assessment Record
- Their Individual Variation Sheet

On Results Day, students will be given an advice sheet that will explain how to access a Microsoft Form in which they can request the above information for their subjects. At this stage no formal appeal has been lodged.

Once in receipt of the above information a student will be able to see the information the school used to finalise their grade. If concerns remain at this stage, then an appeal can be submitted.

Submitting an Appeal:

There are 2 separate stages to the summer appeals process and it is important to remember that these have been set by the JCQ and apply nationally.

Stage 1 - Centre (School) Review

Stage 2 - Appeal to the Awarding Organisation (Exam Board)

Before a student can submit an appeal to an awarding organisation they must request a Centre Review.

It is important to note that the outcome at either Stage 1 or Stage 2 of an Appeal can be that the original result remains the same, it goes up or it is lowered.

Once a finding has been made you cannot withdraw your request for a Stage 1 or Stage 2 Appeal. If the result has been lowered you cannot revert back to the original grade received on results day.

Stage 1 – Centre Review:

Any student may submit a request for a Centre Review on the grounds that the centre has:

- failed to follow its procedures properly or consistently in arriving at that result
- made an administrative error in relation to the result

Once a student has completed the electronic form and received their assessment information, we will also send a Stage One Appeal Form, which they can use to submit their request for a Centre Review.

This form must be returned by e-mail to results@whitleybayhighschool.org. Students must submit the review and a new form must be submitted for each subject that is being reviewed.

Outcome of a Centre Review:

The Centre Review will be completed by senior staff with the support of our exam and data teams. Once the school has received the stage one form we will carry out checks to ensure that when your grade was finalised and submitted, we:

- a. were aware of the existence and gave due consideration to any mitigating circumstances at the time of an assessment
- b. ensured that the provision of agreed access arrangements/reasonable adjustments for an assessment were in place
- c. correctly followed our process for determining and quality assuring grades

Once the Centre Review is complete the outcome will be sent to students via e-mail.

Stage 2 – Appeal to the Awarding Organisation (Exam Board):

An appeal to the Exam Board can only be made after a Centre Review has been completed and the outcome communicated to the student.

The grounds for a Stage 2 Appeal are:

- a. the Centre did not follow its procedure properly or consistently in arriving at the result, or during the Centre Review
- b. the Exam Board made an administrative error in relation to the results
- c. the Centre made an unreasonable exercise of academic judgement in the choice of evidence from which to determine the grade and/or the determination of that grade from the evidence.

Students will be e-mailed the Stage 2 appeals form when they receive the outcome of Stage 1. If a student wishes to submit a Stage 2 appeal then they can do so by e-mailing the Stage 2 form to results@whitleybayhighschool.org.

When submitting a Stage 2 Appeal, the form will provide the opportunity for you to provide information on:

- a. what you consider the Centre failed to do, why that was a failure to follow the Centre's procedures, and why that failure was important in the determination of the Teacher Assessed Grade
- b. in what way you consider the Exam Board made an administrative error, and what difference it made to the determination of the Teacher Assessed Grade
- c. in what way you consider there was an unreasonable exercise of academic judgement:
 - i. in the selection of evidence used to determine the Teacher Assessed Grade
 - ii. in the determination of a Teacher Assessed Grade from the selected evidence.

Please note that the requirements for each type of appeal are different and not all require any additional rationale:

- appeals made on the grounds of a general procedural check or on the grounds that there has been an unreasonable exercise of academic judgement in the determination of the grade from the evidence **does not** require submission of an explanation
- appeals made on the grounds of a procedural check in relation to mitigating circumstances or access arrangements/reasonable requirements **do** require submission of an explanation
- appeals made on the grounds of an unreasonable exercise of academic judgement in the choice of evidence from which to determine the grade **do** require an explanation of the student's concerns
- appeals made on the grounds of an administrative error **do** require an explanation of the perceived error.

The Exam Board will not be able to consider an appeal that is based solely on differences of opinion - the reviewer will not be reviewing the marking of individual assessments, but instead will consider whether the Teacher Assessed Grade is a reasonable exercise of academic judgement.

Priority Appeals:

*A priority appeal is defined by JCQ as **only for** Year 13 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. **You should inform your intended higher education provider that you have requested a Centre Review or appeal. You will need to provide in the request form(s) your UCAS personal ID code which is included in all correspondence from UCAS. This is needed to confirm that a student's place is dependent on the outcome of the appeal.***

Key Dates:

Tuesday 10th August – Year 13 students receive their results

Thursday 12th August – Year 11 students receive their results

Monday 16th August - 10am – deadline for submitting Year 13 Priority Stage One Appeals (Centre Reviews)

Wednesday 18th August - 12pm – All Priority Centre Reviews will be completed and outcomes returned to students

Friday 20th August - 3pm – deadline for submitting Year 13 Priority Stage Two Appeals (Exam Boards) – this is to enable the school to meet the JCQ deadline for submitting priority appeals to them which is 23rd August 2021

Friday 3rd September - 3pm – deadline for submitting all other Stage One Appeals (Centre Reviews)

Wednesday 8th September - 3pm – All Centre Reviews will be completed and outcomes returned to students

Tuesday 14th September - 3pm – deadline for submitting all other Stage Two Appeals (Exam Boards) – this is to enable the school to meet the JCQ deadline for submitting appeals to them which is 17th September 2021

Headteacher:
Steve Wilson

Deputy Headteachers:
Linda Buckle
Andrew Sherlaw

info@whitleybayhighschool.org
www.whitleybayhighschool.org

Resits:

At the request of the JCQ, the Exam Boards will make available an opportunity for students to resit almost all qualifications during the Autumn 2021 Examination Series. Students will receive an advice sheet with their results which will explain how to apply to take these resits.

While I appreciate a student may think a resit is a good option for them, it is important to remember that they may be taking these examinations without the same level of preparation and support that they have had for other assessments. I would recommend that any student considering taking resits speaks with our 6th Form Team for advice and support.

Conclusion:

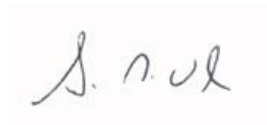
I hope the information I have provided in this letter provides clarity on the process that we have followed regarding Teacher/Centre Assessed Grades. A huge amount of time and effort has been taken to ensure that submitted grades are fair, reflecting each student's work, progress and ability.

Furthermore, I hope that I have provided a clear explanation as to the processes the JCQ have asked schools to follow for appeals, and how Whitley Bay High School will support students through this.

We will endeavour to respond to all appeals and queries as quickly as possible but please be understanding of the difficult position we have been placed in.

I wish you and your families an enjoyable summer.

Yours faithfully



STEVE WILSON
Headteacher