



# EXAM APPEALS PROCEDURE

*May Reid*

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**Signed – Governor**

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**Print Name**

**Date:** September 2017

**Review:** September 2018

## **External Assessment Appeals Procedure**

**This applies to GCSE work that is assessed externally. In general it relates therefore to written papers, and also the few pieces of coursework that are wholly assessed externally.**

It is possible to appeal against the *procedures* of an Exams Board in the conduct of an examination.

This is *not* to be confused with making a Result Enquiry, querying a mark. The routine for this is specific to each Exams Board, and details can be obtained by contacting the Examinations Officer at the School. It is not possible to appeal against the outcome of Result Enquiry unless there is evidence that the exam board was not adhering to the Code of Practice.

An appeal might be against the inappropriate application of a mark scheme or perhaps against a change in specification without properly making it known. In each case the School would need to look very carefully at the Code of Practice, to see if there has been a procedural error. The process is long winded, and final conclusion may be at least 6 months after the exam results are published. *Making an appeal is very rare.*

Any appeal must be made through the School; submissions will *not* be accepted from individuals. The final arbiter is the Examinations Appeals Board.

## **Internal Assessment Appeals Process**

**This applies to GCSE coursework, performance etc. providing the work is assessed internally.**

If at any stage during your exam courses you have concerns about the procedures used in assessing your internally marked work for public exams (e.g. coursework / portfolio / projects), then you **MUST** initially discuss this with your form tutor and the teacher concerned. Hopefully this will resolve the issue.

If the matter is not resolved then you should see the Examinations Officer as soon as possible to discuss whether a formal appeal could be made. Any appeal is very much a last resort, and a request for an appeal will not be accepted unless these other avenues have first been explored. It is expected that appeals will be extremely rare.

An appeal would be very weak if you have not kept to the agreed deadlines (unless this is what the appeal is about), or you have not tried to sort it out within a fortnight of the problem arising.

You may not appeal against any mark that has been awarded unless you think that this has been because of a procedural error, and you must be able to identify the procedural error. In accordance with the Code of Practice for the conduct of examinations, Falconer School is committed to ensuring that:

- Internal assessments are conducted by staff who have the appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills
- Assessment evidence provided by candidates has been produced and authenticated according to the requirements of the specification.
- The consistency of internal assessment is secured through internal standardisation
- The School will comply fully with the Joint Council guidelines.

Appeals may be made to the School regarding the procedures used in internal assessment, but not against the actual marks or grades submitted by the School for moderation by the Awarding Body.

A pupil or parent wishing to appeal against the procedures used in internal assessments should contact the Examinations Officer as soon as possible to discuss the appeal, and a written appeal must be received by the School at least two weeks before the final examination for that subject. The written appeal must explain in detail the specific grounds on which the appeal is being made.

Internally assessed coursework marks are not normally made known to candidates until the process of external moderation by the Exams Board (during which marks can be revised upward or downward) is complete and the moderator's report has been received by the school. However, if an appeal against internal assessment is being made, the mark awarded will be made available to the candidate for use in the appeal procedure.

On receipt of a written appeal, an enquiry into the internal assessment will be conducted by the Examinations Officer (or if necessary a representative) and an Assistant Head Teacher or Head of Department not involved in the assessment. This enquiry will consider whether the procedures used in the internal assessment conformed to the published requirements of the Awarding Body.

The School would encourage the candidate to be supported by a parent, guardian, or friend in the presentation of their case. The appeal decision will be recorded and filed.

The candidate will be informed in writing of the outcome of the appeal, including details of any relevant communication with the Awarding Body and of any steps taken further to protect the interests of the candidate(s).

### **Enquiries about results procedures**

Any student who wishes to query a mark/grade given by an Awarding Body following the issue of results should use the following procedure:

- Liaise with subject teacher/Head of Department for their opinion and advice on the marks awarded
- Read carefully the information given to them with their results slips regarding their Review of Marking and Access to Script options
- Contact the Exams Officer by the deadlines given to obtain, complete the consent form and make the appropriate payment. Students are signing the consent form to confirm that they understand that marks/grades awarded can be lowered as well as raised. The costs of all requests are borne by the candidate.
- The outcome of all enquiries will be forwarded to the candidate as soon as possible after they have been received by the Awarding Body.

### **If the school does not agree to support the EAR**

A candidate may appeal against the decision not to support an EAR request. Appeals should be made in writing to the Exams Officer, at least 5 working days before the published deadline for EARs. The appeal should state, in detail, the reason(s) for the appeal. This appeal should be signed and dated. The appeal information will be reviewed by the Exams Officer and a member of the Senior Leadership Team and the outcome of the appeal communicated to the candidate within 48 hours of receipt. The decision is final.

### **Options**

For the individual candidate, there are two enquiry options:

- A clerical re-check [rarely requested], and
- A re-mark of the script [which is done by a highly experienced examiner].

### **Involvement of pupil and staff**

Whilst the School checks for anomalies that might need investigation, the onus still remains on the candidate to indicate that there might be a reason for a re-mark.

One poor unit may well be counterbalanced by another excellent one, so the candidate needs to consider the *overall grade* as the sole criterion.

Candidates should discuss concerns with the appropriate Head of Department. If an enquiry is to be made, then the School *must* handle all requests to the Exam Boards. Exam Boards will not deal directly with candidates or parents.

The deadline for re-mark requests is 20th Sept. at 1700 *at the Exam Board*. The outcome could take as long as 40 days – and occasionally longer – to arrive back.

### **Enquiries must be realistic**

Only if there is a reasonable expectation that a remark would result in a higher overall grade, and no risk of being marked down a grade, should an enquiry be made.

### **Warnings over enquiries**

Enquiries may be expensive. They are sometimes free if the certification grade changes. It is perfectly *possible for marks to go down* as well as up, which may lower the grade. This happens quite often.

### **There are fixed deadlines:**

Applications normally have to be received by the Board by 20th Sept.

Normally result enquiries have to be agreed by the relevant Head of Department.

Boards rigorously adhere to these dates.

## Coursework

Almost all coursework is marked internally and moderated externally. The School submits a rank order of marks, which cannot be changed. Consequently individual coursework pieces cannot be remarked within this result enquiry process. *It is possible that the moderation process will scale all of the marks* but without changing the rank order. The mark you were told may not be same as that on your statement of results.

## Appeals

There can be no appeal against the re-mark. The paper will have been re-marked by a top examiner whose opinion is, by definition, final.

Appeals can only be made against the *procedures* of the Examination Board, and the regulations make it clear that a further re-mark would not normally be requested as part of the evidence for the appeal, although of course the decision might be, after a successful appeal, to instruct the Board to look at the marking again.

## Fees

- **Fees vary a lot between the Boards.**
- **In general the candidate pays these but fees may be waived if the grade changes.**
- **Grade changes are automatic.**

As a rough guide, **a re-mark will cost £45 - £65 for each paper.**

Because the mark can go down, we require a **written** request for any Result Enquiry. In addition, the school will only process a Result Enquiry once the fees have been paid in advance.

Initially you should contact the relevant Head of Department, who will discuss the matter with you and advise you whether a formal Result Enquiry is likely to succeed. The Examinations Officer will have access to the relevant procedures and fees for the various examinations boards.