# Appeal process for summer 2020 awarding of GCSE, AS and A level qualifications - CCEA

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to this consultation.

The controlled Schools’ Support Council (CSSC) was set up in September 2016 to represent and support the interests of the controlled sector in Northern Ireland. To date 95% of controlled schools have chosen to register with CSSC.

The controlled sector is:

* large – it accounts for 49% of all schools and caters for over 144,719 children, making it the largest education sector in Northern Ireland
* diverse – providing education across all school types – nursery, primary, secondary, grammar and special schools. Within this, controlled integrated and controlled Irish Medium schools are included
* inclusive – providing education for children of all faiths and none (62% of pupils define as Protestant, 10% Catholic, and 28% ‘other’) and over a two fifths of newcomer pupils in Northern Ireland.

**Background**

CSSC welcomes the opportunity to comment on the appeal process for summer 2020 awarding of GCSE, AS and A level qualifications offered by the Curriculum, Examinations & Assessment (CCEA) Awarding Organisation.

CSSC recognises the necessity to put in place a modified appeals process for students due to the exceptional arrangements in which results will be generated this summer, and the absence of examinations and assessments.

**Consultation responses**

**QUESTION 1 – to what extent do you agree or disagree that we should provide for a centre to appeal to CCEA AO on the grounds that CCEA AO used the wrong data through its own administrative error or failure to follow its own procedures when calculating a grade, and/or incorrectly allocated or communicated the grades calculated because of this?**

Strongly Agree – Whilst we are in unprecedented times, and not underestimating the challenges, the appeals process will need to be modified but the essence of the process should be maintained.

**QUESTION 2 – to what extent do you agree or disagree that for results issued this summer, CCEA AO should only consider appeals submitted by centres and not those submitted by individual students?**

Strongly Agree – The centre should continue to be the mechanism for the appeals process as this is the agreed vehicle for the appeals process. There is no vehicle for an individual candidate to appeal and if this were to occur the entire cohort could be disadvantaged. Individual pupils have requested re-marks in the past through the centre.

# Appeal process for summer 2020 awarding of GCSE, AS and A level qualifications - CCEA

There is no appeals mechanism for coursework marks and as there has been no formal external examinations this year there can therefore be no right to appeal.

**QUESTION 3 – to what extent do you agree or disagree that we should not make it a regulatory requirement for CCEA AO to ensure consent has been obtained from all students who might be affected by the outcome of an appeal before that appeal is considered?**

Strongly Agree – It should not be necessary to ensure consent from all students who might be affected by the outcome of an appeal. In some centres this may amount to hundreds of students depending on the centre or the subject. This would be unworkable and inappropriate as one person disagreeing would deny the right of a person who felt they had been adversely treated from having their appeal processed.

**QUESTION 4– to what extent do you agree or disagree that should an appeal result in a change of rank order, the rank order position and potentially the grades of other candidates in the centre should also change?**

Strongly Disagree – The appeal process should retain the essence of the normal appeals process. Students in previous years have not been adversely affected when a student in their centre was awarded a higher grade as a result of a successful re-mark.

**QUESTION 5 – to what extent do you agree or disagree that CCEA AO should be permitted to ask persons who were involved in the calculation of results to be involved in the evaluation of appeals in relation to those results?**

Strongly Disagree – CCEA AO should be able to demonstrate that any award is free of personal interest, reliable, valid and carried out accurately. An appeal should be processed by different persons to the original calculations performed by CCEA.

**QUESTION 6 – to what extent do you agree or disagree that CCEA AO should be able to run a different appeals process (i.e. compared to the normal process) this summer?**

Strongly Agree – These are unprecedented times, therefore it is necessary to process appeals using a modified version of the current process, however, the essence must be retained to make sure that as far as is humanly possible, no student is advantaged and no student is disadvantaged.

**QUESTION 7 – to what extent do you agree or disagree that we should not provide for appeals in respect of the operation or outcome of the statistical standardisation model?**

Strongly Disagree – There should be an opportunity for a centre to challenge on the basis of justifiable and robust evidence. There is the need for the Head of Centre to justify how the outcomes of this year’s cohort is different to that of previous years. An issue for concern is that of subjects with small numbers of students particularly at A Level where there may be no correlation from one year to the next but which can be justified by the Head of Centre.

**QUESTION 8 – to what extent do you agree or disagree that we should not provide for a review or appeals process premised on scrutiny of the professional judgements on which a centre’s assessment grades are determined?**

Strongly Agree – centres should have sufficient evidence and procedures in place that they are capable of defending and thus ensuring professional integrity.

# Appeal process for summer 2020 awarding of GCSE, AS and A level qualifications - CCEA

**QUESTION 9 – to what extent do you agree or disagree that we should not provide for a student to challenge their position in a centre’s rank order?**

Strongly Agree – A centre should not make provision for a student to challenge their position in a centre’s rank order.

**QUESTION 10– to what extent do you agree or disagree that we should not provide for an appeal in respect of the process or procedure used by a centre?**

Strongly Agree – Centres assess performance and have robust evidence to support the assessment of the candidates but do not award the grades, this is the remit of CCEA.

If these opportunities for appeal/scrutiny are not in place, then HE, FE and Training and employers may not have confidence in the reliability or validity of the awarded grades.

**QUESTION 11– to what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to make the EPRS available to centres for results issued this summer and that its functions will be to consider:**

* **whether CCEA AO properly considered the appeal in line with its published process, and**
* **that any administrative error on the part of the AO used to generate the calculated grade(s) issued was properly identified during the appeal and corrected?**

Agree – Whilst the EPRS has been used infrequently in the past, this process should remain available to centres.

**QUESTION 12: Do you agree with our assessment? If no, please outline any potential equality impacts which you feel we should consider.**

Agree – CSSC has not identified any impacts of the proposals (positive or negative) on persons who share protected characteristics.

Appendix - Appeal process for summer 2020 awarding of GCSE, AS and A level qualifications offered by CCEA Awarding Organisation

Double click on image to open pdf.