

Summer 2021



CCEA Post-Results Service, Process for Heads of Centre Summer 2021



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1. Introduction

The Summer 2021 exam series could not take place because of COVID-19, therefore students will now receive qualifications based on Centre Determined Grades (CDGs), which are based on the content they have been taught.

This guidance sets out the exceptional Post-Results Service for grades issued in Summer 2021 by CCEA awarding organisation (AO).

The Post-Results Service for Summer 2021 allows students to appeal their grade where they believe there has been an error. There are **two stages** to the Post-Results Service.

Stage 1 is a **Centre Review**. Students must first ask their centre to review whether an **administrative error** has been made or their centre **did not follow its procedure** as outlined in its CDG policy.

If the centre identifies an error with the grade it submitted to CCEA AO, it must submit a proposed revised grade with rationale for the proposed grade change. If CCEA AO is satisfied with the rationale presented by the centre **and** it considers it is appropriate to correct the result, it will issue a revised grade.

Stage 2 is an **Appeal to CCEA AO**. Where the centre concludes that no administrative error has been made and that they have followed their procedure, but a student believes that an error persists, a student may ask the centre to submit an Appeal to CCEA AO on their behalf. The centre **must** submit the student's appeal if requested and must provide the required full supporting evidence.

Depending on the grounds of the appeal, CCEA AO will consider:

- whether CCEA AO or the centre made **an administrative error; and/or**
- whether the **centre followed its procedures** in arriving at the student's result or in conducting its review; and/or
- whether the grade reflects **an unreasonable exercise of academic judgement**.

These procedures fulfil the CCEA Regulation General Qualifications Alternative Awarding Framework for Summer 2021, together with the relevant General Conditions of Recognition and Qualification Level Conditions of CCEA Regulation, both of which underpin the Post-Results Service.

This document applies solely to the Post-Results Service in Summer 2021.

2. Importance of Retaining Evidence

- 2.1 It is important that all evidence and records on which a student's grade is based, including copies of the student's work and any mark records, are retained safely. These will be needed to support the determination of students' grades, the internal and external quality assurance processes and Post-Results Service. It is not a requirement that the original version is retained, and a scanned copy of handwritten evidence or a digital document will be acceptable.

This is in line with the CCEA document [GCSE, AS and A Level Awarding Summer 2021 Alternative Arrangements – Process for Heads of Centre](#).

- 2.2 Evidence of a student's performance not used to determine grades may still be required for the Post-Results Service in exceptional cases where the awarding organisation deems the selection of evidence to have been unreasonable (please read Section 6 for full details). Existing evidence should therefore not be destroyed, deleted or returned to the student. If an appeal contends that a centre made an unreasonable exercise of academic judgement in selecting the evidence used, alternative evidence may need to be submitted to CCEA AO. For example, this alternative evidence could be highlighted by a student when a centre shares information with them regarding the determination of their grade.
- 2.3 Centres must retain any information about a student's access arrangements/reasonable adjustments, or mitigating circumstances affecting their performance in an assessment, which has been considered during the process of determining a student's grade – even if this was then deemed not to be relevant. This must include the reason for the centre's decision.
- 2.4 Records of student evidence should be kept accessible so that they can be used if a student wishes to appeal their grade.

Where centres have accepted entries from Private Candidates, **please refer to Section 8**.

Missing evidence

- 2.5 Where not all evidence or records have been retained, CCEA AO will consider the available evidence when determining the outcome of the appeal. This may affect the extent to which CCEA AO can review the centre's decision. Where no evidence has been retained (or evidence has been lost due to an unforeseen situation), CCEA AO may need to determine the outcome of the appeal based solely on the marks/grades on which the grade was determined. The appeal will be based on the available evidence.

3. Sharing Information with Students

- 3.1 Students will want to understand how their grades will be determined this summer, so they can be assured the process will be fairly and consistently applied.
- 3.2 Students will also want to understand the steps they can take if they believe something has gone wrong in determining a grade and how they can request a Centre Review.

Centres are expected to support students through the Centre Review and Appeal to CCEA AO.

Information a centre may share with students

- 3.3 The need for Centre Reviews and Appeals to CCEA AO should be limited if a centre shares the following information with students:
 - a) the sources of evidence that will be used to determine their grade, along with any grades/marks associated with them – this transparency will allow students to identify any errors or highlight circumstances relating to pieces of evidence and should reduce the number of instances where students request a Centre Review or Appeal to CCEA AO once grades have been issued;
 - b) the centre's CDG policy and any supporting documentation;
 - c) details of any variations in evidence used based on disruption to what a student was taught; and
 - d) details of any special circumstances that have been considered in determining their grade, for example access arrangements/reasonable adjustments or mitigating circumstances such as illness.
- 3.4 We recommend centres share this information with students before results day. However, if a centre has not been able to share this information before results day, it must be prepared to do so on or after results day if a student requests it. Centres may find it useful to refer to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) [guidance](#) on students' access to information about their exam results, exam scripts and exam mark exemptions.

Information a centre must share with students prior to the results date

- 3.5 Before grades are issued, centres must take all reasonable steps to ensure all students, including Private Candidates, have information about the arrangements in place for conducting Centre Reviews and submitting Appeals to CCEA AO following a Centre Review; this includes providing students with a statement of the arrangements promptly when requested.

Information a centre must not share with students prior to the results date

- 3.6 Centres are required to maintain the confidentiality of students' grades. Students **must not** be told the final Centre Determined Grade that has been submitted to CCEA AO. Grades must only be shared with students on the published results date once CCEA AO has issued the final grades.

- 3.7 Provision of the Centre Determined Grade to any student, or other party, before the agreed date for release of results will be viewed as malpractice and appropriate action will be taken by CCEA AO.

4. Centre Administrative Errors

- 4.1 Although centres will have undertaken robust internal checks and a quality assurance exercise to ensure the grades they submit to CCEA AO are correct, there is always a small possibility that an administrative error is identified, outside of the Centre Review process, before the results are reported. After the submission of grades, a centre may wish to undertake a further quality assurance exercise in order to minimise the number of potential Centre Reviews based on administrative errors.
- 4.2 If an administrative error is discovered after Centre Determined Grades have been submitted, but before the online portal for the submission of Centre Determined Grades has closed, the centre must resubmit the revised Centre Determined Grade(s). This must be accompanied by a new Head of Centre Declaration.
- 4.3 Where an administrative error is discovered before results day, but after the online portal for the submission of Centre Determined Grades has closed, the centre must contact CCEA AO with details of the error identified. Where appropriate, if time allows, CCEA AO will rectify the error before results are reported to students.
- 4.4 In a small number of cases, the error may be identified too close to results day for it to be rectified by CCEA AO before the student receives their grades. In these cases, the centre must make clear to the student when they receive their grades that an error has been identified and reported to CCEA AO to be corrected. The centre must explain to the student what impact this is likely to have on their grade, particularly if the grade will be lower as a result. CCEA AO will report the revised grade as soon as possible after results day.
- 4.5 Where a centre identifies an error in the post-results period, but not as the result of a student submitting a request for a Centre Review, centres should follow the advice set out in **paragraphs 5.23 to 5.24** before determining whether or not a revised grade should be submitted to CCEA AO.

5. Stage 1 – Centre Reviews

- 5.1 This is the first stage of the Post-Results Service in Summer 2021. This section covers the centre's role in handling requests from students who wish to correct a perceived error in their grades.

Procedural and administrative reviews may take place before or after results have been issued, whether they are prompted by a student or a centre's own quality assurance processes. For example, a centre may complete these reviews should a student query the information shared in **paragraph 3.3** and retain these records for use after results have been issued. The evidence for the review described in **paragraphs 5.16 and 5.17** must be available at any point from when grades are submitted. If a centre has completed a review in advance, it does not need to repeat the exercise after results day, as long as the records are available and provided to CCEA AO in the event of an Appeal to CCEA AO.

Who can request a review and when?

- 5.2 Any student, including a Private Candidate, may submit a request for a Centre Review on the grounds that the centre has:
- made an administrative error; or
 - not followed its procedure in arriving at the grade.
- 5.3 Requests for appeals on the grounds of academic judgement (unreasonableness) will only be considered by CCEA AO (at Stage 2) and not by centres. In these cases, an initial Centre Review must still be completed to ensure that the centre has not made any procedural or administrative errors.
- 5.4 To decide whether to request a review, students will need access to certain information before results day, or on results day if it has not already been made available to them. This must include:
- a) the centre's CDG policy;
 - b) the sources of evidence used to determine the student's grade, along with the marks/grades associated with them;
 - c) details of any variations in evidence used based on disruption to what that student was taught; and
 - d) details of any special circumstances that have been considered in determining their grade, for example access arrangements/reasonable adjustments or mitigating circumstances such as illness.
- 5.5 A Centre Review must be completed and an outcome reported to the student before an appeal can be submitted to CCEA AO (**see Section 10 for key dates**). Any appeals submitted where this has not happened will be rejected by CCEA AO, and a

new application will need to be submitted once the Centre Review has been completed.

- 5.6 All requests for a Centre Review, including those from Private Candidates, must be made directly to the centre that submitted the grade(s). Requests for Centre Reviews should be made by the student to the centre by:
- **16 August 2021** for priority reviews (where a higher education place is pending); and
 - **3 September 2021** for non-priority reviews (in all other cases).

This will enable centres to meet the deadlines to submit Appeals to CCEA AO.

- 5.7 Centre Reviews that are not requested by these dates may lead to appeals not being completed in time for those with a higher education place pending.
- 5.8 For reviews where a higher education place is pending, students must include their UCAS reference number. The student should also notify their preferred higher education provider that a review has been requested at the earliest possible opportunity, so the provider can decide how to handle its offer.
- 5.9 Given the short timescales for requesting Centre Reviews, and for submitting subsequent Appeals to CCEA AO, centres must have:
- a) a clearly documented process and appropriate resources in place to handle reviews and appeal requests from results days;
 - b) clearly communicated the process to students in advance of results days; and
 - c) ready access to the materials needed by the student to assess and decide whether to request a review (**see paragraph 5.4**).
- 5.10 Centres must accept and process/investigate any request for a review from a student. Failure to do so could constitute malpractice, and CCEA AO is required to follow up on such cases.

Administering review requests

- 5.11 To assist centres and students to promptly request and handle reviews, a sample Post-Results Service Submission Form is included in **Appendix B**. This form should be used to ensure the correct information is captured. A fully interactive version will be available on the CCEA website.
- 5.12 The centre must keep an electronic record of all review applications received and the outcomes of those reviews. How this is organised is up to the centre; however, it should be easy to access the information from a Centre Review should an appeal subsequently be submitted to CCEA AO.

- 5.13 A student may submit a request for a review but subsequently decide they wish to withdraw it. They should be allowed to do so as long as no outcome has been determined. A Centre Review application cannot be withdrawn once an outcome has been determined.

Determining a review outcome

- 5.14 An example of a centre administrative error is the transposing of grades for students with similar names. Such factual errors should be easy to identify and determine.
- 5.15 The focus of a review on procedural grounds will be **whether the centre followed its CDG Policy in arriving at the grade being challenged, not whether the CDG Policy is appropriate.**
- 5.16 The types of procedural error a student may raise and a centre will need to check may include:
- a) the existence and consideration of mitigating circumstances at the time of an assessment;
 - b) the provision of agreed access arrangements/reasonable adjustments for an assessment; and/or
 - c) the process for determining and quality assuring grades (for example internal standardisation and authentication of student work).
- 5.17 Procedural and administrative reviews may take place before or after results have been issued, whether they are prompted by a student or a centre's own quality assurance processes. If a centre has completed a review in advance, it does not need to repeat the exercise after results day, as long as the records are available and provided to CCEA AO in the event of an Appeal to CCEA AO. Centres will need access to all the following records and will need to consider:
- a) the reason presented by the student for the review, where this has been specified, and any evidence provided by the student about issues that were not known about at the time the grade was determined;
 - b) the centre's approved CDG policy and whether it was adhered to;
 - c) the evidence that was used to determine the student's grade;
 - d) any relevant assessment records for the student detailing any amendments to the range of evidence used for the cohort and, where applicable, steps taken to address any known mitigating circumstances/special consideration or approved access arrangements/reasonable adjustments;
 - e) a record that the grades had been signed off by at least two teachers in the subject, one of whom was the head of department/subject lead, or the Head of Centre where there was only one teacher in the department/subject (this can be delegated to facilitate the processing of Centre Reviews);

- f) the record, where it exists, of any relevant pre-results communications between the centre and student (for example where a student has raised mitigating circumstances earlier in the process); and
- g) relevant centre administration records.

5.18 In cases where the centre considers a procedure was not followed or an administrative error occurred, the centre must decide whether this affected the grade submitted to CCEA AO.

5.19 The resulting outcome may be that the grade goes up, goes down or stays the same, depending on the impact of the error.

Examples

- a) A student requested a review as they did not believe that the marks/grades attributed to their selection of evidence were accurately recorded. The centre reviewed the student's evidence and confirmed that the correct marks/grades were included when determining the student's grade. Therefore, no change was required to the student's grade.
- b) A student requested a review as they believe that the school did not take account of the fact that their approved access arrangements/reasonable adjustments were not in place for some of the assessments used in the selection of evidence. The centre finds that the student's concerns were correct, having checked that the student was entitled to access arrangements/reasonable adjustments and finding no record that these were in place for two of the three assessments used in the student's evidence. The centre therefore **did not follow a procedure**. The centre reviews the grade for the student considering this finding, to determine whether their final judgement would have changed as a result. The centre considers that the lack of access arrangements/reasonable adjustments would have had an impact on the student's performance – if the access arrangements/reasonable adjustments had been in place it is considered the student would have achieved a higher grade. They therefore advise that, in their professional opinion and in line with the approach set out in the centre's CDG policy, the grade should be a B rather than a C.
- c) A student requested a Centre Review believing that the school transposed some of their marks for the range of evidence incorrectly. The centre finds that the student's concerns are correct: there was an **administrative error**. The centre reviews the student's grade to determine whether their final judgement would have changed as a result. The centre decided that correcting this has raised the final grade from a B to an A.

- 5.20 It is possible for a procedural error or an administrative error to be identified but for this not to have had any impact on the grade awarded. In this case, the outcome of the review would be that the grade stays the same.

Example

The centre finds that the marks of one piece of evidence have been transposed to another piece of evidence, but the differences are small so the overall impact of correcting the errors is that the grade already reported was accurate and therefore stays the same.

- 5.21 It is also possible for a procedural error or an administrative error to be identified at the review which, when rectified, leads to a lowering of the grade.
- 5.22 In such cases, the student who has requested the review will already have consented to their grade being lowered as a possible outcome, and the centre should therefore submit a request to lower the grade to CCEA AO.
- 5.23 The review may highlight other students who have been impacted by the same issue. In some cases, those students may also be found to have a lower grade than they should, and the centre should rectify this. In other cases, there may be a student or students whose reported grade is too high. For example, one student's marks could have been transposed with another student's, leading to one student having a grade higher than it should be – but the student with the higher grade is unlikely to have requested a Centre Review.
- 5.24 These students will not have consented to having their grades lowered unless they have separately submitted requests for reviews. In these cases, the centre must carefully consider the impact of lowering the students' grades before requesting CCEA AO to do so. In most instances, it will be appropriate to lower the grade, as not to do so could have an adverse impact on public confidence. Allowing incorrect grades to stand could also have an adverse impact on employers or educational institutions who rely on the grade in future, as well as on the student, if for example they progress to a course they were not equipped for. However, there could also be an adverse impact on the individual student by correcting the grade at this point.

Reporting an outcome – pre-results

- 5.25 If a Centre Review takes place before results are issued, and an error is identified, the error may be corrected before results are issued. Centres may confirm to the student that the review has been completed, that an error has been identified, and that the appropriate steps have been taken to rectify the error. However, centres must not share information about any new grade that has been submitted for the student until the date for the publication of results.

Reporting an outcome – post-results

- 5.26 Once the centre has considered the review and determined if a grade change is necessary due to a procedural error or administrative error, it must report the outcome either to the student who requested the review (if the grade has not changed) or to CCEA AO to request a change to the grade.
- 5.27 If the centre's review finds a procedural error or administrative error and concludes that a grade change is needed, before reporting the outcome to the student, the centre must submit an error correction request to CCEA AO as soon as possible, and before reporting the outcome to the student.
- 5.28 The error correction request to CCEA AO must include the outcome of the review and the reason for the decision made, and it must be signed off by the Head of Centre or a designated member of staff. CCEA AO staff will then consider the outcome and reasons and make the final decision about changing the grade.
- 5.29 Amended grades will be reported to the centre, to be shared with the student along with the centre's review decision. In cases where CCEA AO disagrees with the centre's proposal of a revised grade as the result of a review, whether because CCEA AO considers any revision to be inappropriate, or considers a different grade to be appropriate, CCEA AO will clearly communicate its reasons to the centre.
- 5.30 The decision the centre provides to the student can be set out using a template letter provided by CCEA AO or in a separate outcome letter. It must set out:
- whether or not the review found a procedural error or administrative error;
 - if it did, what that error was;
 - the reason for the finding;
 - whether there was a grade change and, if so, what the new grade is (if reporting an outcome before results day, this information must not be provided);
 - a reason for the grade change, or lack of change (including any explanation from CCEA AO where its decision differs from the centre's proposal); and
 - information on the next steps if a student wishes to submit an appeal to CCEA AO.
- 5.31 A record of the outcome of all reviews must be kept by the centre.
- 5.32 Whether or not a procedural error or administrative error was found, and whether or not the grade changed as a result, all students have the right to submit an Appeal to CCEA AO as the next stage in the process.
- 5.33 Any Appeal to CCEA AO must be submitted on the student's behalf by the centre that carried out the relevant review, with the consent of the student. A refusal to submit an appeal for the student could be considered malpractice and investigated by CCEA AO as such.

6. Stage 2 – Appeals to CCEA AO

6.1 This is the second stage of the appeals process in Summer 2021. This section covers the centre's role in submitting student appeal requests to CCEA AO, including the supporting information needed, what CCEA AO will do and how outcomes will be reported.

Who can request an appeal and when?

- 6.2 Any student, including a Private Candidate, may submit a request for an Appeal to CCEA AO after the publication of results and they have received the outcome of their Centre Review. An appeal may be made on the following grounds:
- a) The centre made an administrative error;
 - b) The centre did not follow its procedure in arriving at the grade, or during the centre review;
 - c) CCEA AO made an administrative error in relation to the result; and/or
 - d) The centre made an unreasonable exercise of academic judgement in the choice of evidence in light of the centre's agreed CDG Policy and selection of evidence for the cohort and/or the determination of that grade from the evidence.
- 6.3 An appeal can only be made against a grade issued. Any student who believes that the centre's decision to withdraw an entry due to insufficient evidence on which to determine a Centre Determined Grade, or not to make an entry in the first place, must raise such concerns through the centre's complaints process. Any continuing concerns following completion of the centre's complaints process may subsequently be raised through CCEA AO's complaints process.
- 6.4 All requests for an appeal should be made directly to the centre that submitted the grade and must be received by CCEA AO:
- by **23 August 2021** for priority appeals (those for which a higher education place is pending); or
 - by **17 September 2021** for non-priority appeals.
- 6.5 All requests for appeals, from internal or Private Candidates, must be made to the centre that determined and submitted the grade, and the centre must submit the appeal request to CCEA AO.
- 6.6 Failure to submit appeals by the dates in **paragraph 6.4** may lead to appeals not being completed in time for those with a higher education place pending.
- 6.7 CCEA AO will not accept appeals directly from students or parents/guardians. Appeals submitted by students or parents/guardians directly to CCEA AO will not be processed and will need to be resubmitted via the centre. This may increase the risk of appeals not being completed in time for those with a higher education place pending.

- 6.8 Any student who requests a priority appeal must include their UCAS reference number 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 its offer.
- 6.9 Given the importance of students being able to access the appeals process, and the short timescales for submitting and completing Appeals to CCEA AO, centres must:
- a) have a clearly documented process and appropriate resource in place to handle reviews and appeal requests from results days;
 - b) have clearly communicated the process to students in advance of results days;
 - c) have ready access to the materials needed to submit the appeal to minimise the likelihood of CCEA AO needing to request further information; and
 - d) have a named contact available for any CCEA AO queries, who will know about the appeals submitted and be able to assist promptly.
- 6.10 Centres must accept and submit a request for an appeal from a student. A failure to do so could constitute malpractice, and CCEA AO is required to follow up on such cases. The appeal submission should include the outcome of the initial Centre Review showing the centre's own findings when considering the student's concerns.
- 6.11 Appeals cannot be made to CCEA AO until the Centre Review has been completed. Any appeal submitted where this is not the case will be rejected, and a new application will need to be submitted after the Centre Review has concluded.

How to appeal

- 6.12 A centre must submit an Appeal to CCEA AO if the student considers that:
- a) The centre made an administrative error;
 - b) The centre did not follow its procedure in arriving at the grade, or during the Centre Review;
 - c) CCEA AO made an administrative error in relation to the result; and/or
 - d) The centre made an unreasonable exercise of academic judgement in the choice of evidence in light of the centre's agreed CDG Policy and selection of evidence for the cohort and/or the determination of that grade from the evidence.
- 6.13 Where centres are delayed in providing all the necessary information to CCEA AO, there could be a delay in processing the appeal which may make it impossible to meet higher education provider deadlines for priority appeals.

6.14 It is essential that there is a named contact at the centre with whom CCEA AO can liaise, should further information be needed before the appeal can be progressed. This will help to minimise any delays to the process.

6.15 The information CCEA AO will require when a student appeal is submitted includes:

- a) what they consider the centre failed to do, why that was a failure to follow the centre's procedures, and why that failure was important to the determination of the Centre Determined Grade;
- b) in what way they consider CCEA AO to have made an administrative error, and what difference it made to the determination of the Centre Determined Grade;
- c) in what way they consider there was an unreasonable exercise of academic judgement:
 - i in light of the centre's agreed CDG Policy and selection of evidence for the cohort;
 - ii in the determination of a Centre Determined Grade from the selected evidence;

If possible, the student should explain the basis on which each ground of appeals is advanced. This will not however be necessary where the appeal contends that there was an unreasonable exercise of academic judgement.

- d) a clear statement that grades may go up, go down or stay the same as the result of an appeal, with space to confirm that the student understands this and consents to those outcomes;
- e) relevant accompanying evidence; and
- f) a named contact at the centre who can handle any CCEA AO queries.

6.16 Once the centre has submitted the Appeal to CCEA AO, it should confirm to the student that it has done so.

6.17 When an appeal is received, CCEA AO will decide whether it will be accepted for evaluation or not.

6.18 The decision whether to accept the application for an appeal is based on:

- a) whether a Centre Review has been completed;
- b) the timing of the application in relation to the published deadlines for submitting appeals; and
- c) whether the student has confirmed that they consent to their grade going up, going down or staying the same.

6.19 If an application for an appeal is not accepted, the reason(s) for this will be given.

- 6.20 A student may submit a request for an appeal but subsequently decide they wish to withdraw it. CCEA AO will accept requests for appeals to be withdrawn as long as no outcome has been determined. An application for Appeal to CCEA AO cannot be withdrawn once an outcome has been determined.

What happens during the appeal?

- 6.21 An appeal is not an investigation by CCEA AO, but an evaluation of the student's grade in light of the grounds of appeal.
- 6.22 When considering an appeal, CCEA AO will consider the factors raised by the appeal and attach such weight to them as it considers appropriate.
- 6.23 CCEA AO will consider whether the centre deviated from its own procedures in the way(s) identified by the student in the grounds of appeal.
- 6.24 As procedures are evaluated at the Centre Review stage, it is expected that most procedural errors and centre administrative errors will have already been rectified by the centre before an appeal is submitted.
- 6.25 Where an appeal is made on the grounds of an unreasonable exercise of academic judgement (either in the choice of evidence from which to determine the grade and/or the determination of that grade from the evidence), CCEA AO will take as the starting point the Centre Determined Grade itself and not any alternative grade put forward as part of the appeal. Therefore, the focus of any appeal will be on whether the Centre Determined Grade was unreasonable and not that any other grade or mark would have been reasonable.
- 6.26 As the Centre Determined Grade is holistic in nature, CCEA AO's independent reviewer will take a similarly holistic approach to their decision-making. The purpose of the independent review is not to review the marking of individual items of evidence.
- 6.27 An independent reviewer will consider whether the original Centre Determined Grade decision was reasonable. The independent reviewer will not consider whether they would have given an alternative grade or whether an alternative grade could also reasonably have been given.

The independent reviewer will consider whether the original Centre Determined Grade decision was reasonable on its own terms, not if any alternative proposition for the Centre Determined Grade or evidence put forward by the student would be a more appropriate exercise of academic judgement. There may be a difference of opinion as to the assessed grade without there being an unreasonable exercise of academic judgement. The reviewer will only conclude that there has been an unreasonable exercise of academic judgement if the Centre Determined Grade was clearly wrong – i.e. there was no basis upon which the grade could properly have been given.

- 6.28 Where the appeal concerns the selection of evidence, the academic decision will be considered in the context of the centre's CDG Policy. Where this sets a starting point that the same evidence will be used for all students in a cohort, the relevant question will usually be whether an academic decision to depart from, or not to depart from, the starting point in respect of the particular student was unreasonable.
- 6.29 Depending on the grounds submitted by the student (procedural/administrative, unreasonableness of academic judgement, or both), CCEA AO may assign the appeal for evaluation to a member of their staff and/or to an independent reviewer.
- 6.30 An independent reviewer will be a subject expert appointed by CCEA AO and trained to evaluate appeals. The independent reviewer will have no personal interest in the decision being appealed and will evaluate any appeal made on the grounds that there was an unreasonable exercise of academic judgement by the centre.
- 6.31 Where the student submits an appeal on more than one of the grounds (for example CCEA AO is asked to review both procedures and the exercise of academic judgement), the appeal process is likely to take longer. This could be an important consideration for students who urgently need the outcome of their appeal.

Reporting the outcome

- 6.32 The appeal will either be allowed or dismissed in whole or in part. The fact that an appeal has been allowed will not necessarily result in a grade change for the student.
- 6.33 Where CCEA AO:
- identifies that a centre did not follow its procedure; or
 - finds alternative evidence should have been included in the range of evidence,
- and that this may have impacted the Centre Determined Grade, they may report these findings to the centre and direct it to review the Centre Determined Grade. The centre must then inform CCEA AO if it concludes that there should be a change to the grade.
- In most cases, CCEA AO will determine whether a grade change is necessary and may impose a change to the grade.
- 6.34 Following final quality assurance checks, where it considers it appropriate to do so, CCEA AO will make the grade amendment and report the outcome of the appeal, with reasons for its decision, to the centre.
- 6.35 Where an unreasonable exercise of academic judgement is identified by CCEA AO, the independent reviewer will determine the appropriate grade. CCEA AO will then report the revised grade and outcome of the appeal, with reasons, to the centre.
- 6.36 The centre must promptly share the outcome of the appeal, and where appropriate the next stage of the process, with the student.

7. Examination Procedures Review Service

Following the conclusion of Stage 2 Appeal to CCEA AO, a student who remains concerned that their grade was incorrect, can apply to CCEA Regulation's EPRS if they feel that the appeals procedure was not followed by the AO. CCEA Regulation will provide further details about the EPRS processes for Summer 2021 before the issue of results day this summer.

8. Appeals for Private Candidates

- 8.1 The Post-Results Service applies to Private Candidates in the same way as for all other students. It is the responsibility of the centre to ensure that all candidates, including Private Candidates, can access the Post-Results Service.

Prior to results day

- 8.2 Where a centre has accepted entries from Private Candidates, it must ensure that it has followed the CCEA AO guidance on assessing Private Candidates.

Sharing information with Private Candidates

- 8.3 If, following the issue of grades, a Private Candidate requests information about their grade, the centre must provide the same information as for all other students. Where some of this information is held by a third party, the centre must liaise with the third party to ensure that this information can be provided. Please see **Section 3** for details of the information centres will need to share.

Conducting a Centre Review for Private Candidates

- 8.4 If a Private Candidate requests a Centre Review, it is the responsibility of the centre that entered them to conduct the review and to liaise with third parties who have been involved in assessing the candidate where necessary. The centre must ensure that the CDG Policy has been followed and that no administrative errors have been made. Before conducting a Centre Review, the centre must ensure that the student is aware that their grade may go up, go down or stay the same as a result of the review. Please see **Section 5** for more information on the Centre Review process.

Appeals to CCEA AO

- 8.5 If, following a Centre Review, a Private Candidate requests an Appeal to CCEA AO, the centre must submit this on their behalf as for any other student. Before submitting an appeal, the centre must ensure that the student is aware, and accepts, that their grade may go up, go down or stay the same as a result of the appeal. When submitting the appeal, the centre must ensure that any additional supporting documentation provided by third parties involved in the Post-Results Service is included. Please see **Section 6** for more information on CCEA AO's appeals process.

9. Summary of Roles and Responsibilities

9.1 The **candidate**, supported by their centre, will:

- submit an application for a Centre Review if they feel there has been an error in the award of their grade;
- submit an Appeal to CCEA AO through their centre if they feel the error has not been resolved;
- submit an application to EPRS if they feel CCEA AO did not follow its procedures at the Appeal to CCEA AO stage;
- provide any evidence and rationale to support their application; and
- understand that their grade may go up, go down or stay the same.

9.2 The **centre** will:

- have appropriate arrangements in place to conduct a Centre Review;
- ensure that a transparent process is in place so that candidates and parents/guardians understand the steps in a Centre Review;
- complete a Centre Review if requested by a candidate, checking for any administrative errors and/or that procedures have been followed;
- decide if a grade change is necessary having completed the Centre Review;
- put in place support mechanisms for candidates who wish to make an Appeal to CCEA AO if they feel the error has not been resolved;
- inform CCEA AO of any required changes to grades;
- submit an application for Appeal to CCEA AO on behalf of a candidate if instructed to do so by the candidate;
- provide all required evidence electronically, through the Post-Results Service application, on behalf of the candidate to CCEA AO in support of the Appeal to CCEA AO;
- communicate the outcome of a Centre Review and/or Appeal to CCEA AO to the candidate; and
- continue to provide pastoral support to candidates at each stage of the process, as required.

9.3 **CCEA awarding organisation** will:

- consider applications for Appeal to CCEA AO made by centres on behalf of a candidate;
- check to ensure that processes have been followed;
- consider if the grade awarded represents a reasonable exercise of academic judgement*;
- ensure that subject experts involved in the review process are independent, i.e. did not review the candidate's work as part of the sampling process for CCEA AO;
- correct any incorrect grades as appropriate; and
- communicate the final grade to a centre.

**The CCEA decision on whether the centre exercised reasonable academic judgement in awarding the grade will be final.*

9.4 **CCEA Regulation** will:

- consider applications to EPRS made by candidates who feel CCEA AO did not follow its procedures at the Appeal to CCEA AO stage;
- not consider applications on the grounds of academic judgement; and
- communicate the outcome of EPRS to the centre (who will communicate with the candidate) and CCEA awarding organisation.

10. Key Dates Following Publication of Results

Key dates for priority appeals (where a student has a place in higher education pending)

10 August to 16 August 2021	Window for students to request a Centre Review
10 August to 20 August 2021	Centres conduct Centre Reviews
10 August to 23 August 2021	Centres submit Appeals to CCEA AO

Key dates for non-priority appeals

From results day to 3 September 2021	Window for students to request a Centre Review
From results day to 10 September 2021	Centres conduct Centre Reviews
From results day to 17 September 2021	Centres submit Appeals to CCEA AO

Publication of GCE AS and A level results – 10 August 2021

Publication of GCSE results – 12 August 2021

11. Timescales

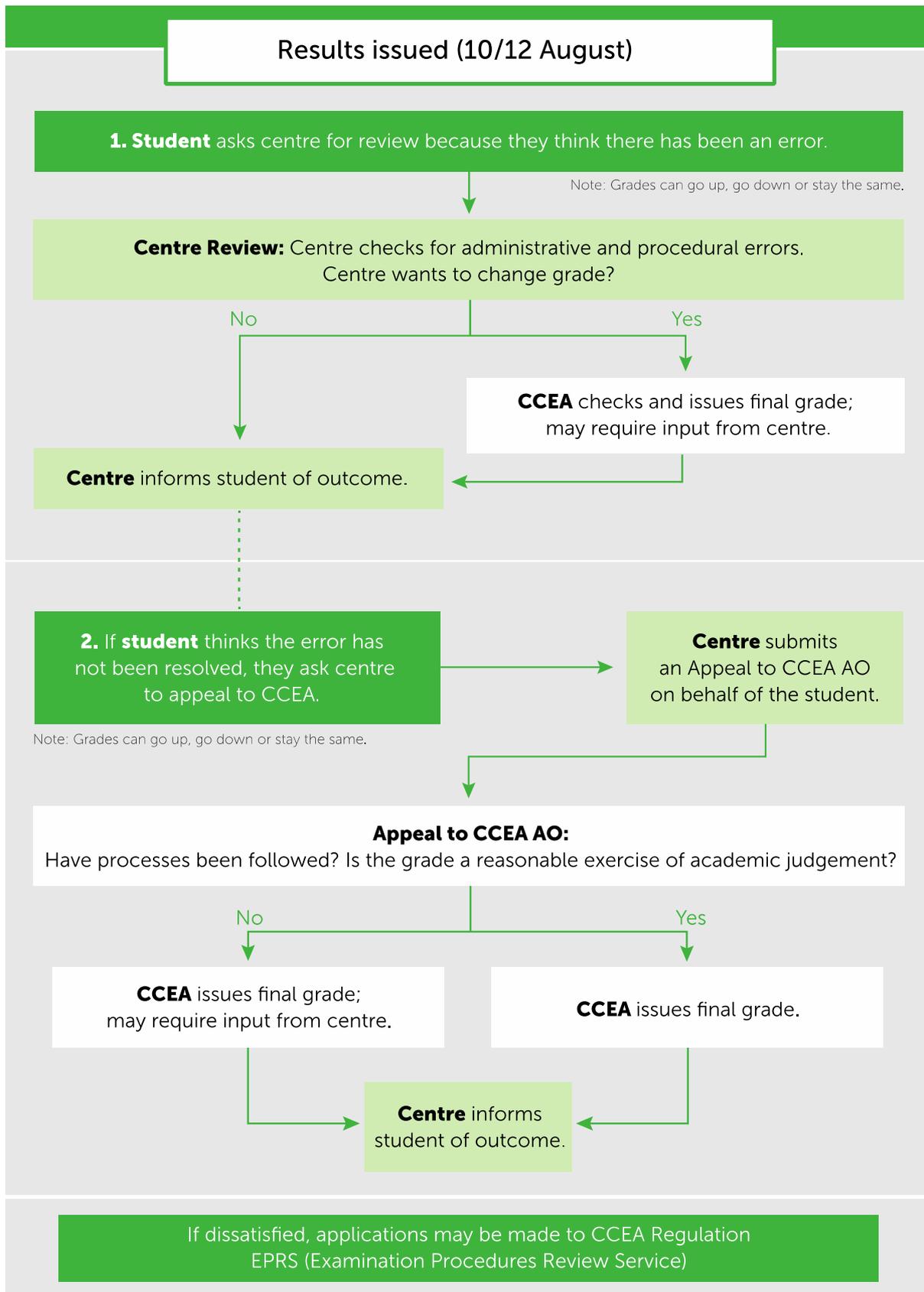
- 11.1 CCEA AO will aim to complete appeals as soon as possible, and particular efforts will be made for those appeals that have been identified as priority appeals for students with a higher education place pending.

CCEA AO will aim to complete Stage 2 of the process (the Appeal to CCEA AO) within 42 calendar days of the receipt of the application.

Due to the nature of appeals this year, CCEA AO may require additional input from centres, and it may not always be possible to meet this target.

- 11.2 There is no set timescale for Stage 1 of the process (the Centre Review), though these will need to be completed in time to allow for an appeal to be submitted to CCEA AO within the deadlines set out in **Section 10**.

Appendix A – Process Overview



Appendix B – CCEA Post-Results Service Submission Form

Important Information for Students

What may happen to your grade during the Centre Review and Appeal to CCEA Awarding Organisation?

If you ask your school or college to undertake a Centre Review of your grade, or if you subsequently ask for an appeal to be submitted to CCEA Awarding Organisation (AO), there are three possible outcomes:

- your original grade goes down, so your final grade may be lower than the original grade you received;
- your original grade stays the same, so there is no change to your grade; or
- your original grade goes up, so your final grade may be higher than the original grade you received.

To initiate a Centre Review, you must complete the form below. You can sign the form with an electronic, handwritten or typed signature. This confirms to your school or college that you have understood what the outcome might be, at any stage of the Centre Review and appeals process, and that you give your consent to a Centre Review and, should you wish, a subsequent Appeal to CCEA AO. A Centre Review or appeal cannot be withdrawn once a finding has been made.

If you believe an error persists once you have received the outcome of the Centre Review and you wish to progress to an Appeal to CCEA AO, you should discuss this as soon as possible with your school or college and ask them to submit your appeal on your behalf. CCEA AO needs to receive an application for appeal from your school or college by **23 August 2021** for priority appeals (those with higher education places pending the outcome of an appeal) or **17 September 2021** for non-priority appeals.

What is a priority appeal?

A priority appeal is for students whose higher education place is pending the outcome of an appeal. You should inform your preferred higher education provider that you have requested a Centre Review or Appeal to CCEA AO.

What is your UCAS personal identifier?

Your UCAS personal identifier is the 10 digit code included in all correspondence from UCAS. This is needed to confirm that a student's place is pending the outcome of an appeal.

Stage 1 – Centre Review

A. Student Request

This section is to be completed by the **student**.

If you need help completing this section, please speak to your school or college.

Centre Name	<input type="text"/>	Centre Number	<input type="text"/>
Student Name	<input type="text"/>	Candidate Number	<input type="text"/>
Qualification title including level, e.g. GCSE	<input type="text"/>		
Centre Determined Grade issued	<input type="text"/>		
Are you applying for a priority appeal?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	If Yes, provide your UCAS personal identifier.	<input type="text"/>
Grounds for Centre Review			
Please tick the grounds upon which you wish to apply for a Centre Review.			
Administrative error by the centre	<input type="checkbox"/>	Centre did not follow their procedure	<input type="checkbox"/>
Supporting evidence			
Please provide a short explanation of what you believe went wrong and how you think this has impacted your grade.			
<input type="text"/>			
Acknowledgement			
I confirm that I am requesting a Centre Review for the qualification named above and that I have read and understood the information provided in the Important Information for Students section above. In submitting this review, I am aware that:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the outcome of the review may result in my grade going up, going down or staying the same; and the next stage (Stage 2 – Appeal to CCEA AO) may only be requested once the Centre Review (Stage 1) has been requested and concluded. 			
Student Name	Student Signature	Date	
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	

B. Centre Review Outcome

This section is to be completed by the **centre**.

Centre Review Outcome Please tick the outcome of the review.			
Upheld	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not upheld	<input type="checkbox"/>
Original Centre Determined Grade	<input type="checkbox"/>	Revised Centre Determined Grade	<input type="checkbox"/>

Information considered by the centre Please provide a short explanation of the evidence that you have reviewed.
<p style="text-align: center; font-size: 48px; opacity: 0.3; transform: rotate(-30deg);">SAMPLE</p>

Rationale for the outcome of the Centre Review Outline the centre's findings from the Centre Review including, where appropriate, rationale for any proposed grade change.
<p style="text-align: center; font-size: 48px; opacity: 0.3; transform: rotate(-30deg);">SAMPLE</p>

Authorisation and dates of next stages			
Name of authoriser		Date submitted to CCEA AO if appropriate	
Date CCEA AO decision and rationale issued to student		Date student informed of Stage 2 submission	

Stage 2 – Appeal to CCEA AO

This section is to be completed by the **student**.

If you need help completing this section, please speak to your school or college.

Grounds for Appeal	
Please tick the grounds upon which you wish to appeal.	
1. Administrative error by CCEA AO	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Administrative error by the centre	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Centre did not follow their procedure	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Unreasonable exercise of academic judgement	
a. Selection of evidence	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Determination of Centre Determined Grade	<input type="checkbox"/>

Supporting evidence
Please provide a short explanation of what you believe went wrong and how you think this has impacted your grade.
<p style="font-size: 48px; opacity: 0.3; transform: rotate(-30deg);">SAMPLE</p>

Acknowledgement		
I confirm that I am requesting an appeal for the qualification named above and that I have read and understood the information provided in the Important Information for Students section above.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I am aware that the outcome of the appeal may result in my grade going up, going down or staying the same. I understand that there is no further opportunity to appeal to CCEA AO and that the next stage would be to contact the regulator. CCEA AO will include the next appropriate steps, where applicable, in its appeal outcome letter. 		
Student Name	Student Signature	Date
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Appendix C – Centre Post-Results Service Checklist

The following identifies where issues may occur that lead to requests for Centre Reviews and Appeals to CCEAAO. Here are a few checks that centres can carry out to reduce the likelihood of Centre Reviews and Appeals to CCEAAO and to ensure that these can be conducted promptly if requested.

Assessment evidence	
<input type="checkbox"/>	The centre's CDG policy has been shared with students and parents/guardians so they understand the centre's approach to assessment.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Eligible students have been given their access arrangements when completing assessments. The arrangements are noted and recorded on the centre's assessment record.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Students have been informed of how they should report incidents/events which may have adversely affected them at the time of taking the assessment (special consideration). The centre has kept a record, and the information will be included on the Candidate Assessment Record, or similar.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The centre has considered CCEA's guidance on Private Candidates, and suitable sources of evidence and methods of authentication have been used.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Teachers have been able to authenticate students' work.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Students have been informed of the assessments used as evidence in determining their grades.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Students' work has been retained in accordance with the CCEAAO guidance.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Students' work and associated records are readily available if requested by CCEAAO.

Marking and grading decisions	
<input type="checkbox"/>	The centre has followed the grading guidance provided by CCEA AO.
<input type="checkbox"/>	If access arrangements and reasonable adjustments could not be provided at the time of an assessment, the lack of them has been taken into consideration in determining the grade or alternative evidence has been used.
<input type="checkbox"/>	If applicable, special consideration has been taken into account in determining a mark/grade for an assessment, or the assessment has not been included when determining the grade and an alternative assessment used, if possible.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Conflicts of interest have been identified and appropriately managed as required.
<input type="checkbox"/>	There is a clear and succinct rationale for the Centre Determined Grades based on the evidence used to determine the grades.
<input type="checkbox"/>	For tiered GCSEs, the grade reflects the tier of entry.

Internal quality assurance	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Internal quality assurance has been conducted in accordance with the centre's CDG policy.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The internal quality assurance decisions are documented, are stored securely and can be retrieved.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The Head of Centre Declaration has been submitted.

Accurate record-keeping	
<input type="checkbox"/>	All relevant information is recorded in line with CCEAAO's <i>GCSE, AS and A Level Awarding Summer 2021 Alternative Arrangements – Process for Heads of Centre</i> .

Submitting grades	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Grades have been checked to ensure that there are no administrative errors. Particular attention has been given to checking students with the same or very similar names.

Centre Reviews and Appeals	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Students have information about the centre's arrangements for conducting Centre Reviews and submitting Appeals to CCEAAO following a Centre Review.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Student work and associated records have been stored so that they can be accessed by staff promptly if a Centre Review is requested and can be sent to CCEAAO if an appeal is requested.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Centre staff are available to provide guidance to students and conduct the Centre Review.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Centre staff are available to submit Appeals to CCEAAO including all relevant evidence.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Centre staff are available to respond to CCEAAO queries on appeals, such as providing further information.

Appendix D – Guidance on Changing Grades

You may discover, following the issue of results, that an error has occurred which has resulted in a student receiving a higher or lower grade than they should have received. This error could impact a student who has requested a centre review and/or other students who have not requested reviews.

CCEA AO will consider requests from centres to correct errors on the basis of the explanation you provide setting out why you believe the grade should be changed. You must only request that a grade be changed if the original grade was incorrect as a result of an administrative error or procedural error on the part of the centre.

Correcting grades for students who have requested a centre review

Students who request a centre review will have been made aware that their grade could go up, go down or stay the same as a result of the review and will have given their consent for the review to take place. Therefore, if you discover that the grade awarded to the student who has requested the review is incorrect, you should request that the grade be corrected. You should submit a centre error correction request to CCEA AO and they will make the final decision as to whether the grade should be changed, after reviewing the explanation that you have provided. Your explanation should include information about any adverse effect that a decision to lower a grade would have on the student, for example if they have been accepted in a further or higher education establishment based on the higher grade.

Correcting grades for students who have not requested a review

Where you discover that the error has led to other students receiving grades that are incorrect, you should consider whether it is appropriate to correct the grades for these students too. In most cases, it will be appropriate to correct the grade(s) to ensure that all students receive final grades which accurately reflect their performance. Allowing incorrect grades to stand could also have an adverse impact on employers or educational institutions who rely on the grade in future as well as on the student, if for example they progress on to a course they were not equipped for.

However, if you find that a student who has not requested a centre review has received a grade which is too high, you should also consider the adverse impact that lowering the grade may have on the student concerned before deciding whether to request that the grade be lowered. In some cases, you may feel that the benefit of correcting the incorrect result is outweighed by the adverse impact on the student.

This may be the case where the error is a relatively minor one (for example where the student was considered to be performing at the borderline between two grades) and the adverse impact on the student of correcting the result would be severe (for example where the student has already relied on the original grade to make decisions about their progression).

You should also consider whether the student's own actions, including malpractice, have contributed to the awarding of an incorrect grade. Where the student has been found to have

committed malpractice, you should always correct the grade and report the malpractice to the awarding organisation.

If having reviewed these factors you consider that the grade should be lowered, you should submit a centre error correction request to the awarding organisation. CCEA AO will review the case before making the final decision as to whether the grade should be changed. You should therefore ensure that the explanation you provide to CCEA AO along with your request includes as much detail as possible about the adverse impact that a decision to lower the grade would have on the student and any other relevant factors that you have identified during your consideration.

Appendix E – Academic Judgements in Appeals

Reviewing academic judgements at the appeals stage

Independent reviewers at the appeals stage will be asked to review whether there has been an unreasonable exercise of academic judgement in the selection of evidence on which the student's Centre Determined Grade has been based and/or the determination of the Centre Determined Grade on the basis of the selected evidence.

The independent reviewer will consider the judgement exercised by the teacher in applying the centre policy to the individual student who has submitted the appeal. They will not consider the reasonableness of the centre policy itself, which will have been reviewed as part of the CCEA AO five-step process. The independent reviewer will expect to see that the teacher has had due regard to the guidance issued for the summer 2021 series by CCEA AO, and the subject specific grading support materials provided.

Reasonable in this context allows for normal variation in academic judgement between two professionals with appropriate subject knowledge and understanding CCEA AO requirements. The teacher's exercise of judgement will not be considered unreasonable simply because an alternative exercise of judgement would have resulted in a more or less favourable result for the individual student. The teacher's judgement will be considered unreasonable only if the independent reviewer deems that no teacher acting reasonably could have reached the same judgement.

Reviewing the selection of evidence

The independent reviewer will first review the centre CDG Policy, to gain an understanding of the centre's overall approach, and then consider the explanations provided by the teacher on Candidate Assessment Record, or similar, for the selection of evidence at a cohort level and any variation in the evidence selected for individual students. They will also consider the student's grounds of appeal, in order to understand why they believe the selection of evidence was unreasonable in their case.

The independent reviewer will consider whether the teacher's academic judgement has been exercised in a way which is contrary to the guidance issued by CCEA AO to such an extent that no teacher acting reasonably, and being mindful of that guidance, could have reached the same judgement.

Reviewing the Centre Determined Grade

The independent reviewer will review the section on determining grades in the centre policy, to gain an understanding of the centre's overall approach, and the Candidate Assessment Record, or similar, to gain an understanding of any mitigating circumstances or other relevant factors relating to the individual student. The reviewer will also review all available items of performance evidence on which the Centre Determined Grade has been based.

The independent reviewer will consider whether the Centre Determined Grade awarded to the student is contrary to the grading descriptors and exemplification issued by CCEA AO for the specification in question to such an extent that no teacher acting reasonably, and being

mindful of that guidance, could have reached the same judgement. 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 and not the grade determined by the centre.



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