

# Teacher Assessed Grades: Appeals Policy Summer 2021

## Bohunt Education Trust



**Approved by:** BET Board

**Date:** 13 July 2021

**Last reviewed on:** July 2021

**Next review due by:** n/a

## 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. In January 2021, the government confirmed that GCSE and A-Level examinations would not take place in the summer of 2021 and would instead be replaced by Teacher Assessed Grades (**TAGs**). All member schools of Bohunt Education Trust have written to students and parents/carers due to take examinations in the summer of 2021 (typically those in Year 11 and Year 13) to outline our approach to assessing each student's grade for each subject they are studying.

1.2. Schools and colleges submitted TAGs for each subject, for each student by Friday 18 June 2021. Awarding Bodies (examination boards) will undertake a period of moderation and quality assurance following the submission of TAGs. Students will receive their grades for their GCSE, A-Levels and Vocational Technical Qualifications during the week commencing (w/c) 9 August 2021 – "**Results Day**".

1.3 Results Day for AS and A Level students is Tuesday 10 August and for GCSE/VTCs is Thursday 12 August 2021.

1.4. This policy outlines how students can appeal against an awarded grade after the applicable Results Day in August 2021.

1.5. Appeals for Private Candidates will follow the same process as for other students detailed in this policy.

## 2. AWARDING TEACHER ASSESSED GRADES

2.1 All BET member schools have provided written information and guidance to students and parents/carers to explain the approach that will be used to arrive at a student's TAG. The TAG(s) will be awarded using a wide range of evidence to determine what a student knows, understands and has been evidenced as being able to do. This evidence will be assessed against the criteria set by Awarding Bodies to determine a student's TAG for each subject.

2.2. All BET Schools have informed Students and parents/carers of the types of evidence used for each subject the student is studying.

2.3 Students and parents/carers WILL NOT be told the final grade a student has been assessed at prior to submission. The final grade will be published by the Awarding Bodies on Results Day.

2.4. Students may wish to appeal against their final grade(s) awarded by the Awarding Bodies (an "**Appeal**").

2.5. All BET Schools will assist a student in accordance with the Policy with any Appeal to ensure the student understands the process and is able to present their case. This does not represent agreement with the case submitted by the student: it is to ensure all students understand the process and have an equal opportunity to make an Appeal.

## 3. THE EVIDENCE BASE

3.1. TAGs are determined using a wide range of different forms of evidence to ensure each TAG is representative of what the student knows, understands and has been evidenced as being able to do. The types of evidence to be used in determining a TAG has been communicated to students and parents/carers by all BET member schools.

3.2. All BET schools have ensured that no student is unduly disadvantaged by the use of a particular piece of evidence, when there are mitigating circumstances that prevented the student producing the work they are capable of for a specific piece of evidence.

3.3. Examples of reasons why a particular piece of evidence does not represent a student's understanding, knowledge and ability may include, but are not exclusive to:

- Illness or absence from school/college (including due to Covid-19 infection) on the day the piece of evidence was produced;
- Periods of illness or absence from school/college (including due to Covid-19 infection) prior to the day the piece of evidence was produced;
- Periods of illness or absence from school/college (including due to Covid-19 infection) when the subject of the piece of evidence was taught;
- Caring for a household or family member or relative who was ill on the day or around the day the piece of evidence was produced;
- Bereavement of a household or family member or close family friend on the day or around the day the piece of evidence was produced;
- Known reasonable adjustments, that would be expected to be in place, were not in place when the piece of evidence was produced.

3.4 In the situations set out in 3.3 alternative evidence has been sought to replace the planned evidence. This is to ensure a wide spread of evidence is used to determine the TAG. If this has not been possible, the piece of evidence will be removed from the evidence base. The TAG has been determined only on the available evidence for each student, with no reference to whether other evidence may have been available to determine the TAGs for other students.

3.5 All BET Schools have, by the applicable Results Day, shared the following with all students:

All Students who wish to appeal their awarded grade may on or after the applicable Results Day request copies of the following information (“Appeals Information”) without needing to make subject access request procedure or make a freedom of information request. The Appeals Information will comprise:

- the Centre Policy
- the sources of evidence used to determine the TAG along with any grades/marks associated with them where the grades/marks were given at the time the evidence was provided
- details of any special circumstances that have been taken into account in determining a student’s grade, e.g access arrangements, mitigating circumstances such as illness.

#### **4. APPEALS FOLLOWING RESULTS DAY**

4.1 Students will be awarded their final grades by the Awarding Bodies (Examination Boards) on Results Days.

4.2 If a student does not agree with their final grade, they can appeal against the grade they have been awarded, by completing the ‘**Student Appeal**’ form which will be available electronically. A student may request a hard copy form if electronic means are not available to them.

4.3 Students will be reminded that upon any Appeal, their awarded grade could go up, or go down, or stay the same.

#### **5 DEADLINES**

All **Priority Appeals** must be submitted to the School by **4pm on 13 August 2021.**

A Priority Appeal is an appeal by a student holding a firm offer from a higher education institution whose awarded grades mean that the student failed to achieve the firm offer’s conditions.

All **Non Priority Appeals** must be submitted to the School by **4pm 3 September 2021.**

## **6. TYPES OF APPEALS**

6.1 There are two types of appeals:

- **Stage 1: Centre review (Stage 1 Appeal-School procedural or administrative error):** If a student does not consider that they have been issued with the correct grade, they can ask their School to check if an administrative or procedural error has occurred, including making an Appeal on the grounds the School did not follow its Centre Policy, or that access arrangements were not in place when they should have been.
- **Stage 2: appeal to the awarding organisation (Stage 2 Appeal-Exam Body administrative error; School did not follow its own process or TAG is an unreasonable exercise of academic judgment):**

If a student:

- disagrees with the outcome under Stage 1 and considers that the School did not follow its Centre Policy properly; or
- considers that the grade awarded was an unreasonable exercise of academic judgement

The student may require the School to make a Stage 2 Appeal to the Awarding Body.

All students must submit Appeal Forms within the time periods set out in this Policy and repeated on the Appeals Forms.

## **7 Outcomes of Appeals and Next Steps**

### **7.1 Outcome of Stage 1 Appeals**

#### **7.1.1 School agrees with Student that a procedural or administrative error occurred (Agreed Stage 1 Appeal)**

If the School finds that a procedural or administrative error has occurred, or that the Awarding Body made an administrative error, the School will submit a request to the Awarding Body to correct the error and amend the grade together with reasons and supporting evidence as required by the Awarding Body within the required deadlines. The Student need not take further action. The Student's grade may go down, stay the same or go up. The Student cannot withdraw an Appeal once the School has reviewed the Stage 1 Appeal

#### **7.1.2 School Does not agree that an error occurred (Rejected Stage 1 Appeal)**

If the School does not find that an error has occurred, the School will inform the student together with the reasons as set out on the School Outcome Form, A student may instruct the School to submit a Stage 2 Appeal on the student's behalf by requesting and returning the Student Request for a Stage 2 Appeal Form by:

- for all Priority Appeals, by **4 pm 20 August 2021** to enable the School to ensure that all Stage 2 Appeals are submitted to the Awarding Bodies by 23 August 2021.

- for all non Priority Appeals, **by 4 pm 13 September 2021** to enable the School to ensure that the Awarding Bodies' deadline for submission of Stage 2 Appeals is achieved (17 September 2021).

### **7.2 Submission to Awarding Body of Stage 2 Appeal**

For all Appeals made as a Stage 2 Appeal to the Awarding Body, the School will submit the evidence the student has provided to support the Stage 2 Appeal in the Student Appeal Form) and the evidence the School used to determine the Teacher Assessed Grade, together with the School's reasons for determining the Teacher Assessed Grade.

7.3 In accordance with each Awarding Body's processes, the Awarding Body will then consider if the Centre Policy has been followed correctly and if the TAG reflected a reasonable exercise of academic judgement. Each School will ensure students are aware of the definition of reasonable exercise of academic judgment- that the teacher's judgment in assessing the grade was so unreasonable that no other teacher could have come to the same conclusion acting reasonably. Students will be made aware that this is not the same as an Awarding Body's remarking process, and that the Awarding Body is not asking whether it would have made the same judgment as the teacher came to.

7.4 The School will ensure students know that an Awarding Body will only revise a student's grade Stage 2 Appeal where it finds the evidence on which the grade was determined cannot reasonably support that grade, rather than as a result of marginal differences of opinion. An Awarding Body may revise a student's grade upwards, downwards or make no change under a Stage 2 Appeal.

## **8 Awarding Bodies**

8.1 Whether an Appeal is made to the Awarding Body under a Stage 1 Appeal or Stage 2 Appeal, it is solely for the Awarding Body to determine whether a grade should be changed, and if so, that Awarding Body will issue a final grade to the student.

8.2 If a student believes the Awarding Body has made a procedural error in handling the appeal, they can apply to Ofqual's Exam Procedures Review Service to review the process undertaken by the Awarding Body.

## **9. MALPRACTICE AND MALADMINISTRATION**

9.1. It is vital that TAGs are awarded to students with integrity and honesty, following the Centre Policy in line with national government and Awarding Body guidance. This is important for students to ensure they receive the grades they deserve for their effort and commitment over a number of years; and it is important for the School, Bohunt Education Trust and teaching profession to uphold professional standards and the trust placed in teachers and leaders in the education sector.

9.2. If any students, parents/carers or member of staff believe there has been malpractice or maladministration, they should report it to the AHT Performance in accordance with normal procedures.

9.3 The School will ensure the appropriate policies are followed along with the expectations detailed in the Joint Council for Qualifications guidance where any instance of malpractice or maladministration has occurred.

9.4. Bohunt Education Trust is committed to ensuring that its Whistleblowing Policy is embedded in its culture, and all members of staff are strongly encouraged to report any instances of wrong doing they become aware of without any fear of harassment, victimisation or consequence of reporting such actions.

9.5 For the purposes of the TAG process, it is vital all members of staff report any instances of wrong doing that they become aware of immediately. This should be reported to the professional's senior line manager, or another member of the Senior Leadership Team, in the first instance.

## **10 Whistleblowing**

If it is believed the line manager may be involved in the wrong doing, or the colleague does not feel comfortable reporting to their line manager, they should report their concerns to the Head of School. Alternatively, a colleague can report a concern directly to the CEO and/or Director of Governance.

## **11 Gifts and Hospitality**

11.1 The Bohunt Education Trust Gifts and Hospitality Policy outlines how members of staff should treat any offers of gifts and hospitality they receive.

11.2 For the purposes of the TAG process, it is vital that all members of staff record ANY offers of gifts or hospitality (other than a 'thank you' card) from any students, parents/carers or any other individuals who may be connected to a student receiving a TAG in the summer of 2021.

11.3 If offers of gifts or hospitality are received by any member of staff, they must record this immediately within their School. If any member of staff is unclear about the operation of these processes they may seek advice from the Finance Manager and/or the Director of Governance.