

Determining Teacher Assessed Grades – Summer 2021

1. Introduction

1.1. The purpose of this policy is:

- To determine Teacher Assessed Grades for a range of qualifications including GCSE, Functional skills and all vocational qualifications categorised by Ofqual's Extraordinarily Regulatory Framework (ERF) to determine awards for summer results 2021.
- It is the responsibility of everyone involved in the centre's teacher assessed grades processes to read, understand and implement this policy, complying with appropriate procedures and deadlines.

2. Definition

2.1. Teacher Assessed grades – Lecturers will determine grades on evidence based on and commensurate with the standard at which a student is performing i.e. the knowledge, skills and content of the course they have been taught.

3. Aims

3.1. The policy aim is to

- To ensure that teacher assessed grades are determined fairly, consistently and are free from bias and effective across all departments.
- To ensure the operation of effective processes with clear guidelines that support academic staff and all those involved in the process, which clearly explains their roles and responsibilities.
- To ensure our centre meets all requirements set out by the Department of Education, Ofqual, the Joint Council for Qualifications and Awarding Organisations for Summer 2021.
- To ensure the process for communicating to students and their parents/guardians how they will be assessed is clear, in order to give confidence.
- To support our centre in meeting its obligations in relation to equality legislation.

4. Objectives

4.1. The objectives of this policy are

- To support lecturers to make evidence-based decisions in line with Joint Council for Qualifications guidance.

- To ensure the consideration of historical centre data in the process, and the appropriate decision making in respect of, teacher assessed grades.
- To support a high standard of internal quality assurance in the allocation of teacher assessed grades.
- To ensure this policy aligns with our centre policies for malpractice, maladministration and conflicts of interest, which have been reviewed to ensure they address the specific challenges of delivery in Summer 2021.
- All staff involved are made aware of the specific arrangements for the issue of results in Summer 2021.
- Parents/guardians are made aware of arrangements for results days.
- All staff involved have been made aware of the arrangements for, and the requirements of, appeals in Summer 2021, as set out in the JCQ Guidance and the College Appeals Process.
- Internal arrangements will be in place for the swift and effective handling of Centre appeals in line with the current College Appeals Process.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1. Head of Centre

Head of Centre, Bill Meredith, Chief Executive and Principal

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

5.2. Senior Leadership Team and Heads of Department

Director of Quality and Standards, in collaboration with the Senior Leadership Team, College Management Team and the Quality Team will:

- provide training and support to our lecturing staff and wider support 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 across all required subjects.
- be responsible for ensuring lecturers have a clear understanding of the internal and external quality assurance processes and their role within them.

- ensure that all lecturers within their department make consistent judgements about student evidence in deriving a grade.
- ensure all staff conduct assessments under the appropriate levels of control with reference to guidance provided by the Joint Council for Qualifications.
- ensure lecturers have the information required to make accurate and fair judgments.
- ensure that a Head of Department Checklist is completed for each qualification that they are submitting.

5.3. Lecturers/ Course managers

Our lecturers and course managers will:

- ensure they conduct assessments under our centre's appropriate levels of control and have sufficient evidence, in line with this Centre Policy and guidance from 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 main JCQ guidance.
- 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 taken.
- Complete an internal assessment record in line with awarding organisation requirements for their programmes.
- securely store and be able to retrieve sufficient evidence to justify their decisions.
- Students have been appropriately guided as to necessary stages of appeal.

5.4. Examinations Officer

Our Examinations Officer will:

- be responsible for the administration of our final teacher assessed grades and for managing the post-results services.
- Ensure arrangements are in place for the timely submission of appeals to awarding organisations. Including priority appeals, for example those on which university places depend.

6. Implementation

6.1. Training and support

- Lecturers involved in determining grades in our centre will attend any centre-based training to help achieve consistency and fairness to all students.

- All staff will be attend awarding organisation training where appropriate to support the consistency of grading and the use of evidence.
- Lecturers will engage fully with all training and support that has been provided by the Joint Council for Qualifications and the awarding organisations.
- We will provide mentoring from experienced lecturers to new staff and newly qualified lecturers less familiar with the assessment.
- We will put in place additional internal reviews of teacher assessed grades for newly qualified lecturers and other lecturers as appropriate.
- A larger sample of internal quality assurance will be conducted with new staff and newly qualified lecturers from experienced member of staff providing feedback and additional guidance where required to reduce the risk of bias before submission to the Head of Department.
- Any mock assessments will be marked independently of the delivery lecturer to reduce bias along with a sample of second marking to take place by a subject specialist lead.
- We will ensure all staff are fully aware of the arrangements for the appeals process for the summer 2021 results.

6.2. Use of Evidence

- Lecturers making judgements will have regard to 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.
- We will be using student work produced in response to assessment materials provided by our awarding organisation(s), including groups of questions, past papers or similar materials such as practice or sample papers.
- We will use non-exam assessment work (often referred to as coursework), even if this has not been fully completed.
- We will use 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.
- We will use substantial class or homework (including work that took place during remote learning). This will form part of the evidence but will be weighted accordingly.
- We will use internal tests taken by students.
- We will use mock exams taken over the course of study.
- We will use records of a student's capability and performance over the course of study in performance-based subjects.

- We will use additional assessment materials to give students the opportunity to show what they know, understand or can do in an area of content that has been taught but not yet assessed.
- We will use additional assessment materials to give students an opportunity to show improvement, for example, to validate or replace an existing piece of evidence.
- We will use additional assessment materials to support consistency of judgement between lecturers or classes by giving everyone the same task to complete.
- We will combine and/or remove elements of questions where, content has not been taught.
- All evidence sources have been identified by department based on content being taught, this will be collated within a college devised grade calculator to support consistency between teachers in a department and across college.

7. Awarding Teacher Assessed Grades Based on Evidence

- Our lecturers will determine grades based on evidence which is commensurate with the standard at which a student is performing, ie. Their demonstrated knowledge, skills across the content of the course they have been taught.
- Our lecturers will record how the evidence was used how they have arrived at a fair and objective grade, which is free from bias.
- Our lecturers will produce an assessment record for each subject cohort and will share this with the Head of Department for quality assurance purposes
- Any necessary variations for individual students will also be shared.

8. Internal Quality Assurance

- We will ensure all lecturers involved and deriving at teachers assessed grades read and understand this centre policy document.
- In subjects where there is more than one lecturer or class in the department we will ensure that our centre carries out an internal standardisation process.
- We will ensure all lecturers are provided training and support to ensure they take a consistent approach to:
 - Arriving at teacher assessed grades
 - Marking evidence
 - Reaching Holistic grading decision
 - Applying the use of grading support and documentation.
- We will conduct internal standardisation across all grades.
- We will ensure that the Assessment Record will form the basis of internal standardisation and discussions across teachers to agree the awarding of teacher assessed grades.
- Where necessary, we will review and reflect on individual grading decisions to ensure alignment with the standards as outlined by our awarding organisations.

- Where appropriate, we will amend individual grade decisions to ensure alignment with the standards as outlined by our awarding organisations.
- Where there is only one lecturer involved in marking assessments and determining grades, then the output of this activity will be reviewed by an appropriate member of staff within the centre.
 - This will be a member of the Quality Department.
- In respect of equality legislation, we will consider the range of evidence for students of different protected characteristics that are included in our internal standardisation

9. Comparison of Teacher Assessed Grades to results for previous cohorts

- We will compile information on the grades awarded to our students in past June series in which exams took place (e.g. 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.
- We will prepare a succinct narrative on the outcomes of the review against historic data which, in the event of significant divergence from the qualifications-levels profiles attained in previous examined years, which address the reasons for this divergence. This commentary will be available for subsequent review during the Quality Assurance process.
- We will compile historical data giving appropriate regard to potential mixtures of A*-G and 9-1 grades in GCSEs. Where required, we will use the Ofqual guidance to convert legacy grades into the new 9 to 1 scale.
- We will bring together other data sources that will help to quality assure the grades we intend to award in 2021.
- We will omit subjects that we no longer offer from the historical data.

10. Reasonable Adjustments and Mitigating Circumstances

- Where students have agreed access arrangements or reasonable adjustments (for example a reader or scribe) 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 remove that assessment from the basket of evidence and alternative evidence obtained.
- 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](#)

11. Addressing Disruption / Differentiated lost learning

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

12. Objectivity

Staff will fulfil their duties and responsibilities in relation to relevant equality and disability legislation.

We will consider:

- Sources of unfairness and bias (situations/contexts, difficulty, presentation and format, language, conditions for assessment, marker preconceptions);
- How to minimise bias in questions and marking and 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; and

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

13. Recording of Decisions and Retention of Evidence and Data

- We will ensure that lecturers and Heads of Departments maintain 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 put in place recording requirements for the various stages of the process to ensure the accurate and secure retention of the evidence used to make decisions.
- 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 or on paper in a secure centre-based system that can be readily shared with our awarding organisation(s).

14. Authenticating Evidence

- Robust mechanisms, which will include student signed declaration forms, will be in place to ensure that lecturers 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, either within the centre or with external tutors.
- 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 Pearsons and NCFE to support these determinations of authenticity.

15. Confidentiality

- All staff involved have been made aware of the need to maintain the confidentiality of teacher assessed grades.
- All lecturing 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.

16. Malpractice

- Our general centre policies regarding malpractice, maladministration and conflicts of interest have been reviewed to ensure they address the specific challenges of delivery in Summer 2021.
- All staff involved have been made aware of these policies, and have received training in them as necessary.
- 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.

17. 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.
- Our Head of Centre will take appropriate action to manage any conflicts of interest arising with centre staff in accordance with the JCQ documents - [General Regulations for Approved Centres, 1 September 2020 to 31 August 2021](#).
- We will also carefully consider the need if to separate duties and personnel to ensure fairness in later process reviews and appeals

18. External Quality Assurance

- All staff involved have been made aware of the awarding organisation requirements for External Quality Assurance as set out in the 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 a department representative in 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.

19. Results

- All staff involved have been made aware of the specific arrangements for the issue of results in Summer 2021, including the issuing of vocational and GCSE results in the same week.
- Arrangements will be made to ensure the necessary staffing, including exams office and support 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.
- 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 days.

20. 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 Jcq Guidance.
- Internal arrangements will be in place for the swift and effective handling of Centre Reviews in compliance with the requirements through the use of a central logging system within the Quality and Exams Department.
- 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.
- Students will have been 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, for example those on which university places depend.
- 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.

21. Centre Policy Portability

- Our arrangements for ensuring confidentiality of centre-determined grades for Ofqual-regulated qualifications are compliant with those outlined in the Jcq Guidance

22. Method of Monitoring

22.1. Academic Managers Group (AMG).

22.2. Auditing of appropriate aspects by the Quality Office in accordance with the annual audit schedule including final sign off from department exam boards.

22.3. **Authorship:** Director of Quality and Standards

22.4. **Date:** April 2021

22.5. **Reviewing Officers:** Director of Quality and Standards

This document is available in a variety of formats. Student Services or main reception will supply guidance on the range