



**Lister Community School**  
St Mary's Rd, Plaistow, London, E13 9AE

Mr Anthony Wilson, Headteacher  
T: 020 8471 3311 / F: 020 8472 1027  
[www.lister.newham.sch.uk](http://www.lister.newham.sch.uk)

## **Q&A Summer Grades, Exam Malpractice and Appeals**

### **How were my grades arrived at this year?**

Grades this summer were based on Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGs). TAGs were submitted to the exam boards by schools as a holistic assessment of students' performance in a subject, following a rigorous process of assessment, moderation and quality assurance.

These grades were then approved by the relevant exam board, following external quality assurance checks.

In some cases, the TAGs we submitted may have been reviewed by the exam board, who may have asked us to submit an alternative grade. However, any changes to the grades we submitted were done by professional teachers or reviewers; this year no grades have been changed as a result of an algorithm.

### **What do I do if I'm not happy with my grade?**

All students have the opportunity to appeal their grade if they meet the eligibility criteria (see below). It is important to note that an appeal may result in a grade being lowered, staying the same, or going up. So if a student puts in an appeal and their grade is lowered, they will receive the lower mark.

There is also the option to resit GCSEs in the autumn, which may be preferable to some students. The design, content and assessment of these papers will be the same as in a normal year.

### **What are the two stages of an appeal?**

All appeals must first go through a centre review. At this stage, schools will check for any administrative errors, and check that policies and procedures were followed correctly. The school policy would have been approved by the exam boards, so schools are only ensuring that this was followed properly.

The outcome of the centre review will be communicated to students when made.

At the centre review stage, if the school finds that a grade should go up or down, they will ask the exam board to change it. The exam board will consider this request.

Following the outcome of a centre review, students may still choose to pursue an awarding organisation appeal. They must complete a form which the school will then send on their behalf to the exam boards. Students and parents cannot send appeals directly to the exam board themselves – it must come from the school.

The outcome of the awarding organisation appeal will be communicated to students when made.

### **How do I make an appeal?**

Following results days, students should speak to the school and discuss their concerns. You will be asked to complete the relevant form and submit this to the exams officer.

## **What are the grounds for a centre appeal?**

As dictated by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) if schools:

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

## **What are the grounds for an awarding body appeal?**

- the centre did not follow its procedure properly or consistently in arriving at the result, or during the centre review
- the awarding organisation made an administrative error in relation to the result
- the centre made an unreasonable exercise of academic judgement in the choice of evidence from which to determine the grade and/or the determination of that grade from the evidence.

## **What does 'unreasonable' mean?**

'Unreasonable' is a technical term in this context and means that no educational professional acting reasonably could have selected the same evidence or come up with the same grade.

This means that just because other forms of evidence may have been equally valid to use, the selection of evidence is not unreasonable. Because of the flexibility of the approach this year, every school and college will have used different forms of evidence.

It also means that the independent reviewers will not remark or grade students' evidence. Instead, they will look to see whether any teacher acting reasonably could have arrived at the same grade.

## **What will be the outcome of an appeal?**

At either stage of the appeals process a student's grade may go up, stay the same, or go down. When placing an appeal the student will have to sign a declaration saying that they accept the fact their grade may go down and they may get a lower grade than their original Teacher Assessed Grade.

## **You know my grades. Why can't you tell us?**

We are forbidden from disclosing the Teacher Assessed Grades to any third party, including students and parents, until results day. Any teacher or member of staff who does this is committing exam malpractice.

Although students may have been given marks or grades on single pieces of evidence, we cannot disclose the final submitted TAG.

During the external quality assurance process taking place in June or July, our submitted TAGs may be moved up or down (although this will always be done through human agency, not by an algorithm).