

Appealing against Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGs)

Summer 2021– as part of the Vocational Qualification Regulatory Framework (VCRF)

1. The purpose of this document is to outline the process for centres to follow should they, or their students, wish to appeal against the grades they receive in 2021 as part of the TAG process.
2. We understand that due to the nature of grades this year students may be unhappy with the grade they receive and feel they may have been able to perform better had the examinations been able to take place. As such they should have the opportunity to appeal.

Principles for appeals

3. Students and/or centres will have the opportunity to appeal if they do not believe the process was applied properly when determining their grade. Whilst we have a standard appeals process in place, we feel it is appropriate, given the exceptional circumstances, to offer an initial informal step of the process specifically to address appeals received in relation to TAGs for this year. This informal step is intended to allow for early resolution, particularly if the issue is due to an administrative error, and will mean the centre does not have to pay the required appeal fee in the first instance, as this will only apply should they wish to escalate the appeal to the formal stage (see paragraph 14).
4. Appeals can be submitted on the grounds that:
 - The procedures were not properly and consistently followed in arriving at the TAG that was subsequently supplied to us (including any failure of quality assurance),
 - An administrative error occurred in relation to the final result.
5. The above two grounds may be due to the centre either not following procedures correctly or making an administrative error, or it could be due to us. In other words an appeal may be submitted on one of the above grounds on the basis that the centre subsequently realises they have made an error or because they feel we have made an error within our quality assurance process or when issuing the final results.
6. If a student wishes to appeal, they should first inform their centre so that an accuracy check can be undertaken to see if the grade supplied was correct or not, whether due to procedural or administrative errors. If an error is found, or the centre believe we have made an error in applying the process, the centre should submit an appeal to us. Appeals will only be accepted by us if received from the centre.

Submitting an appeal

7. A centre should submit an appeal to us in writing within one month of the results being released, namely by the 10th September for Level 3 results and by 13th September for Level 2. Within the

appeal the centre should outline which student(s) they believe are affected and their reasons for the appeal. It should state on what grounds the appeal is being submitted and why an error is believed to have occurred. Details of the appeal should be directed to fcexams@libf.ac.uk in the first instance.

8. Prior to submitting an appeal the centre should ensure it has reviewed its own processes for determining TAGs and provide us with information as to why it believes an error has occurred and provide us with the supporting evidence used in the academic judgement when determining the TAG. As such centres must ensure they keep a record of all evidence used for each student. This review by the centre may need to consider whether there could have been any perceived bias or discrimination when determining their TAG, especially if an appeal is on the basis that a student is challenging the academic judgement used when deciding upon their grade.
9. A centre must ensure it has obtained permission from an affected student prior to submitting an appeal that may affect their result.
10. Upon receipt of an appeal we will review the information supplied. This will be done by someone with no personal interest in the decision being appealed. If the appeal is on the grounds of a procedural error by the centre, we will review the information supplied by the centre which will need to include further evidence to support the academic judgement of the students potential ability. This will enable us to determine if the original TAG was based on reasonable academic judgement and whether appropriate internal quality assurance was undertaken by the centre prior to submission.
11. If the appeal is in relation to an administrative error, either from the centre or by us, then the process will be run again to adjust grades awarded for the centre's student(s) as appropriate.
12. If an appeal is upheld, we will amend the grades for affected students. Centres/students need to be aware that if an appeal is successful it could result in grades decreasing as well as increasing. Regardless of the outcome we will inform the centre of the decision and the reasons for the decision.
13. Appeals are not likely to lead to adjustments in grades where the original grade is based on a reasonable exercise of academic judgement supported by the evidence and there have been no administrative errors either by the centre when supplying the TAGs or by us when issuing results.

Further steps

14. If a centre remains dissatisfied following the outcome of the initial informal step of the appeal then it can be escalated and considered through our standard [appeals policy](#), subject to meeting the requirements for making appeals outlined within said policy.
15. Regardless of the outcome of any appeal, students will have the opportunity to sit the Level 3 exams in the Autumn/Winter if they wish to improve their grade. Entry for this exam should be made according to the published deadlines.
16. Any further questions regarding the appeals process should be directed to fcexams@libf.ac.uk.