



Appeals & Complaints Procedure for Centre Assessed Grades 2019 - 2020 (from JCQ guidelines 2020)

Introduction

Schools were recently issued with guidance from JCQ (Joint Council for Qualifications) on the appeals process for the Summer 2020 qualifications.

“This is an exceptional appeals process. It is a result of the directions that the summer 2020 exam series for GCSE, GCE AS and A-level qualifications should be cancelled following the COVID-19 outbreak and the subsequent arrangements made by the regulators to ensure that as many candidates as possible could receive qualifications based on calculated results.

*The regulators were directed to develop an appeals process that focuses on the **accuracy and application of the data** provided, rather than challenge teachers’ professional judgement on the ability of individual students. This aim sets the context within which the awarding bodies will handle appeals for the summer 2020 exam series.*

Any concerns that a candidate or group of candidates may have been subject to bias or discrimination, should be raised directly with the centre and escalated through their complaints/internal appeals process. In addition, evidence of bias, discrimination or other improper action by a centre may be presented to an awarding body who may then investigate the matter as alleged malpractice.” (JCQ 2020)

St Malachy’s College Appeals Procedure

St Malachy’s College can appeal to Awarding Organisations on behalf of candidates, which is the same as in previous years. Before authorising the appeal for submission, the Head of centre, through the Vice Principal (Curriculum) must be able to demonstrate that the centre has the written consent of all candidates on whose behalf they are appealing.

In Northern Ireland, candidates cannot appeal directly to an awarding body. They may make representations to the Head of the Centre, through the Vice Principal (Curriculum), which submitted information to the awarding body on behalf of that candidate. The Head of Centre’s decision as to whether to proceed with an appeal is subject to the centre’s internal appeal arrangements.

“An appeal may be submitted if the Head of Centre considers that:

- a. the awarding body did not apply procedures consistently, or procedures were not followed properly and fairly; or*
- b. the awarding body used the wrong data in calculating results; or*
- c. the result generated was incorrectly issued by the awarding body to one or more candidates.*

The wrong data under b. includes where:

- the centre provided the awarding body with incorrect data (centre error); or*
- the awarding body used an incorrect data set, which includes the transposition of data sets from two or more centres (awarding body error); or*
- the awarding body introduced errors into a specified data set (awarding body error); or*
- in exceptional circumstances, the centre establishes an exceptional factor that undermines the assumption that using a default data set is the most appropriate basis to calculate results. This would require a centre to establish that its previous cohorts of candidates are not sufficiently representative of the 2020 cohort to reliably inform the calculation of results.”*

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How a candidate may request an appeal

If a candidate wishes to request an appeal, **they should apply in writing to the Examinations Officer** outlining their reason for requesting an appeal. Candidates are reminded that the appeals process “focuses on the **accuracy and application of the data** provided”.

The appeals committee will investigate and decide whether or not there are grounds for appeal in line with the criteria outlined in the table above. The appeals committee will be comprised of Senior Leaders in the College who have no interest in the subject concerned.

Requests to the Examinations Officer for possible appeals must be made within 14 days of the issue of results to candidates:

- 27th August for AS and A2 results
- 3rd September for GCSE results

The first stage in the appeals process is the “Initial Review”. If there are grounds for appeal, candidates must complete the ‘Candidate consent form’ (attached), to enable the College to proceed with the application for “Initial Review”.

Candidates must be aware that in appealing their grade:

“Any action taken by the awarding body to rectify an error identified as the result of an appeal could result in grades being raised or lowered or remaining the same for those candidates on whose behalf the appeal has been made.”

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Further detailed guidance on how the process works is outlined in the attached JCQ guidance document.

If candidates or parents/carers wish to challenge decisions taken by St Malachy’s College (regarding the internal appeals process) they should follow the school’s complaints procedure.

Please take time to read through all other information on the Results section of the College website.