

# HAWTHORN HIGH SCHOOL

## Appeals Policy 2021 Centre Determined Grades



1. Introduction
2. The Centre Review and Appeals Processes in summer 2021
3. Stage 1 – Centre Review
4. Stage 2 – Appeal to WJEC
5. Stage 3 - EPRS
6. Support if you are making an appeal
7. Appendix 1 – **Request Form Summer 2021: Copy of Decision-Making Record**
8. Appendix 2 – **Request Form Summer 2021 centre review and appeals**

### Introduction

This policy is intended to cover the temporary 'Centre Determined Grade' (CDG) arrangements that have been put in place by Welsh Government due to Covid-19 related issues. This policy covers approved GCSE, AS and A level qualifications and the Welsh Baccalaureate Skills Challenge Certificates provided by the WJEC. A very small minority of our pupils follow courses for other examination boards. Appeals for other examination board qualifications will be dealt with as per the relevant appeals policies for those boards. All WJEC and Qualifications Wales guidance has been followed when assembling this guidance.

Pupils and families will be provided with the details of this policy via our website and the school messaging service in advance of provisional results day. Staff will be on hand to help and advise throughout the process.

Results will be issued on the following dates:

**21st June 2021 (during allocated time slots on-site) – Year 11 GCSE & Year 13 A2**

**21st June 2021 (during form time) – Year 10 GCSE & Year 12 AS**

It will be possible for pupils to appeal once they have received their results. However, pupils must follow the process outlined in this policy for the appeal to be valid. There are three stages to this new appeals process:

- Stage 1 – Centre Review
- Stage 2 – Appeal to WJEC
- Stage 3 - Qualifications Wales' Exam Procedures Review Service (EPRS)

## **Stage 1 – Centre review**

If a pupil believes that an error has been made in the determination of their grade, they can ask the school to review the decision. Before requesting a full centre review, pupils should ask to see the '**Decision Making Record**' (DMR) to inform their decision. The DMR should be requested via the online form (Appendix 1) on the school website by the end of **Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> June**. If a pupil decides to proceed with a centre review, they must complete the online centre review request form by the end of **Friday 25<sup>th</sup> June**. Pupils must state clearly where they believe an error has been made when submitting the review. Pupils must give written consent before a review can be undertaken and need to acknowledge that their grade could go up or down as a result of the review. This centre review is not focused on marking errors, but rather on the judgement made by school on a grade awarded, based on a range of evidence. Small changes in marks are very unlikely to change the overall judgment.

N.B. A request for a centre review will only be accepted on the correct online '**Centre Review Request Form**' (Appendix 2), only after the DMR has been requested and within the timescales outlined above. As the primary decision maker in determining the grade, the school has the opportunity to review its decision before any external party plays a part in the appeals process. The school will review the evidence and make a judgement on whether the grade is correct. For example, having reviewed the original decision the school could conclude that a pupil awarded a grade F for their GCSE in Geography should have received a E i.e. an error was made in determining the original grade.

### **Key facts on the centre review process:**

- Pupils should only request a centre review if they consider an error has been made and they can identify where they think that error has been made.
- Pupils should briefly explain the nature of the error when requesting a centre review.
- The centre review is an opportunity for pupils to request a review where they consider an error has been made in the determination of their grade – the focus is on the overall grade not on the marking of individual assessments.
- There is no expectation that the school re-mark assessments.
- Pupils are not able to negotiate which evidence should have been included. Any evidence not on the assessment plan cannot be retrospectively considered.
- Pupils should only request a review where they consider that the error has had a material effect on the accuracy of the grade.
- The centre review is not an opportunity for pupils to try and improve grades that have been determined fairly in accordance with the school's assessment and quality assurance processes and are supported by the evidence and the decision-making record.
- The centre review is an opportunity for the school to check they have not made any errors in the determination of the grade. However, it should be noted that every grade awarded would have already gone through a three-stage checking process and be subject to the school's robust quality assurance procedures.
- Grades can go up, down or remain the same following the centre review.
- The school cannot revisit their own centre review once it is complete.

- If a pupil is unhappy with the outcome of a centre review, the next step is a Stage Two appeal to the WJEC.

### **Requesting a centre review**

If a pupil considers there may be an error in the determination of their grade, they should check the DMR (Decision-Making Record) before deciding to request a full centre review. The DMR is an important part of the alternative awarding arrangements this year. Not only does it mean that quality assurance processes are documented, but it also provides pupils with access to information that will help them to understand why they have been awarded the grades and to make an informed decision on whether they believe there has been an error in the determination of their grade.

If pupils identify an error from the DMR, they should use the online centre review request form (Appendix 2) to outline the nature of the error when requesting a review. They should also make clear how and why they think this error would have had an impact on the grade awarded. The pupil will have **until the end of Friday 25<sup>th</sup> June** to complete their centre review request form. If the pupil cannot outline the nature of the error on the form and how this would have impacted upon the grade, it will not be possible to progress the review. If the pupil applies after five working days from when they received their DMR, it will not be possible to progress the review.

The school will reply to centre review requests **within five working days**. The school will inform the pupil in writing of the outcome of the review. The decision cannot be revisited by the school after this point. If the pupil does not agree with the decision, there is no further internal centre review stage. The escalation is to the WJEC stage 2 appeal.

N.B. It is not possible to appeal to the WJEC without having first requested a centre review from the school.

### **Possible reasons for a request for a centre review could include:**

- The grade for the pupil was incorrectly documented (There is clear evidence that the grade awarded has been entered incorrectly or is based on other incorrectly entered data).
- Special considerations were not taken into consideration when they should have been
- Assessment evidence that was part of the assessment plan was not taken in to account. (These have to be the assessment evidence listed on the assessment plan. Pupils can be only assessed on work they have completed within the assessment plan. Other assessments or work cannot be introduced at the appeal stage. If work was missed, decisions can only be made on the work that has been completed).
- The grade is not supported by the information in the decision-making record. (There is a mismatch between the information on the decision-making grade and the actual grade awarded).

### **The timeframes and sharing of evidence at centre review**

The decision-making record for each qualification will be shared with the pupil upon request. The pupil will use this information when considering whether to request a centre review.

The school will reply in writing to the review request within five working days from the receipt of the centre review request form. At Stage 1, most pupils will not need to see more information than the decision-making record in order to determine whether they consider an error has been made and request a review. Pupils will have the opportunity to request to see the other evidence relied upon by the school in determining the grade before deciding to submit a stage 2 appeal to WJEC if they believe the error still remains after the centre review. If a pupil does not feel able to make a decision on whether to request a centre review without seeing additional evidence, they can only ask to see the evidence that was directly relied upon by the school in determining the grade. If a request is made for evidence that goes beyond the evidence relied upon in determining the grade, the schools can refuse it on the basis that it is an unreasonable request. There is no expectation that centres re-mark assessments.

### **Who is part of the centre review?**

The school will appoint a member of staff who was not involved in determining the grade to oversee the centre review process. This will be a member of the SLT not involved with the subject area concerned. However, the original decision maker may be part of the process to check whether an error was made. Details of all Stage 1 Centre Reviews will be recorded by the school. The WJEC will collect data on the number and result of all centre reviews.

All centre reviews will be completed by **1<sup>st</sup> July**.

### **Stage 2 – Appeal to WJEC**

Stage 2 appeals can be submitted to WJEC on the grounds of an unreasonable academic judgement. Appeals can also be put forward on procedural grounds. It is important to note that a Stage 2 appeal on grounds of unreasonable academic judgement cannot be submitted unless a Stage 1 centre review has been completed. Pupils are responsible for outlining the grounds and reasons for requesting the appeal, but the appeal must be submitted to WJEC by the school. The WJEC will not accept appeals directly from pupils or parents/carers. The school will have an online form on our website to submit the request. The grade can go up, down or remain the same on appeal to the WJEC. Further details about the WJEC's role in the appeals process can be found on their website: <https://www.wjec.co.uk/>

The approach to the appeal will depend upon the information provided by the pupil and the ground for the appeal.

- **Centre administrative error:** It is anticipated that administrative errors will have been corrected during a centre review. If the pupil considers that an administrative error persists, WJEC will consider the evidence in respect of whether an error occurred.
- **Procedural error:** Based on the information provided by the pupil, WJEC will evaluate whether the centre followed the procedure which is being challenged by the pupil. It is not a ground for an appeal that the pupil disagrees with the content of a procedure, the focus of an appeal is the application of the procedure.
- **An unreasonable grade:** WJEC will consider the pupil's decision-making record and related evidence and determine whether the grade is reasonable. A centre determined grade will only be considered unreasonable if it is well outside the bounds of reasonable academic judgement and that the evidence cannot reasonably support the grade awarded. The appeal will not consider an alternative grade

submitted by the pupil or whether an alternative grade is reasonable. As the centre determined grade is holistic in nature, the reviewer will take a similarly holistic approach to their decision-making. The reviewer will not re-mark individual assessments. WJEC will inform the school in writing of the outcome of the appeal including the reason(s) for the decision. If an error has occurred which has resulted in an incorrect grade, WJEC will correct the grade. The school will provide the learner with a copy of WJEC's outcome letter. The letter will inform the learner of the next stage of the appeals process – Stage 3 Qualifications Wales EPRS.

**Key Dates for the Stage 2 Appeal GCE, Advanced Skills Challenge Certificate, Priority appeals** (those for which a higher education place is pending): 10 - 23

August

Non-priority appeals: 10 August – 17 September

GCSE, Foundation and National Skills Challenge Certificate: All appeals 24 August – 21 September

Any learner who submits a priority appeal request must include their UCAS reference number with the appeal application in order for it to be processed as such. The candidate's details will be checked against UCAS data and WJEC will only process applications as a priority appeal if the candidate's university or other higher education place is pending the outcome of an appeal. Applications submitted without a UCAS reference number will not be processed as priority applications. Candidates should also notify their university or other higher education establishment that they have requested an appeal.

**What is meant by unreasonable academic judgement at Stage 2?**

The school is best placed to review its decision on a grade and make any corrections where they believe an error has been made. The same level of finely tuned decision making is not possible at the Stage 2 appeal conducted by WJEC. This is because there aren't standardised assessments and the final centre determined grade is a holistic judgement on the pupil's level of attainment. The WJEC reviewer will not overrule a school's holistic judgement on the correct grade for the pupil unless there was a clear exercise of unreasonable academic judgement. WJEC reviewers are unlikely to be able to make decisions on whether a change to an adjacent grade (a D to a C for example) would result in a more accurate grade being awarded.

Qualifications Wales and WJEC guidance states that the school is best placed to make those finer judgements based on all the evidence and knowledge it holds that went into determining the grade. A centre determined grade will only be considered unreasonable if it is well outside the bounds of reasonable academic judgement and that the evidence cannot reasonably support the grade awarded. For example, a decision to award a grade B will not be unreasonable where the decision maker for the appeal considers the evidence would support either a grade A or a grade B. Both would be reasonable and therefore neither would be unreasonable. The judgement would be considered unreasonable if it were such that no other centre in the same position, and acting reasonably, could have reached the same judgement. This is the standard that the WJEC will use in determining reviews.

The school hopes that any issues could be resolved before a Stage 2 appeal. However, the Stage 2 appeal on the grounds of unreasonable academic judgement is an important safety net to ensure fairness for any pupil who considers there has

been a significant error of judgement in the centre's grading decision or that the decision by the centre has been affected by bias or discrimination.

### **Stage 3 - Qualifications Wales' Exam Procedures Review Service (EPRS)**

This is the final stage in the appeals' process.

The EPRS is a procedural review conducted by Qualifications Wales to check whether the WJEC has complied with its own procedures and regulatory requirements. The EPRS this year will remain focused solely on WJEC's compliance with regulatory requirements and their own procedures.

Qualifications Wales will not review whether the centre has complied with its own policies or procedures or those set by WJEC for it to follow. That part of the appeals process will take place at Stage 2 by WJEC.

Qualifications Wales will not review the accuracy of the grading decision and will not change any grades. If Qualifications Wales identify that the WJEC has failed to comply in some way, they will require the WJEC to consider their findings and consider whether that failure has a bearing on the accuracy of the grade. In practice, the EPRS will only identify procedural failures on behalf of the WJEC and is unlikely to lead to changes in decisions on academic judgement as a result.

### **Support if you are making an appeal**

If you need any support after receiving your provisional grade, please contact us. We will be able to give you advice on what to do next. Please also contact us if you're an A level learner and the provisional centre determined grade isn't what you need to meet your university offer. Don't contact the universities you've applied to, as they will only make admissions decisions when grades are finalised on results day. You can find some useful links on the Qualifications Wales and WJEC websites, and there are more available on the Hwb site, which you can also access from this link. There is information on the Children's Commissioner for Wales website about free Wales-wide services that offer support.



## APPENDIX 1

### HAWTHORN HIGH SCHOOL

**Request Form Summer 2021: Copy of Decision-Making Record**  
(WJEC GCSE, AS and A Level, Skills Challenge Certificate, Level 2 and Level 3)

**\*\*THIS REQUEST MUST BE MADE BY THE END OF THE DAY ON TUESDAY 22 JUNE. ONLINE COPY OF THIS FORM AVAILABLE ON SCHOOL WEBSITE \*\***

<b>Centre Name:</b>	HAWTHORN HIGH SCHOOL
<b>Centre Number:</b>	68567
<b>Candidate Name:</b>	
<b>Candidate Number:</b>	
<b>Qualification title and level:</b>	
<b>Provisional grade issued:</b>	

Please explain briefly and clearly why you are requesting a copy of your Decision-Making Record:

#### Declaration

*I confirm that I am requesting a copy of the school's **Decision-Making Record** for the qualification named above. I understand that any potential centre review I may request upon viewing my Decision-Making Record may result in my grade being **lowered, raised or remaining the same.***

*I confirm that the information provided is accurate.*

**Candidate Name:**

**Signed:**

**Date:**



## APPENDIX 2

### HAWTHORN HIGH SCHOOL

#### Request Form Summer 2021 centre review and appeals

(WJEC GCSE, AS and A Level, Skills Challenge Certificate, Level 2 and Level 3)

**\*\* THIS REQUEST MUST BE SUBMITTED BY THE END OF FRIDAY 25<sup>th</sup> JUNE.  
ONLINE COPY OF THIS FORM AVAILABLE ON SCHOOL WEBSITE \*\***

<b>Centre Name:</b>	HAWTHORN HIGH SCHOOL
<b>Centre Number:</b>	68567
<b>Candidate Name:</b>	
<b>Candidate Number:</b>	
<b>Qualification title and level:</b>	
<b>Provisional grade issued:</b>	

I have requested and viewed the Decision-Making Record for the provisional grade awarded	Yes	No
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### APPLICATION FOR A REVIEW OF PROVISIONAL CENTRE DETERMINED GRADE

Please explain briefly and clearly what error you consider has taken place in determining your grade. You should refer to the information in your learner decision making record. You should only provide information that is relevant to the error you consider has been made by the centre in the determination of your grade.

Please explain briefly and clearly how you consider the error has affected your grade?

**Declaration**

*I confirm that I am requesting a review of my provisional centre-determined grade for the qualification named above. I understand that the centre review may result in my grade being **lowered, raised or remaining the same**. I confirm that the information provided is accurate.*

**Candidate Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_