



# Spalding High School

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**Headmistress Mrs M Anderson B.Ed**

1<sup>st</sup> July 2021

Dear students, parents and carers,

I trust that you are well and enjoying the summer.

This letter contains very important information about the following issues:

- Preparation ahead of A Level results.
- The publication and distribution of A Level results this summer.
- Support with UCAS, clearance and accepting university offers.
- Confirming post 18 destinations.
- A Students rights and grounds for appeal.
- The Autumn Examination series 2021.

Please read the information, including the supplementary guidance document from the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) very carefully. We advise that you keep this letter safe for future reference.

The JCQ parent/student guide can be found here:

[JCQ-Guidance-for-Students-and-Parents-on-Summer-2021.pdf](#)

Sadly, due to the on-going and unpredictable nature of Covid-19, we will again be issuing results remotely rather than on-site. I am sorry that we will not be able to accommodate a more traditional results day for you but we will speak with you all on the day and provide support and guidance where needed. I am optimistic that at some point next academic year we may be able to welcome you back into school to celebrate your achievements and the destinations you have moved on to.

As always, you have my very best wishes and those of all the High School staff as well. If we can do anything to help, please contact us at [enquiries@spaldinghigh.lincs.sch.uk](mailto:enquiries@spaldinghigh.lincs.sch.uk).

Take care and good luck – you all have bright adventures to look forward to!

Yours sincerely

M K Anderson  
Headmistress

## **Preparation ahead of results day – Information from Mrs Bushell, Careers Leader**

If a student has applied to university, we advise looking at the sections on the UCAS website about clearing and adjustment procedures. If an applicant is not accepted by the firm or insurance choice institution, she/he may have to search for an alternative course in 'clearing'. Clearing listings are available from July on the UCAS website. It is a good idea for students to follow what is available in clearing from July onwards in case they wish to apply for something after they receive their A Level results.

Sometimes students exceed their original firm choice offer and might be curious about courses with higher entry requirements. If an applicant had a conditional firm offer which she/he met and exceeded, she/he would be eligible to use 'adjustment' to look for an alternative course, possibly one they previously discounted because of high entry requirements, whilst still holding their first choice offer.

We would recommend that students look at the information about exam results day, clearing and adjustment on the UCAS website prior to 10<sup>th</sup> August:

<https://www.ucas.com/undergraduate/results-confirmation-and-clearing/ucas-undergraduate-results>

<https://www.ucas.com/undergraduate/results-confirmation-and-clearing/what-clearing>

If a student has not applied for a university course, we can continue to support with references for apprenticeships, employment and further and higher education applications. Mrs Bushell is happy to work with students to try to assist them in finding a permanent or gap year opportunity. It is clearly a difficult time for job hunting in many sectors. However, former students who have undertaken gap years have benefitted from volunteering experiences which can provide an insight into a certain sector and/or give them time to further investigate what they would like to do. There are useful links in the careers section of the school website which can be used for further research.

Mrs Bushell is keen to build alumni links in school and is delighted when former students make contact and share their experiences with staff and current students. Please see the Future First flyer with instructions about how to join our alumni network.

We are required by the Department for Education to report intended destinations of our students when they leave the High School. **Students must complete the attached Data and Destination Consent Form** and send into school or email to – [dawn.bushell@spaldinghigh.lincs.sch.uk](mailto:dawn.bushell@spaldinghigh.lincs.sch.uk) either on or as soon as possible after results day on 10<sup>th</sup> August.

## **Publication of A Level Results – Summer 2021**

Results will be emailed to students' school email accounts at **8.30am Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> August**, this is the earliest that schools are permitted to release the results this year. For each subject students study, they will receive a Teacher Assessed Grade (TAG), this is the grade that was submitted to the exam board by the School.

On Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup>, students will also receive a telephone call from a member of staff to talk about the results and discuss any questions or queries students may have and their plans for September.

A team of staff will also be available from 8.30am to 3.30pm on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> August should students require any further assistance following the initial telephone call. We will be happy to help, whatever the query.

We anticipate that most queries can be addressed quickly and efficiently over the telephone without the need for students or parents to come into school. However, if students feel that a face to face meeting is necessary, please make this request when the member of staff calls. Students will only be able to come into school if they have made an agreed appointment. Students attending on-site meetings will also need to bring a completed Covid-19 questionnaire with them which will be emailed to students once the appointment time is agreed.

**Please do not come to the school without an appointment.**

When contemplating appeals and/or sitting examinations in the autumn series, we would urge all students to very carefully consider whether the outcome is likely to have any positive impact on their chosen progression route. The effect that studying for the autumn examinations might have on new degree courses, employment or apprenticeships should also be weighed up. School staff would be happy to discuss these issues on an individual basis over the phone.

## A Student's Right and Grounds for Appeal Summer 2021

This guidance sets out the exceptional appeals process for results issued in summer 2021 by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ). Information and the forms for submitting an appeal can be found on the School website in the examination tab drop down menu. It is vitally important that students, parents and carers who are considering an appeal read this guidance carefully, together with the JCQ Parent/Student guide before embarking upon the process.

The JCQ threshold for appeals has been set to a very high standard and is underpinned by the following:

- Schools have been through a rigorous and robust process which has been moderated and quality assured by Exam Boards.
- If students would like to improve upon their TAGs they will be able to sit the examination in the Autumn Series planned for October/November 2021. The higher grade of either the TAG or the grade of the Autumn Series will stand. The exam boards will be able to issue new certificates if required.
- “A grade will only be considered unreasonable if the reviewer (the exam board) considers that the student’s performance evidence is **clearly and unequivocally** indicative of a higher or lower grade.” (JCQ June 2021)
- “The teacher’s exercise of judgement will not be considered unreasonable simply because an alternative exercise of judgement would have resulted in a more or less favourable result for the individual student. The teacher’s judgement will be considered unreasonable only if it is such that **no** teacher acting reasonably could have reached the same judgement.” (JCQ June 2021)

The JCQ also requires schools to make it explicitly clear to students and parents that in undertaking a review, the grade may be raised, stay the same or be lowered, and that the reviewed grade replaces the TAG, even if it is lower.

At Spalding High School, we have mitigated the need for appeals by:

- Producing an effective Centre Policy which has been approved by the JCQ and adhered to by all centre staff involved in the determination of TAGs.
- A high standard of internal quality assurance both in determining TAGs based only on student evidence and ensuring that there are no administrative or procedural errors.
- Effective provision of access arrangements for all eligible students.
- Effective arrangements for students that may have been disadvantaged during an assessment that contributes to their grade either by taking the circumstances into account in determining grades or by using alternative evidence that was unaffected by the adverse circumstances.
- Effective communication with students and parents/carers so that they understand the centre’s approach to determining their grades before grades were submitted to the exam boards, including the evidence used and a realistic understanding of the standard at which they are performing.
- Providing access to the sources of evidence each department will use to determine the student’s grade, along with the marks associated with them and a rationale for the inclusion of the evidence.
- Effective use of examination board materials relating to standardisation to ensure accuracy and consistency in awarding grades.
- Working with other centres to moderate evidence.
- Submission of a moderated sample and departmental evidence, as requested by the exam boards.
- Providing students every opportunity, especially later in their courses of study, to demonstrate what they know, understand and can do.

## **Stages of Appeal**

There are **two** stages to the summer appeals process.

### **Stage 1 – Centre Review**

The appeals process for summer 2021 allows students to appeal their grade where they believe there has been an error. They must first ask their centre to review whether an administrative or procedural error has been made.

If the centre identifies an error with the grade it submitted to the exam boards, it must submit a revised grade with rationale for the grade change to the exam board. If the exam board is satisfied with the rationale presented by the centre and it considers it is appropriate to correct the result, it will issue a revised grade.

**Students are advised that grades may be raised, stay the same or be lowered as the result of a review. Where a grade is lowered, a student will not be able to revert back to their original grade. A centre review application cannot be withdrawn once a finding has been made.**

### **Stage 2 – Appeal to the Awarding Organisation**

Where the centre does not believe that an error has been made but a student believes that an error persists, a student may ask the centre to submit an appeal to the awarding organisation on their behalf. Parents/students must request the centre makes an appeal on their behalf, they cannot appeal directly to the awarding organisation.

**Appeals cannot be made to an awarding organisation until the centre review has been completed.**

The centre must submit the student's appeal if requested and must provide the required full supporting evidence. An appeal should be submitted if the student considers that the centre did not follow its procedure properly, the exam board has made an administrative error, or the student considers that the grade awarded was an unreasonable exercise of academic judgement\* (either because of the way the grade has been determined and/ or the selection of evidence on which the grade is based).

*\* “Reasonable in this context allows for normal variation in academic judgement between two professionals with appropriate subject knowledge and understanding of the Ofqual and JCQ requirements. The teacher’s exercise of judgement will not be considered unreasonable simply because an alternative exercise of judgement would have resulted in a more or less favourable result for the individual student. The teacher’s judgement will be considered unreasonable only if it is such that **no** teacher acting reasonably could have reached the same judgement.”*

As a result of the appeal, the case will either be rejected (disallowed) or upheld (allowed) in whole or in part. **The fact that an appeal has been upheld (allowed) will not necessarily result in a grade change for the student.**

**As with Stage 1, students are advised that grades may be raised, stay the same or be lowered as the result of a review. Where a grade is lowered, a student will not be able to revert back to their original grade. A centre appeal application cannot be withdrawn once a finding has been made.**

### **Ofqual Exam Procedures Review Service**

If the student or centre considers that the awarding organisation has made a procedural error, they can apply to Ofqual’s Exam Procedures Review Services (EPRS) to review the process undertaken by the awarding organisation.

## Timeline for Appeals

The appeals process is limited this year and there are two types of appeal: **priority** and **non-priority**.

A priority appeal is **only** for students applying to higher education who did not attain their firm choice (i.e. the offer they accepted as their first choice) and wish to appeal an A Level or other Level 3 qualification result.

Any student who requests a priority appeal must include their UCAS personal ID with the appeal application for it to be processed as such. They should also notify their higher education provider that they have requested an appeal at the earliest possible opportunity so they can decide how to handle their offer.

Schools are permitted to operate their own time frames within those set by JCQ to allow for the availability of staff whilst the school is not in session. This will also enable us to meet the deadline to submit appeals to exam boards if necessary.

All appeals must be completed on the standard JCQ appeals form found on the School website in the Teacher Assessed Grades 2021 folder which can be found in the Exams tab on the School website. This must be emailed to [enquiries@spaldinghigh.lincs.sch.uk](mailto:enquiries@spaldinghigh.lincs.sch.uk) and not to an individual member of staff. Students do not need to submit a digital signature on the form; a typed name is sufficient.

The Spalding High School timeframe and deadlines for the appeals is as follows:

Key dates for **priority** appeals:

Tuesday, 10 <sup>th</sup> August 2021	A Level Results Day
Wednesday, 11 <sup>th</sup> August 2021 (midday)	<b>Centre Review deadline (Stage 1)</b>
Friday, 13 <sup>th</sup> August 2021	Centre Review outcome shared with student
Monday, 16 <sup>th</sup> August 2021 (Midday)	<b>Awarding Body Appeal deadline (Stage 2) submitted to centre</b>
Friday, 20 <sup>th</sup> August 2021	Centre submits appeals to awarding organisation no later than midday.

Key dates for **non-priority** appeals:

Tuesday, 10 <sup>th</sup> August 2021	A Level Results Day
Friday 3 <sup>rd</sup> September (midday)*	<b>Centre Review deadline (Stage 1)</b>
Wednesday 8 <sup>th</sup> September	Centre Review outcome shared with student
Friday 10 <sup>th</sup> September (midday)	<b>Awarding Body Appeal deadline (Stage 2) submitted to centre</b>
Friday 17 <sup>th</sup> September 2021	Centre submits appeals to the exam board no later than midday

\*If the appeal is submitted between Friday 20<sup>th</sup> August and Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> September you will receive an acknowledgement of receipt email within 48 hours as the School is not in session. Non-priority appeals will be dealt with from Monday 6<sup>th</sup> September.

## Autumn Examination Series 2021

Students have the opportunity to sit a formal examination in their subject(s) in the autumn of 2021. The examination series will open on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> October and close on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> October. Results will be published on 16<sup>th</sup> December. We have not received any further details or timetables for the Autumn Series at the point of issuing this letter. We will update parents and students as further information is received.