



Appeals approach for International GCSEs and International AS/A Levels (May/June 2021)

For all International Qualifications where a Teacher Assessed Grade has been awarded

The Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) has outlined the appeals process for regulated GCSEs and A Levels in summer 2021 in the JCQ document, [A guide to appeals processes, Summer 2021 series](#). We will follow the same principles for Pearson's International GCSEs and International AS/A Levels.

This document provides a summary of the appeals process for these international qualifications and also provides information on where the appeals process will differ from the arrangements detailed in the JCQ document.

Overview of appeals approach

As in any year, it is important there is a clear route to appeal in cases where centres and/or students believe an error has been made in determining their grade. There will be a two-stage appeals process for summer 2021.

Stage One, the centre review, will be completed by the centre and will consider whether the centre followed its process correctly or made an administrative error in relation to the Qualification level Teacher Assessed Grade.

Stage Two, the awarding organisation appeal, can be made once the Stage One centre review has been completed, where the student continues to believe an error has been made.

How the international appeals process will differ from the JCQ guidance

For summer 2021, the grounds for appeal that are specified in the JCQ document, [A guide to appeals processes, Summer 2021](#), will apply to most international appeals, with the following differences:

1. Centres will be able to appeal on an additional ground where they believe an error has been made by Pearson regarding the aggregation of unit UMS and the subsequent calculation of the cash-in grade for an International AS/A Level qualification.
2. Some centres will have used the unseen assessments under high control and returned these to Pearson for marking. For any appeal relating to academic judgement the assessment will be reviewed by a different examiner to the one who conducted the original marking.
3. A Pearson appeal is the final stage in the appeals process. There is no route to Ofqual's Exam Procedure Review Service (EPRS) for international qualification students.

The appeals process

The appeals process is summarised below, and full details are available in the JCQ document, [A Guide to Appeals Processes, summer 2021](#).



Stage One – Centre review

The centre must provide a centre review as the first stage of the appeals process for 2021. Requests for appeals on the grounds of academic judgement (unreasonableness) will only be considered by Pearson (at Stage Two) 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.

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 policy
- b. the sources of evidence used to determine the student's grade, as well as the marks/grades for each
- c. details of any variations in evidence used based on disruption to what a candidate was taught
- d. details of any special circumstances that have been considered in determining their grade, e.g. access arrangements/reasonable adjustments or mitigating circumstances such as illness.

Centres are strongly encouraged to use the review template provided in Appendix B of the JCQ document, A Guide to Appeals Processes, summer 2021 booklet to ensure all required information is captured.

A centre review must be completed and an outcome reported to the student before an appeal can be submitted to Pearson. Any appeals submitted where this has not happened, will be rejected by the awarding organisation and a new application will need to be submitted once the centre review has been completed.

Stage Two – Awarding organisation appeal

The centre is required to submit an appeal to Pearson on behalf of a student where the student wishes to continue to the second stage of the appeals process. The centre must confirm at this stage to Pearson that it has not found a procedural or administrative error by the centre.

Ground for appeal – centre

The ground upon which a **centre** may appeal to Pearson are:

- **Centre Aggregation Appeal** – where a centre believes an error has been made by Pearson regarding the aggregation of UMS and the subsequent calculation of the cash-in grade for an International AS/A Level qualification. Due to the unitised structure of IAL qualifications each unit TAG is assigned a UMS mark, these are then combined to form an overall qualification UMS mark and an overall grade.

Grounds for appeal – student

The grounds upon which a student may appeal to Pearson (following completion of a centre review) are:

- **Pearson Error Appeal (Student)** – where the student believes Pearson has made an error and has not issued the grade that the centre has requested. The student must provide its reason for believing we have made an error.
- **Centre Process Appeal (Student)** – where the student believes the centre has not followed its process for determining the Qualification level Teacher Assessed Grade correctly, or it has made an admin error, or it has not followed the centre review/appeal process properly. This will also include where a student does not believe the centre has made appropriate provision for any reasonable adjustments they were entitled to or applied special considerations appropriately.



- **Centre Academic Judgement Appeal (Student) – grade** – a student believes the centre’s Qualification level Teacher Assessed Grade was unreasonable.
- **Centre Academic Judgement Appeal (Student) – range of evidence** – the student believes the centre has not been fair in its selection of evidence upon which it has based its Qualification level Teacher Assessed Grade determinations.
- **Centre Process and Academic Judgement Appeal – combined (Student)** – the student believes the centre has not followed its process for determining Qualification level Teacher Assessed Grade correctly and that the centre’s Qualification level Teacher Assessed Grade was unreasonable.

All student appeals to Pearson must be submitted by the centre. Students are not able to submit appeals directly to us.

Student consent

Student consent to appeals will be required. It is important for students to be aware that grades may go up, stay the same or go down as an outcome of an appeal.

Priority appeals

When a centre is submitting an appeal on behalf of a student, it may select ‘priority appeal’ in cases where a student has a higher education place pending the outcome of the appeal. A UCAS number is required when making a priority application.

Deadline for appeals

Priority appeals must be submitted to Pearson by 23 August 2021.
All other appeals must be submitted to Pearson by 17 September 2021.

Submitting an appeal

International qualification appeals should be submitted using the Pearson Appeals Portal. This will be accessed by centres via Edexcel Online (EOL). Applications to appeal should be submitted with the relevant supporting evidence for the appeal.

Error correction service

Where a centre identifies an error, it should use the Pearson error correction service. Details are provided in Appendix A of the JCQ document, A Guide to Appeals Processes, summer 2021.

Fees for appeals

Further information will be provided shortly.

Following a Pearson appeal outcome

When a centre/student has received the outcome of a Pearson appeal this is the end of the appeals process. There is no route to Ofqual’s Exam Procedures Review Service (EPRS) for international qualification students. This is because IAL and International GCSE are not regulated qualifications.

Malpractice appeals

Malpractice appeals will be handled in line with the approach specified in paragraphs 26-40 of the JCQ publication: [A guide to the awarding bodies’ appeals processes Effective from November 2020 examination series](#).