

Arrangements for appeals against examination results 2020

As GCSE and A level exams were cancelled for 2020, results have been produced using a combination of teacher rankings and statistical processes implemented by exam boards. This means that the usual 'appeals' process of having the marking of one or more exam papers reviewed will not be possible this year.

Ofqual, the body that oversees qualifications, has developed clear rules about how appealing against results will work this year. If something has gone wrong, and a candidate has been awarded the wrong grade there are processes to correct this. There are also limited grounds for a college to appeal against the overall grades that have been awarded.

Note that the main appeal routes available to students are not about appealing because they do not like the grade they have been awarded. The routes are both focused on something going wrong in the awarding process, either at the college or at the awarding body.

Added to this, there is the possibility of appealing on the grounds that you have a 'valid mock exam grade' that is higher than the grade awarded.

Checking the accuracy of the information supplied by the College

One thing that students can do is ask a college to check that the right grade and rank was submitted to the awarding body. Sometimes mistakes do happen, and the awarding body will correct the grade if it is found that an error has been made in the submission of information by the College, or in processes completed at the awarding body. For example, there might be two John Smiths studying mathematics at a particular college, and a candidate may suspect that they have received the grade for the other John Smith.

Applying for a clerical check

If a student feels that a mistake has been made in the awarding of their grade, they should apply for this service via the intranet's [Results Service](#) pages. There is a declaration to be completed by the student before the application can be accepted. If you experience any problems with this process then you should instead put a request in writing to the Examinations Department at the College by email using the address exams@psc.ac.uk. You will need to provide your full name, tutor group, candidate number, the subject you are concerned about, and a brief description of why you feel an error has been made. (eg, I achieved A* in all my tests and mock exams for the last year, but was awarded in E grade overall). Please note that for reasons of data protection, we can only accept these requests if made by the student concerned.

Appealing on the grounds of discrimination or bias

The regulations also allow a student to challenge the grade(s) they have been awarded if they have evidence that they have been discriminated against in the production of the centre assessed grades and rankings. Given the evidence-based processes the College used in awarding and checking the centre assessed grades and ranks, it is highly unlikely that there will be a dramatic difference between the grades awarded at A level and GCSE and the grades that students were achieving on

the course in assignments, mock exams and so forth. In reviewing such a complaint, the College will check how the academic profile of the student concerned compares to students who were similarly placed in the rank order for that subject. If a student had been achieving A grades in all marked work and was awarded an E grade overall, when all the other A grade students had been awarded A grades, that would be evidence that the student had been treated differently to other students, and would warrant further investigation by the College. It is the comparison with similarly ranked students which is key here. The College's arrangements also have the facility for a student to appeal if they are not satisfied with how the review of the grade has been conducted.

Applying to appeal on the grounds of discrimination or bias

If a student feels that they have been subject to discrimination or bias, they should apply for this service via the intranet's [Results Service](#) pages. There is a declaration to be completed by the student before the application can be accepted. If you experience any problems with this process then you should instead put a request in writing to the Examinations Department at the College by email using the address exams@psc.ac.uk. The email must contain your full name, tutor group, candidate number, the subject you are concerned about, and also a detailed description of why you feel you have been discriminated against. This will then be passed to a member of the senior management team for attention. The College will then complete an analysis comparing your grade to that of similarly ranked students. If there is evidence that a student has been treated differently, this will then be explored with the teachers and subject leaders concerned. The timescales for this process will mirror those in the College's complaints procedure. Please note that for reasons of data protection, we can only accept these requests if made by the student concerned.

Applying to appeal on the grounds of having a higher grade in a valid mock exam

If a student believes they achieved a higher grade in a full mock exam, they should apply for this service via the intranet's [Results Service](#) pages. There is a declaration to be completed by the student before the application can be accepted. If you experience any problems with this process then you should instead put a request in writing to the Examinations Department at the College by email using the address exams@psc.ac.uk. It must contain your full name, tutor group and candidate number, the subject you are concerned about, when you sat your full mock exam and what grade you achieved.

We are awaiting guidance as to what constitutes a 'valid mock exam' and guidance as to how the appeals process will work.

Please note that for reasons of data protection, we can only accept these requests if made by the student concerned.

Applying to take an exam in October

Our view is that if you are disappointed with your exam results, your energies would be best spent talking to universities. It is a very good year for university entrance, with more places available at top universities, and it may well be that students who have missed the grades they need to progress to their chosen course, may well find the university concerned is prepared to be flexible, or that places are available for similar courses. A few students may also consider taking an exam in the Autumn. These exams will take place in October. This will be the right route for some students, but it should be noted that students will have been out of the classroom for six months by this point, so will not be in a strong position to prepare for exams. Information on applying to take an October exam are available on the Exams intranet site.