



8th July 2021

Dear Parents, carers, year 11 and year 13 students

We are writing to update you on information around results for A Levels and GCSEs. This year has been like no other and is very different for both students and schools. We therefore want to take the opportunity to explain the process so far and also the next steps. We've collected together some of the most frequently asked questions and you will find the responses to them on the following pages.

The results days this year will take place on site at the Lakeside Hall. Given the current guidance on coronavirus we are expecting to be able to allow parents to come onto site with students to collect results but if this should change we will publish updated information on the school website. The results days are as follows:

A Level – Tuesday 10th August 8.30am – 10.30am
GCSE – Thursday 12th August 8.30am – 10.30am

All results will be issued to the student directly. In the event that you cannot attend the results day we can issue results to a third party if, and only if the following conditions are met:

- A signed, physical letter from the student is handed to reception before results day. This letter must detail exactly who is coming to collect the results on their behalf.
- The third party must bring an identical physical copy of this letter on results day along with standard photographic identification such as a passport or driving license.

To make this straightforward we have included a letter template underneath for you to complete. We cannot accept this in any other form e.g. emails or phone call as we must keep a record of the permission granted by the student.

On results day itself, we really hope you are pleased and can understand the outcome. If you have any concerns, please share them with us. There will be an opportunity to talk matters through, and details of how to proceed if you want a formal review or appeal.

We'd once again like to pass on our thanks for your continued support during this difficult year and wish you the very best in the future. If you have any further questions about results days then please email them directly to exams@kirkhallamacademy.co.uk.

Yours sincerely

D. Belshaw

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Head of School

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How were grades determined?

Guidance for determining grades was issued earlier in the year by JCQ. The full guidance can be found at the following link: <https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/JCQ-Guidance-on-the-Determination-of-Grades-for-A-AS-Levels-and-GCSEs-Summer-2021.pdf>

All schools had to write a centre policy, which was submitted to JCQ for approval. You can find a copy of our centre policy at the following link: https://www.kirkhallamacademy.co.uk/data/uploads/web/files/Kirk_Hallam_Centre_TAG_Policy_%281%29.pdf

We then worked through this process collecting evidence for which we would base grades on. We have previously communicated our evidence base in writing but evidence could come from:

- Timetabled in class assessments
- Non-exam assessment (coursework)
- Work produced at the centre including substantial classwork/homework, internal tests, mock exams
- Records of student capability and performance in performance based subjects e.g. drama, music or sport.

The school then worked to determine the grades that would fit the evidence for each student in each subject. It is important to understand that this is a thorough process and no individual teacher has decided any of the grades. Firstly, evidence was analysed at a department level to ensure consistency across all classes (standardisation). Departments completed their own moderation process to ensure that grades are awarded using the guidance from JCQ but also the grade descriptors provided by all exams boards. Once this was completed a further level of internal quality assurance checks were completed by the senior leadership team for each subject. Grades were then submitted to exam boards. After this, external quality assurance was conducted by exam boards to check that we were awarding grades correctly.

How were access arrangements and mitigating circumstances considered?

All students who were entitled to access arrangements were given the full support that they would usually have for a regular set of examinations. We paid for an invigilation team to ensure these needs were fully met and students have signed a declaration to this effect.

Where we were made aware of any mitigating circumstances we have applied the procedure as described in the centre policy. Students that we would have expected to have received special consideration due to such mitigating circumstances were treated as though they did. This means a small adjustment to raw marks in line with the guidance from JCQ found here:

<https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/A-guide-to-the-spec-con-process-202021-Website-version.pdf>

How do appeals work?

If they are unhappy with their grade all students have the opportunity to appeal their grade if they meet the eligibility criteria for an appeal. It should be noted though that an appeal could result in a grade being lowered, staying the same or going up. If a student puts in an appeal and the grade is lowered they will receive this lower grade as their actual grade. Before making an appeal students must read the JCQ Student and Parent guide for appeals that can be found at the following link: <https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/JCQ-Guidance-for-Students-and-Parents-on-Summer-2021.pdf>

We have also provided key information about the process below.

There are two stages to the appeal process:

Stage 1: Centre review – an appeal made to the centre (the school)

This appeal must be made before a stage 2 appeal. It is an appeal made directly to the centre using a form that we will provide and can only be on the following grounds:

- The student believes that the centre has made an **administrative error** in relation to the result. An example might be that you think a grade awarded to you was actually the grade of another student with the same name.
- A **procedural error** in that the student believes that the centre has failed to follow its procedures properly or consistently in arriving at the result. An example might be that you should be entitled to extra time in your assessment but were not given this.

A stage 1 appeal cannot be on the grounds of academic judgement (unreasonableness), this would be a stage 2 appeal to the awarding organisation (exam board) instead. A stage 1 appeal must always be completed first however, else the stage 2 appeal will be rejected.

Once a stage 1 appeal has been submitted the centre the centre will consider the appeal and made a decision. In the event that the review finds there is no administrative/procedural error OR if there is an error but there is still no impact on the final grade awarded then the centre will advise the student that this is the case. In the event that the review finds there is a need to change a grade then the centre will inform the awarding organisation. The awarding organisation will then communicate back to the centre, who will in turn, inform the student of the final decision. It should be noted that if a centre review finds the need to change a grade, this may not always be supported by the awarding organisation, who ultimately make this decision.

Stage 2: Awarding organisation review – an appeal made to the awarding organisation (exam board)

If a stage 1 appeal is unsuccessful then a student can make an appeal to the awarding organisation. This is done through the centre, on behalf of the student, once again by completing a form that we will provide. You cannot appeal directly to the awarding organisation. A stage 2 appeal can only be on the following grounds:

- **Administrative error** (as with stage 1 or during the centre review)
- **Procedural error** (as with stage 1 or during the centre review)
- **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 making a stage 2 appeal will be required to provide details about why they are making this appeal including explanations where applicable.

The awarding organisation will then consider the appeal and then make a decision.

The awarding organisation may:

- Reject the appeal e.g. if a stage 1 appeal has not already been conducted first.
- Direct the centre to review its decision again.
- Find there that is no need for a grade to change.
- Impose a grade change (that could be higher **or** lower than the original grade)

As with a stage 1 review if the finding of a stage 2 is complete it cannot be withdrawn. This means if a grade change is the outcome this cannot be reversed by the awarding organisation.

Who can appeal?

Only students can make appeals. **A parent cannot appeal on behalf of a student.**

Due to this we require that **all appeals** forms be completed as **physical copies** that are **hand signed** by the student and submitted to the **school reception**. Forms will be available on results days.

What are the deadlines for appeals?

There are two types of appeals, regular and priority. The deadlines for both types of appeal are different and detailed below:

10 August to 7 September: priority appeals window

- » 10 August to 16 August: student requests centre review
- » 10 August to 20 August: centre conducts centre review and informs exam board (stage 1)
- » 11 August to 23 August: centre submits appeal to exam board (stage 2)

10 August to end October: majority of non-priority appeals take place

- » 10 August to 3 September: student requests centre review
- » 10 August to 10 September: centre conducts centre review and informs exam board (stage 1)
- » 11 August to 17 September: centre submits appeal to exam board (stage 2)

What is a priority appeal?

A priority appeal is when an A level student, who is starting university this autumn, has missed out on the conditions of their firm or insurance offer. If you decided not to confirm a firm conditional offer and to go through clearing instead, JCQ cannot offer you a priority appeal.

When making a priority appeal, students will have to include their UCAS number so it can be confirmed that it is a genuine priority appeal.

JCQ cannot offer priority appeals for GCSE students.

Is there another opportunity to do exams?

If you wish to do so then you can also be entered to do your subject as an examination during the autumn term. In the event that you perform better in the autumn examination than the grade you received in August then you can ask the exam board to issue you a certificate with the higher grade.

The windows when these exams take place are below:

A Level – From 4th October 2021 to 22nd October 2021

GCSE English Language and mathematics – From 1st November 2021 to 9th November 2021

All other GCSEs – From 15th November 2021 to 3rd December 2021

If you would like to be entered for subject(s) during this window then please contact exams@kirkhallacademy.co.uk (giving your request to be entered subject information and contact details) no later than Sept 1st (A Level) and September 15th (GCSE). This is so that entries can be submitted to exam boards before their deadlines.

FAO: The Exams Officer



Student Name: _____ (print name)

I authorise the person named below to collect and sign for my examination results on my behalf on results day in August 2021.

Name of the person collecting: _____ (print name)

Relationship to the student: _____ e.g. parent

Student signature: _____ Date: _____

Please now hand one copy of this letter to reception before results day.

Hand a second copy to the person collecting above.

Results will not be passed to the name person unless they bring both a fully completed copy of this letter that matches the one passed to reception before results day, and photographic identification