

2nd November 2021

Dear Students, Parents and Carers

This term our school team have been completing the processes to decide on the unit grades for vocational qualifications in BTEC Sport, Performing Arts and Music, for units undertaken last academic year that were disrupted due to Covid-19. These grades have been moderated and reviewed by a robust procedure in line with the expectations of the exam board. The grades have been sent to the exam board and will now undergo a series of external checks.

Students will be told their unit grades by their teachers, and how this grade fits in with the overall grade for the qualification. Please note that the grades awarded are for elements of the overall BTEC grade, and will contribute towards the final grade in summer 2022. The final overall grade may be the same, higher or lower than this unit grade.

Please find below a summary of the information now available about this year's appeal process. Like so many other aspects of our lives, the appeals process is different this year because a very different process has been used to determine the grades. Further detail is given below about the appeals process and deadlines.

How were my / my child's unit grades arrived at this year?

Grades were based on school-assessed grades. These were submitted to the exam boards by us as a holistic assessment of students' performance in a subject, following a rigorous process of assessment, moderation and quality assurance.

Our procedure, along with the grades were then approved by the relevant exam board, following external quality assurance checks.

What do I do if I'm not happy with my / my child's unit 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.

What are the grounds for appeal?

There are five main grounds for appeal, as dictated by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ). They are:

- You think we have made an **administrative error**: an example of this would be putting the wrong information into a spreadsheet.
- You think we have made a **procedural error**: this means we haven't properly followed our own process, as approved by the exam board. An example of this would be where you've been told you should have received extra time for assessments but this wasn't given in a certain subject.



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Executive Headteacher: Mrs Jan Woodhouse
Head of School: Mr Simon Horner

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- You think the **academic judgement on the selection of evidence was unreasonable**: you think the evidence used to grade you was not reasonable.
- You think the **academic judgement on the grade you were given was unreasonable**.

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 (see 'What are the two stages of an appeal?' below), 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 grade.

What are the two stages of an appeal?

All appeals, on any of the grounds above, must first go through a **centre review**. Students can request this by completing the form below. At the centre review stage, we will check for any administrative errors, and check that our policies and procedures were followed correctly. Our policy was approved by the exam board, so we are ensuring that we followed this properly (you cannot appeal against the procedure that was followed).

The outcome of the centre review will be communicated to students when it has been completed.

At the centre review stage, if we find that a grade is incorrect and should go up or down, we will ask the exam board to change it. They will then consider this request.

Following the outcome of a centre review, students may still choose to pursue an **awarding organisation appeal**. They must fill in the form below, which we will then send on their behalf to the exam board. Students (and parents) cannot send appeals directly to the exam board themselves – it must come through the school. The school is required to submit all the awarding organisation appeals that we receive from students.

The outcome of the awarding organisation appeal will be communicated to students when it has been completed by the exam board and the school informed of the outcome.



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How do I make an appeal?

Following the sharing of results, students should fill in the first section of the JCQ form [here](#) and send it to our Exams Officer, Mrs Farrah Fulton (Farrah.fulton@hayleacademy.net). Please note that because the grades belong to the student, students must sign to confirm they are making the appeal. Parents/ carers can, of course, help students to complete the paperwork required.

What are the deadlines for appeals?

The deadline for students to submit an appeal to us for a centre review is Monday 24th January 2022; and the deadline for submitting an awarding organisation appeal is 7th February 2022.

Appeals received after these dates may still be considered but will be outside the guidelines. Please ensure we receive notification of any appeal you wish to make as soon as possible after you receive your results.

All students making an appeal are asked to note that the outcome of the appeal may be that a grade remains unchanged, is lowered or increased. There is therefore, a risk with any appeal that a grade may go down instead of up.

The school knows my grades so why can't you tell us now?

During the external quality assurance process taking place (by the awarding bodies) in, our submitted grades may be moved up or down.

I do hope you will find this additional information on the grading and appeals process to be of use, and I hope your child will be pleased with the unit grade they have achieved.

Yours faithfully,



Simon Horner
Head of School



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