



Circa 1492

Ermysted's Grammar School

Headmaster: Mr M J Evans

13 July 2021

Dear Candidates, (cc Parents and Carers)

The awarding process for A Levels in 2021

The School submitted the Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGs) to the awarding bodies on Friday, 18 June 2021. The School is now part of a national programme of quality assurance ahead of the publication of results to candidates in August. This letter is intended to anticipate and answer some of the questions you may have about the remainder of the awarding process, some of which we have also addressed in previous correspondence.

How were my grades arrived at this year?

Grades this summer will be based on Teacher Assessed Grades. TAGs were submitted to the exam boards as a holistic assessment of candidates' performance in a subject, following a rigorous process of assessment, moderation, and quality assurance. These grades will then be approved by the relevant exam board, following external quality assurance checks.

How will I be notified of my grades?

A Level results will be published on **Tuesday, 10 August 2021**.

From **8:30 am** (the earliest time we can release the results) we will email your grades to your **school** email address. (Please make sure you can access your school account ahead of results day.) You will then have the option to come into school from 8:30 am to meet with staff in person, should you require further support or information regarding your results, or need to discuss your options. Please come to the School Library initially, and you will be directed to the best person to help you.

What should I do if I am pleased with my grades?

Celebrate! You have worked hard and should allow yourself a moment of self-congratulation and celebration. It would be very helpful to us – and save us lots of telephone calls and letters – if you could email destinations@ermysteds.n-yorks.sch.uk to confirm what you will be doing next year. Please include your name, university or place of work, your course or job title, and year of entry or start date. Please stay in touch – we would love to hear how you are getting on!

What can I do if I am unhappy with my grade?

If you believe an error has been made, you may appeal your grade. It is very important to note, however, that an appeal may result in a grade being lowered, staying the same, or going up. **So, if you put in an appeal and your grade is lowered, you will receive the lower mark.**

There is **no grade protection** in this year's appeals process, and this change needs to be well understood. **Therefore, consider very carefully before you take this course of action** – this process should only be used if you think there has been an error, not just because you are disappointed with your grade.



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There is also an opportunity for you to re-sit any A Level exams that you were entered for in summer, during October 2021. NEA (Non-exam assessments) will not form any part of the autumn series assessment except in Art. If you want to be entered for the autumn series re-sits, candidates must complete a re-sit [form](#) available from the Exam Office. This form must be completed by the candidate. The deadline date for receipt is **Monday, 6 September**.

How do I appeal?

There are **two stages** to the appeals process:

Stage 1: Centre Review

If you think the School (the Centre) has made an administrative or procedural error, you can appeal. The School will review whether it:

- made an administrative error; for example, it submitted an incorrect grade, or it used an incorrect assessment mark when determining your grade.
- did not apply a procedure correctly; for example, it did not follow the Centre Policy, did not undertake internal quality assurance, did not take account of access arrangements or mitigating circumstances.

To help you decide whether to appeal, the School has already shared with you the following information:

- the Centre Policy.
- the sources of evidence used to determine your grade along with any associated grades or marks.
- details of any special circumstances that have been taken into account in determining your grade; for example, access arrangements or mitigating circumstances such as illness.
- details of any changes made to your marks, where necessary, following further internal quality assurance processes.

To request a Centre Review, you must complete an appeals form (available on the school website at Parents > Exams > Appeals Form) and email it to centrereview@ermysteds.n-yorks.sch.uk by the deadline of:

- **12:00 pm (noon) on 16 August 2021** for *Priority* (explained below) A Level appeals and
- **3 September 2021** for all other A Level appeals and all GCSE appeals.

The form allows you to explain how you believe the Centre has failed to follow its procedures and/or the administrative error the Centre made and what difference it made to the determination of your grade. It also requires you to **acknowledge and accept** that the grade may be lowered, stay the same, or raised as a result of the appeal. At the Centre Review stage, if the Centre determines that a grade should go up or down, it will ask the exam board to change it. The Exam Board will then consider this request.

The form is a Word document. We would prefer you to send the completed form from your **school** email account to the email address given above. This will allow us to verify your identity and edit the document to record the actions that will follow submission of the appeal. If you do not have access to the internet, please collect a hard copy from the School Office and return it once you have completed the relevant sections. Please note that however you choose to submit the appeal form, it must be **signed by you, the candidate**, not your parent.

The outcome of the Centre Review will be communicated to candidates as soon as possible.



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Stage 2: appeal to the exam board

If you still do not think you have the correct grade after the Centre Review is complete, you can ask the School to appeal to the exam board. Candidates and parents cannot send appeals directly to the exam board themselves – it must come from the School. Appeals cannot be made to an awarding organisation until the centre review has been completed. Any submitted where this is not the case will be rejected by the awarding organisation and a new application will need to be submitted after the centre review has concluded.

The Exam Board will review whether:

- the centre made a procedural or administrative error - or whether the awarding organisation itself made an administrative error.
- the academic judgement of the centre was *unreasonable* (explained by JCQ below), either in the selection of evidence or the determination of your grade.

To make an **appeal to the exam board**, you must complete this form (available on the school website at Parents > Exams > Appeals Form) and email it to appeals@ermysteds.n-yorks.sch.uk by the deadline of:

- **12:00 pm (noon) on 23 August 2021** for *Priority* A Level appeals (defined below) and
- **17 September 2021** for all other A Level appeals and all GCSE appeals.

The form allows you to explain the basis of your appeal. As with the Centre Review, the form requires you to acknowledge and accept that the grade may be lowered, stay the same, or raised as a result of the appeal.

Any candidate who requests a *priority* appeal must include their UCAS personal ID with the appeal application for it to be processed as such. They should also notify their higher education provider that they have requested an appeal at the earliest possible opportunity so the provider can decide how to handle their offer.

As with the Centre Review, the form is a Word document, and we would prefer you to send the completed form from your **school** email account to the address above. If you do not have access to the internet, as before, please collect a hard copy from the School Office and return it once you have completed the relevant sections. Please note that however you choose to submit the appeal form, it must be **signed by you, the candidate**, not your parent.

You will be informed when your appeal has been submitted by the Centre to the awarding organisation. The outcome of the awarding organisation appeal will be communicated to you as soon as it is known.

At both stages of the appeals process, there may be the need for specialist, expert input (for example, subject teachers, SEND specialists, etc.). This may not be possible in August. In such cases, we may have to wait until the start of term, but priority appeals will still be treated as a priority.

What is a priority appeal?

Priority appeals will be handled more quickly than other appeals, where possible before UCAS's advisory deadline of 8 September. Priority appeals are only open to [A Level] candidates 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 result. 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, candidates will have to include their UCAS number so it can be confirmed that it is a genuine priority appeal.



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What is a 'reasonable' judgement?

A reasonable judgement is one that is supported by evidence. An exercise of judgement will not be unreasonable simply because a student considers that an alternative grade should have been awarded, even if the student puts forward supporting evidence. There may be a difference of opinion without there being an unreasonable exercise of judgement. The reviewer will not remark individual assessments to make fine judgements but will take a holistic approach based on the overall evidence.

What should I do before deciding whether to appeal?

You should read the [Student and Parent Guide to Appeals](#) from JCQ and the [Student Guide](#) from Ofqual before appealing. 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.

What should I do if I do not get into my first choice of university?

First, do not panic. Speak to us to discuss your options; there will be plenty of staff available in school on results day ready to help. You can visit in person, or phone into School. You may wish to go through clearing or sit the autumn exams or summer exams next year to try to improve your grade. If you are going to appeal your grade, you must let your university know you are appealing. They will then let you know whether they will hold a place for you pending the outcome of an appeal (note that universities are not obliged to hold a place for you; this is at their discretion).

When will I receive my exam certificates?

We look forward to seeing you at your Certificate Presentation Evening in December 2021. Details of this celebration evening will be sent out nearer the time. If you are unable to attend the presentation evening, your certificates can be collected by you after Monday, 10 January 2022. Alternatively, you may ask a member of your family or a friend to collect these on your behalf, but you must provide them with a letter of authorisation signed by you and addressed to the School.

Please note if your certificates have not been collected by 31 October 2022 these **will be destroyed** and if you require such documents in the future, you will need to contact the respective awarding organisation and request a replacement. The awarding organisation will charge you for this service.

I hope that this has answered all your questions but let me know if not. Otherwise, I hope you enjoy the summer and I look forward to catching up with you later in the year.

Yours sincerely,

Michael Evans
Headmaster