

Centre Policy for determining teacher assessed grades summer 2021

The policy is applicable to the following qualifications: AQA GCSEs and Level 2 Certificate, OCR GCSEs and Pearson Edexcel International GCSEs.

Statement of intent

The purpose of this policy is:

- To ensure that teacher assessed grades are determined fairly, consistently, free from bias and effectively.
- To ensure the operation of effective processes with clear guidelines and support for staff.
- To ensure that all staff involved in the processes clearly understand their roles and responsibilities.
- To support teachers to take evidence-based decisions in line with *Pearson Guidance on the determination of grades for International A/AS Levels and International GCSEs for May/June 2021* or the Joint Council for Qualifications guidance, as appropriate.
- To ensure the consideration of historical centre data in the process.
- To support a high standard of internal quality assurance in the allocation of teacher assessed grades.
- To support our centre in meeting its obligations in relation to equality legislation.
- To ensure our centre meets all requirements set out by *Pearson Guidance on the determination of grades for International A/AS Levels and International GCSEs for May/June 2021* and the Department of Education, Ofqual, the Joint Council for Qualifications and awarding organisations for Summer 2021 qualifications.
- To ensure the process for communicating to candidates and their parents/carers how they will be assessed is clear, in order to give confidence.

Roles and Responsibilities

Head of Centre

Our Head of Centre, Mr Jason Fletcher:

- will be responsible for approving our policy for determining teacher assessed grades.
- has overall responsibility for the school as an examinations centre and will ensure that clear roles and responsibilities of all staff are defined.
- will confirm that teacher assessed grade decisions represent the academic judgement made by teachers and that the checks in place ensure these align with the guidance on standards provided by awarding organisations.
- will ensure a robust internal quality assurance process has been produced and signed-off in advance of results being submitted.

Senior Leadership Team and Heads of Department

Our Senior Leadership Team and Heads of Departments, will:

- provide training and support to our other staff.
- support the Head of Centre in the quality assurance of the final teacher assessed grades.
- ensure an effective approach within and across departments and authenticating the preliminary outcome from single teacher subjects.
- be responsible for ensuring staff have a clear understanding of the internal and external quality assurance processes and their role within it.
- ensure that all teachers within departments make consistent judgements about student evidence in deriving a grade.
- ensure teachers have the information required to make accurate and fair judgments.

Teachers

Our teachers will:

- ensure they have sufficient evidence, in line with this Centre Policy and guidance from Pearson or the Joint Council for Qualifications, to provide teacher assessed grades for each student they have entered for a qualification.
- ensure that the teacher assessed grade they assign to each student is a fair, valid and reliable reflection of the assessed evidence available for each student.
- make judgements based on what each student has been taught and what they have been assessed on, as outlined in the section on grading in the Pearson or JCQ guidance.
- produce an assessment record for each subject cohort, that includes the nature of the assessment evidence being used, the level of control for assessments considered, and any other evidence that explains the determination of the final teacher assessed grades. Any necessary variations for individual students will also be recorded.
- securely store sufficient evidence which can be retrieved to justify their decisions.

Examinations Officer

Our Examinations Officer will:

- be responsible for the administration of our final teacher assessed grades.
- be responsible for managing the post-results services.

Training, Support and Guidance

- Teachers involved in determining grades will attend centre-based training to help achieve consistency and fairness to all students.
- Teachers will be informed of support materials provided by the relevant exam board for their subject alongside the literature from JCQ, Ofqual and awarding organisations.
- Less experienced teachers will be supported by the Head of Academics.

Use of Appropriate Evidence

We will use:

For Art and Design GCSE:

- non-exam assessment work.

For other GCSEs (Classical Greek and Latin):

- Student work produced in response to assessment materials provided by the awarding organisation, including groups of questions, past papers or similar materials such as practice or sample papers in mock exams.
- Student work produced in centre-devised tasks that reflect the specification, that follow the same format as awarding organisation materials and have been marked in a way that reflects awarding organisation mark schemes in internal tests.

For Level 2 Certificate (Further Mathematics):

- Student work produced in response to assessment materials provided by the awarding organisation, including groups of questions, past papers or similar materials such as practice or sample papers in mock exams and internal tests.

For Pearson International GCSEs:

- Student work produced in response to assessment materials provided by Pearson, including groups of questions, past papers or similar materials such as practice or sample papers in mock exams and internal tests.

Teachers making judgements will have regard to the Pearson guidance for International GCSEs, the Ofqual Head of Centre guidance on recommended evidence, and further guidance provided by awarding organisations.

All candidate evidence used to determine teacher assessed grades, and associated documentation, will be retained and made available for the purposes of external quality assurance and appeals.

Our centre will ensure the appropriateness of evidence and balance of evidence in arriving at grades in the following ways:

- We will consider the level of control under which an assessment was completed, for example, whether the evidence was produced under high control and under supervision.
- We will ensure that we are able to authenticate the work as the student's own, especially where that work was not completed within the school.
- We will consider the specification and assessment objective coverage of the assessment.
- We will consider the depth and breadth of knowledge, understanding and skills assessed, especially higher order skills within individual assessments.
- As per the guidance we will consider that more recent evidence is likely to be more representative of student performance, although there may be exceptions.

Determining teacher assessed grades

Awarding teacher assessed grades based on evidence

- Teachers will determine grades based on evidence which is commensurate with the standard at which a student is performing, i.e. their demonstrated knowledge, understanding and skills across the content of the course they have been taught.

- Teachers will produce an assessment record for each subject. Any necessary variations for individual students will also be shared.

Internal quality assurance

- We will ensure that all teachers involved in deriving teacher assessed grades read and understand this Centre Policy document.
- In subjects where there is more than one teacher and/or class, we will carry out internal standardisation. Where appropriate, we will amend individual grade decisions to ensure alignment with the standards as outlined by the awarding organisation(s).
- Where there is only one teacher involved in marking assessments and determining grades, then the output of this activity will be reviewed by Heads of Department, the Head of Academics and the Head of Centre.

Comparison of Teacher Assessed Grades to results for previous cohorts

- We will compile information on the grades awarded to our students in the past June series in which exams took place (eg 2017 - 2019).
- We will consider the size of our cohort from year to year.
- We will consider the stability of our centre's overall grade outcomes from year to year.
- We will consider both subject and centre level variation in our outcomes during the internal quality assurance process.
- In the event of significant divergence from the qualification-level profiles attained in previous examined years, the Head of Centre will prepare a succinct narrative on the outcomes of the review against historic data, which address the reasons for this divergence. This commentary will be available for subsequent review during the Quality Assurance process.

It should be noted that our centre is a small centre with a small cohort of no more than 20 students per year and small subject entries.

Access Arrangements and Special Considerations

- Where students have agreed access arrangements or reasonable adjustments we will make every effort to ensure that these arrangements are in place when assessments are being taken.
- Where an assessment has taken place without an agreed reasonable adjustment or access arrangement, we will either remove that assessment from the basket of evidence and alternative evidence will be obtained or use the evidence when assigning a grade on the basis it is the most appropriate evidence available and disregarding it would disadvantage the student.
- Where illness or other personal circumstances might have affected performance in assessments used in determining a student's standard of performance, we will take account of this when making judgements.
- We will record, as part of the assessment record, how we have incorporated any necessary variations to take account of the impact of illness or personal circumstances on the performance of individual students in assessments.
- To ensure consistency in the application of Special Consideration, we will ensure all teachers have read and understood the document: JCQ – A guide to the special consideration process, with effect from 1 September 2020. It is important to note that this guidance makes it very clear that special consideration can only be applied in the case of circumstances or illness that manifest themselves on the day of the assessment itself.

Addressing Disruption/Differentiated Lost Learning (DLL)

- Teacher assessed grades will be determined based on evidence of the content that has been taught and assessed for each student.

Objectivity

Senior Leaders, Heads of Department and the Head of Centre will consider:

- sources of unfairness and bias (situations/contexts, difficulty, presentation and format, language, conditions for assessment, marker preconceptions);
- hidden forms of bias; and
- bias in teacher assessed grades.

To ensure objectivity, all staff involved in determining teacher assessed grades will be made aware that:

- unconscious bias can skew judgements;
- the evidence presented should be valued for its own merit as an indication of performance and attainment;
- teacher assessed grades should not be influenced by candidates' positive or challenging personal circumstances, character, behaviour, appearance, socio-economic background, or protected characteristics;
- unconscious bias is more likely to occur when quick opinions are formed.

Our internal standardisation and review meetings will help to ensure that there are different perspectives to the quality assurance process.

Recording decisions and retention of evidence and data

This section outlines our approach to recording decisions and retaining evidence and data.

- We will ensure that the school maintains records that show how the teacher assessed grades process operated, including the rationale for decisions in relation to individual marks/grades.
- We will ensure that evidence is maintained across a variety of tasks to develop a holistic view of each student's demonstrated knowledge, understanding and skills in the areas of content taught.
- We will comply with our obligations regarding data protection legislation.
- We will ensure that the grades accurately reflect the evidence submitted.
- We will ensure that evidence is retained electronically and on paper in a secure centre-based system that can be readily shared with our awarding organisations.

Authenticating evidence

- Robust mechanisms will be in place, which will include much of the evidence used for grading being completed in high control situations, to ensure that teachers are confident that work used as evidence is the students' own and that no inappropriate levels of support have been given to students to complete it. Where due to the pandemic, assessments have to be completed remotely, forms will be completed by parents and students to authenticate the work. Remote supervision/invigilation will also be used for remote assessments.

- It is understood that awarding organisations will investigate instances where it appears evidence is not authentic. We will follow all guidance provided by awarding organisations to support these determinations of authenticity.

Confidentiality, malpractice and conflicts of interest

Confidentiality

- All staff involved have been made aware of the need to maintain the confidentiality of teacher assessed grades.
- All teaching staff have been briefed on the requirement to share details of the range of evidence on which students' grades will be based, while ensuring that details of the final grades remain confidential.
- Relevant details from this Policy, including requirements around sharing details of evidence and the confidentiality requirements, have been shared with parents/guardians.

Malpractice

- All staff involved have been made aware of the specific types of malpractice which may affect the Summer 2021 series including:
 - ☐ breaches of internal security;
 - ☐ deception;
 - ☐ improper assistance to students;
 - ☐ failure to appropriately authenticate a student's work;
 - ☐ over direction of students in preparation for common assessments;
 - ☐ allegations that centres submit grades not supported by evidence that they know to be inaccurate;
 - ☐ centres enter students who were not originally intending to certificate a grade in the Summer 2021 series;
 - ☐ failure to engage as requested with awarding organisations during the External Quality Assurance and appeal stages; and
 - ☐ failure to keep appropriate records of decisions made and teacher assessed grades.
- The consequences of malpractice or maladministration as published in the JCQ guidance: *JCQ Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures* and including the risk of a delay to students receiving their grades, up to, and including, removal of centre status have been outlined to all relevant staff.

Conflicts of Interest

- To protect the integrity of assessments, all staff involved in the determination of grades must declare any conflict of interest such as relationships with students to our Head of Centre for further consideration.
- We will also carefully consider the need to separate duties and personnel to ensure fairness in later process reviews and appeals.

Private Candidates

In our situation the definition of a private candidate is a student at the school who has studied an additional subject outside of the school.

- Our arrangements for assessing Private Candidates to arrive at appropriate grades will be the same as the approach utilised for internal candidates.
- The evidence used will be student work produced in response to assessment materials provided by the awarding organisation, including groups of questions, past papers or similar materials such as practice or sample papers in mock exams and internal tests.
- Pre-existing evidence cannot be accepted and used in the grading process as evidence available was set, supervised and/or marked by the student's parent or produced independently by the student.
- In undertaking the review of cohort grades in conjunction with our centre results profiles from previous examined years, the grades determined by our centre for Private Candidates will be excluded from the analysis.

External Quality Assurance

- All staff involved have been made aware of the awarding organisation requirements for External Quality Assurance as set out in the Pearson or JCQ Guidance.
- All necessary records of decision-making in relation to determining grades have been properly kept and can be made available for review as required.
- All student evidence on which decisions regarding the determination of grades has been retained and can be made available for review as required.
- Instances where student evidence used to decide teacher assessed grades is not available, for example where the material has previously been returned to students and cannot now be retrieved, will be clearly recorded on the appropriate documentation.
- All staff involved have been briefed on the possibility of interaction with awarding organisations during the different stages of the External Quality Assurance process and can respond promptly and fully to enquiries, including attendance at Virtual Visits should this prove necessary.
- Arrangements are in place to respond fully and promptly to any additional requirements/reviews that may be identified as a result of the External Quality Assurance process.
- Staff have been made aware that a failure to respond fully and effectively to such additional requirements may result in further action by the awarding organisations, including the withholding of results.

Results

- All staff involved have been made aware of the specific arrangements for the issue of results in Summer 2021.
- Arrangements will be made to ensure the necessary staffing, including the exams officer and other staff, to enable the efficient receipt and release of results to our students.
- Arrangements will be in place for the provision of all necessary advice, guidance and support, including pastoral support, to students on receipt of their results.
- Such guidance will include advice on the appeals process in place in 2021 (see below).
- Appropriate staff will be available to respond promptly to any requests for information from awarding organisations, for example regarding missing or incomplete results, to enable such issues to be swiftly resolved.
- Parents/guardians have been made aware of arrangements for results day.

Appeals

- All staff involved have been made aware of the arrangements for, and the requirements of, appeals in Summer 2021, as set out in the Pearson or JCQ Guidance.
- Internal arrangements will be in place for the swift and effective handling of Centre Reviews in compliance with the requirements.

- All necessary staff have been briefed on the process for, and timing of, such reviews, and will be available to ensure their prompt and efficient handling.
- Learners will be appropriately guided as to the necessary stages of appeal.
- Arrangements will be in place for the timely submission of appeals to awarding organisations, including any priority appeals.
- Arrangements will be in place to obtain the written consent of students to the initiation of appeals, and to record their awareness that grades may go down as well as up on appeal.
- Appropriate information on the appeals process will be provided to parents/carers.

Authorised by	Jason Fletcher
Date	28 April 2021