



# Exam Procedures Review Service 2021

JUNE 2021



## **Version history**

Version 1 of the Exam Procedures Review Service 2021 was published on 30 June 2021. This replaces the Exam Procedures Review Service (Covid-19) (June 2020) and will remain in force until such date as specified or determined by Qualifications Wales.

Feedback on this document is welcomed at any time. Please send any comments to [policy@qualificationswales.org](mailto:policy@qualificationswales.org)

## Exam Procedures Review Service 2021

1. This year's alternative approach to awarding qualifications through Centre Determined Grades has required a new approach to reviews and appeals so that there is a fair and meaningful process for Learners.
2. There are three stages in this year's approach. Stage 1 is a Centre Review process when a Learner can request a Centre Review of the provisional Centre Determined Grade on the grounds that there has been an error in the determination of their grade. Learners must give a reason why they believe there has been an error in the determination of their grade. Grades can go up, down or remain the same as a result. Stage 2 is an appeal by a Centre on a Learner's behalf to WJEC on grounds that the judgement that the Centre has made is unreasonable and/or a procedural error has been made. Stage 3 allows a Learner, or a Centre makes a request to us for an Exam Procedures Review Service (EPRS 2021) panel to review whether WJEC had followed our regulatory requirements and their own policies and procedures in dealing with the appeal. This policy sets out our EPRS for 2021 which is the third and final stage in this year's approach.
3. The EPRS 2021 will not review whether a Centre has complied with its own policies and procedures or those set by WJEC for it to follow – this takes place at Stage 2 of the appeals process by WJEC. The EPRS 2021 will not review the accuracy of the grading decision and will not change any grades.
4. The EPRS 2021 is a procedure we undertake to review whether WJEC was compliant with our regulatory requirements and/or compliant with its own policies and procedures to secure the outcomes required by our [General Qualifications Alternative Awarding Framework for Wales](#) in relation to:
  - **the management of a Learner's stage 2 appeal;**
  - **the issuing of results, and**
  - **the correction or otherwise of any incorrect result it discovered in connection with the Centre Review and appeals process in respect of an Approved GCSE, AS, A Level and Welsh Baccalaureate Skills Challenge Certificate qualifications.**

## Scope

5. In respect of Approved GCSE, AS, A Level and Welsh Baccalaureate Skills Challenge Certificate qualifications, WJEC is required to have an appeals process in accordance with GQAAF5.1 of our [General Qualifications Alternative Awarding Framework for Wales](#).
6. EPRS 2021 relates to the award of the following qualifications:
  - Approved GCSE qualifications;
  - Approved GCE AS qualifications;
  - Approved GCE A level qualifications;
  - Welsh Baccalaureate Skills Challenge Certificate (SCC), and Legacy GCSE, GCE AS and GCE A level qualifications which are only available to learners in Wales<sup>1</sup>.
7. For other general qualifications taken this summer, applicants should refer to Ofqual's EPRS process which can be found on their [website](#).
8. Whilst the EPRS 2021 only applies to the qualifications listed above, we will deal with complaints about the award of other regulated qualifications in line with our [Complaints About Awarding Bodies Policy](#).

## Eligibility Criteria

9. The EPRS may consider only applications where all of the following criteria are met:
  - (a) the application concerns a qualification listed at paragraph 6 of this policy;
  - (b) the application concerns one or more of the matters specified at paragraph 10 of this policy;
  - (c) the application concerns a Learner or Learners to whom a Centre Determined Grade was submitted by a Centre to WJEC;
  - (d) the application was made after the conclusion of the final stage of WJEC's appeals process;

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<sup>1</sup> WJEC Level 1/Level 2 GCSE in Information and Communication Technology, WJEC Level 1/Level 2 GCSE in Information and Communication Technology (Short Course), WJEC Level 1/Level 2 GCSE in Health and Social Care, WJEC Level 1/Level 2 GCSE in Health and Social Care (Double Award), WJEC Level 1/Level 2 GCSE in Home Economics: Child Development, WJEC Level 3 Advanced GCE in Applied ICT, WJEC Level 3 Advanced GCE in ICT, WJEC Level 3 Advanced Subsidiary GCE in Applied ICT, WJEC Level 3 Advanced Subsidiary GCE in ICT, WJEC Level 3 Advanced Subsidiary GCE in Health and Social Care (Double Award), WJEC Level 3 Advanced GCE in Health and Social Care (Double Award), WJEC Level 3 Advanced Subsidiary GCE in Health and Social Care and WJEC Level 3 Advanced GCE in Health and Social Care.

- (e) unless there are exceptional circumstances, the application was submitted to EPRS within 20 working days after the date on which the applicant received a final decision from WJEC.

Applications may be by a Centre on behalf of one or more Learners, or by a Learner. Duplicate applications will be rejected.

## Role

10. The role of the EPRS 2021 is to consider eligible applications to review appeals undertaken by WJEC and determine whether it is more likely than not that WJEC has:
  - (a) followed its own procedures properly and consistently in relation to:
    - (i) the issue of results;
    - (ii) the management of the Learner's appeal; and
    - (iii) the correction or otherwise of any incorrect result it discovered in connection with the Centre Review and appeals process in respect of a GQ Qualification.
  - (b) secured the outcomes required by Condition GQAAFW3.2(a)(i), by issuing results which reflect the Centre Determined Grade submitted to WJEC by the Centre in respect of that Learner,
  - (c) followed its own procedures properly and consistently in relation to the management of a Learner's appeal pursuant to Condition GQAAFW5.1(a), in particular,
    - (i) determining an appeal submitted on the basis that a Centre did not follow its procedure properly or consistently in relation to the issuing of results and/or the conducting its review;
    - (ii) determining an appeal submitted on the basis that a Learner's result was affected by an administrative error made by the Centre or WJEC;
    - (iii) determining an appeal submitted on the basis that a Learner's result was affected by an unreasonable exercise of academic judgement.

- (d) followed its own procedures properly and consistently in relation to the correction or otherwise of any incorrect result it discovered in connection with the Centre Review and appeals process in respect of a GQ qualification.

## Who can apply for EPRS 2021?

- 11. Applications must be made by a Learner (including a Private Candidate) or by a Centre on behalf of a Learner directly affected by WJEC's original decision.

## What is EPRS 2021?

- 12. The EPRS 2021 is made up of a panel whose role is to review the process undertaken by WJEC in handling the appeal.
- 13. The EPRS 2021 panellists will determine the extent to which WJEC was compliant with our regulatory requirements and with their own policies and procedures. Therefore, the Stage 2 appeal to WJEC must be completed before the request for an EPRS review is submitted and considered. This is to ensure that WJEC has had the opportunity to consider the appeal and correct any errors in the first instance. The EPRS 2021 is the final stage in the review and appeals process in summer 2021.
- 14. For the applicant, this means that the WJEC appeal process has been completed before making an application to us. The EPRS 2021 is the final recourse.
- 15. In addition, unless there are exceptional circumstances, EPRS 2021 will not consider an application made more than 20 working days after the date on which the applicant received a final decision from WJEC.
- 16. Other complaints relating to WJEC's actions in the award of regulated qualifications may be dealt with in line with our [Complaints About Awarding Bodies Policy](#).

## The EPRS 2021 Panel

- 17. The EPRS 2021 Panel may at any time seek legal, technical, or specific case related advice, and can also draw on independent reviewers as and when this is deemed necessary.

18. The EPRS 2021 Panel may be undertaken as a desk-based review of all the evidence, or could conduct a hearing, as well as collect evidence including through interviews with relevant persons.

## **Contacting EPRS 2021**

19. If you wish for your appeal to be reviewed by the EPRS 2021 Panel, please complete the [template](#) and submit to:

[corporategovernance@qualificationswales.org](mailto:corporategovernance@qualificationswales.org)

## **Process for review**

20. On receiving the application, an EPRS 2021 Panel will be convened to determine if the application is eligible to be considered within this policy.
21. Where the application is within scope of this policy, we will contact the applicant to confirm this and outline our timescales to undertake the EPRS 2021 process within 10 days of receipt of their application. The EPRS process will formally commence on this confirmation of eligibility, that is, following the initial 10-day period.
22. Where the application is not within the scope of this policy, we will contact the applicant to let them know within 10 days of receipt of their request explaining the reasons why.
23. We aim for the EPRS process to normally take around 28 days to complete. In the event of circumstances where we receive large volumes of EPRS applications, and/or complex EPRS applications, the process could take up to three months to complete. If we require more than 28 days, we will contact the applicant and explain the reasons for this.
24. Where further evidence is required from the applicant and/or WJEC, we will notify them, specifying the evidence we require and set out the timescale in which that evidence must be provided.

25. We will decide whether the further evidence should be disclosed to the applicant or to WJEC, as appropriate and may allow a period for representations to be made following such disclosure.

## Report

26. A report will be produced, summarising the findings of the EPRS 2021 Panel. This may include recommendations to be made to WJEC. The report will:
- (a) identify any aspect of WJEC's own procedures that the Panel believes it has failed to follow;
  - (b) identify the outcome that WJEC has failed to secure and any Condition(s) that the Panel believes WJEC has not complied with;
  - (c) explain the reasons for its decision, including setting out the evidence on which it has relied, explaining any inferences it has drawn and any evidence on which it has not felt able to rely.

If the report identified any instances of potential non-compliance on the part of WJEC, this will be referred to the Monitoring and Compliance team.

27. Whilst the report concludes the EPRS 2021 process, we envisage that findings of non-compliance will usually initiate a new workstream to investigate whether regulatory action is required in line with our [Taking Action When Things Go Wrong Policy](#).