

Centre Policy for determining teacher assessed grades  
FOR GCSES - SUMMER 2021



# Centre Policy for determining teacher assessed grades in Summer 2021: John O' Gaunt School, Hungerford

## Background

Every centre is required to create a Centre Policy that reflects its individual circumstances. This policy is adapted from the template produced by JCQ.

This policy takes account of the guidance provided in the document: *JCQ Guidance on the determination of grades for A/AS Levels and GCSEs for summer 2021*

This policy applies to the following qualifications offered by John O' Gaunt, Hungerford in summer 2021:

- GCSEs

The principles underpinning the policy will also apply to other qualifications:

- CNat qualification in Sport Science

## I Statement of intent

This section outlines the purpose of this document in relation to our centre.

### **I.1 Statement of Intent**

This section provides details of the purpose of this document, as appropriate to our centre:

*The purpose of this policy is:*

- *To ensure that teacher assessed grades are determined fairly, consistently, free from bias and effectively within and across departments.*
- *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 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 support our centre in meeting its obligations in relation to equality legislation.*
- *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 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 in our processes.*

## 2 Roles and responsibilities

This section of our Centre Policy outlines the personnel in our centre who have specific roles and responsibilities in the process of determining teacher assessed grades this year.

### 2.1 Roles and Responsibilities

This section gives details of the roles and responsibilities within our centre:

#### 2.1.1 Head of Centre

- *Our Head of Centre, Mr R. Hawthorne, will be responsible for approving our policy for determining teacher assessed grades.*
- *Our Head of Centre has overall responsibility for the school 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 teachers 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.*

#### 2.1.2 Senior Leadership Team, Heads of Faculty, Subject Leaders

*Our Senior Leadership Team and Heads of Faculty and Subject Leaders 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 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 teachers have the information required to make accurate and fair judgments.*
- *ensure that a Subject Leader Checklist is completed for each qualification that they are submitting.*

### **2.1.3 Teachers**

Our teachers 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.
- 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.
- Pass all available evidence to our Examinations Officer for secure storage and be able to retrieve sufficient evidence to justify their decisions.

### **2.1.4 SENCo**

The SENCo will

- ensure that all assessment of need has been carried out in order to provide access arrangements (reasonable adjustments) for all students who are entitled to these.
- ensure applications for access arrangements have been lodged with the examination boards as appropriate.

### **2.1.5 Examinations Officer**

Our Examinations Officer will:

- ensure that access arrangements are implemented for any subject assessments and during the May assessment period.
- be responsible for the administration of our final teacher assessed grades and for managing the post-results services.
- securely store the assessment evidence on which assessment decisions have been made.

### 3 Training, support and guidance

This section of our Centre Policy outlines the training, support and guidance that our centre will provide to those determining teacher assessed grades this year.

#### 3.1 Training

This section provides details of the approach our centre will take to training, support and guidance in determining teacher assessed grades this year.

- *Teachers involved in marking May assessments will attend centre-based training to help achieve consistency and fairness to all students.*
- *Teachers involved in determining grades in our centre will attend centre-based training to help achieve consistency and fairness to all students.*
- *Any teacher who leads a subject on their own will have also attended Trust-based training to help achieve consistency and fairness to all students.*
- *Teachers will engage fully with all training and support that has been provided by the Joint Council for Qualifications and the awarding organisations.*

#### 3.2 Support for Newly Qualified Teachers and teachers less familiar with assessment

This section provides details of our approach to training, support and guidance for newly qualified teachers (NQTs) and teachers less familiar with assessment.

- *There are no NQT teachers this year, at John O' Gaunt.*

## 4 Use of appropriate evidence

### 4.1 Use of evidence

This section indicates how our centre will give due regard to the section in the JCQ guidance entitled: *Guidance on grading for teachers*.

- *Teachers making judgements will have regard to the Ofqual 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 the May assessment period, conducted under exam conditions, which are based on exam board materials, in particular past exam questions, with modifications if appropriate, as a primary source of evidence.*
- *We will also use non-exam assessment (NEA) work (often referred to as coursework), as a primary source of evidence, even if this has not been fully completed, in courses where such work forms part of the usual assessment.*
- *We will use the results of mock exams taken in November 2020 as a secondary source of evidence.*
- *We will also use internal tests taken by students during the course as a further source of evidence.*
- *Some departments will also use the Spring Working At data, based on regular internal tests. Heads of department will be asked to detail evidence used to achieve the Spring Working At data to confirm the robustness of that data.*

We provide further detail in the following areas:

#### 4.1.1 May assessments

- *We will use these assessments to give students the opportunity to show what they know, understand or can do in areas of content that have been taught.*
- *We will use these assessments to support consistency of judgement between teachers or classes by giving everyone the same task to complete.*
- *Assessments will principally use past paper questions so that examination board mark schemes can be used to help ensure consistency of marking.*
- *Questions may be modified to ensure they are focused on areas of the specification that have been taught.*
- *We will advise students of the AOs to be assessed in each of the May assessments to ensure that students can focus their preparation purposefully.*
- *These assessments will provide the strongest evidence of each student's current performance because they are being taken as close as possible to the end of the course.*

#### 4.1.2 NEA

- *We will take a consistent approach in each subject with NEA so that all students are treated fairly.*
- *The progress through NEA is managed differently in each subject so that in some cases it will be appropriate for NEA to be completed, whereas in others partial completion will be better.*

#### 4.1.3 Mock assessments

- *We will use the outcomes of these assessments as indicators of each student's performance.*

**4.1.4 Internal tests**

- We will use the outcomes of rigorous internal tests as part of our gathering of evidence.
- Internal tests can take several forms including short answer responses and essays.
- Internal tests conducted under high control will provide stronger evidence than those conducted under low control.

**4.2 Appropriateness of evidence**

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 the May assessments will be completed in comparison to other tests earlier in the course. However, any assessments completed since March 2021 provide evidence produced under high control.
- We will ensure that we are able to authenticate the work, particularly NEA, as the student's own, especially where that work was not completed within school.
- For most subjects, we will use the results of mock assessments as evidence because they also provide evidence produced under high control.
- 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.
- We will consider the range of evidence to use for students who are in a different situation to the rest of the cohort.

## 5 Determining teacher assessed grades

### 5.1 Awarding teacher assessed grades based on evidence

We give details here of our centre's approach to awarding teacher assessed grades.

- *Our 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.*
- *Our teachers will record how the evidence was used to arrive at a fair and objective grade, which is free from bias.*
- *Our teachers will produce an Assessment Record for each subject cohort and will share this with their Head of Department. Any necessary variations for individual students will also be shared.*
- *Teachers will reach holistic grading decisions by comparing the appropriate evidence against the JCQ subject grade descriptors and the exam board exemplification for each grade.*

## 6 Internal quality assurance

This section of our Centre Policy outlines the approach our centre will take to ensure internal standardisation of teacher assessed grades, to ensure consistency, fairness and objectivity of decisions.

*Head of Centre Internal Quality Assurance and Declaration*

### 6.1 Internal quality assurance

This section gives details of our approach to internal standardisation, within and across subject departments.

- 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 in the department, we will ensure that our centre carries out an internal standardisation process.
- We will ensure that all teachers are provided with training and support to ensure they take a consistent approach to:
  - Marking of evidence
  - Reaching a holistic grading decision
  - Applying the use of grading support and documentation
  - Arriving at teacher assessed grades
- We will conduct external standardisation for all our subjects, as many are led by one teacher only.
- In Core subjects, we will also use the expertise of our Academies Trust's SLEs to support training, standardisation and moderation, as appropriate.
- We will conduct internal standardisation across all grades, at Faculty Level.
- We will ensure that the Assessment Record will form the basis of internal standardisation and discussions between 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 the exam boards.
- Where appropriate, we will amend individual grade decisions to ensure alignment with the standards as outlined by the exam boards.
- Where there is only one teacher 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 either the Head of Centre, Mr R. Hawthorne or the Vice Principal, Mrs C. Walker.
- 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.

## 7 Comparison of teacher assessed grades to results for previous cohorts

This section of our Centre Policy outlines the approach we will take to compare our teacher assessed grades in 2021 with results from previous cohorts.

### 7.1 Comparison of Teacher Assessed Grades to results for previous cohorts

7.1.1 This section gives details of our internal process to ensure a comparison of teacher assessed grades at qualification level to results for previous cohorts in our centre taking the same qualification.

- 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 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 consider the size of our cohort from year to year.
- We will consider past sub-groups data too.
- We will consider the stability of our centre's overall grade outcomes from year to year.
- We will compare subject and centre-level performance statistics for initial TAGs with this historical data.

7.1.2 This section gives details of the approach our centre will follow if our initial teacher assessed grades for a qualification are viewed as significantly different compared to results in previous years.

- We will bring together other data sources that will help to quality assure the grades we intend to award in 2021.
- We will prepare a succinct narrative on the outcomes of the review against historic data which, in the event of significant divergence from the qualification-level profiles attained in previous examined years, addresses the reasons for such divergence. This commentary will be available for subsequent review during the QA process.

7.1.3 This section gives details of changes in our cohorts that need to be reflected in our comparisons.

- We will omit subjects that we no longer offer from the historical data.
- We will consider subjects carefully, which were not on our offer between 2017-19 and for which we do not have past data, in our centre.

## 8 Access Arrangements and Special Considerations

This section of our Centre Policy outlines the approach our centre will take to provide students with appropriate access arrangements and take into account mitigating circumstances in particular instances.

### 8.1 Reasonable adjustments and mitigating circumstances (special consideration)

This section gives details of our approach to access arrangements and mitigating circumstances (special consideration).

- *Where students have agreed access arrangements or reasonable adjustments (for example a reader or scribe) we will 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 (i.e. during lockdown), we will consider this evidence carefully in relation to a student's performance in other assessments.*
- *Where illness or other personal circumstances might have affected a student at the time of the November 2020 Mocks / May 2021 assessments, we will take account of this when making grade 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](#)*

## 9 Addressing disruption/differential lost learning (DLL)

### **9.1 Addressing Disruption/Differentiated Lost Learning (DLL)**

This section gives details of our approach to address disruption or differentiated lost teaching.

- Teacher assessed grades will be determined based on evidence of the content that has been taught and assessed for each student.
- We are conscious students in years 11 (apart from two) have been taught the same content and that there has been substantial coverage of the specification in every subject.
- Students whose attendance at school has been disrupted have typically still been taught the same content as other students, via online teaching and learning.

## 10 Objectivity

### 10.1 Objectivity

This section gives a summary of the arrangements in place within our centre in relation to objectivity.

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

*Senior Leaders and Subject Leaders 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);*
- *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 and external standardisation process will help to ensure that there are different perspectives to the quality assurance process.*

*All teachers involved in assessment and grading decisions will receive training on Objectivity and Awarding.*

## II Recording decisions and retention of evidence and data

### II.1 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 teachers and subject leaders 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).*

## 12 Authenticating evidence

### 12.1 Authenticating evidence

This section of our Centre Policy details the mechanisms in place to ensure that teachers are confident in the authenticity of evidence, and the process for dealing with cases where evidence is not thought to be authentic.

- *Robust mechanisms will be in place 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, either within the centre or with external tutors.*
- *The principle means of ensuring assessment evidence is authentic is that most of our evidence is based on assessments conducted under examination conditions.*
- *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.*

## 13 Confidentiality, malpractice and conflicts of interest

### 13.1 Confidentiality

This section details the measures in place in our centre to maintain the confidentiality of grades, while sharing information regarding the range of evidence on which the grades will be based.

- *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.*
- *This sharing of evidence will be checked centrally, before it is released to students.*
- *Relevant details from this Policy, including requirements around sharing details of evidence and the confidentiality requirements, have been shared with parents/guardians.*

### 13.2 Malpractice

This section details the measures in place in our centre to prevent malpractice and, where that proves impossible, to handle cases in accordance with awarding organisation requirements.

- *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.*

### **13.3 Conflicts of Interest**

This section details our approach to addressing conflicts of interest, and how we will respond to such allegations.

- *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 to ensure reviews as part of the external QA process and appeals take account of potential conflicts of interest.*

## 14 Private candidates

### 14.1 Private Candidates

*This section details our approach to providing and quality assuring grades to Private Candidates.*

- *We have no private candidates at John O' Gaunt School.*

## 15 External Quality Assurance

### 15.1 External Quality Assurance

This section outlines the arrangements we have in place to ensure the relevant documentation and assessment evidence can be provided in a timely manner for the purposes of External Quality Assurance sampling, and that staff can be made available to respond to enquiries.

- *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 are based 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.*

## 16 Results

### 16.1 Results

*This section details our approach to the issue of results to students and the provision of advice and guidance.*

- *All staff involved have been made aware of the specific arrangements for the issue of GCSE results in Summer 2021.*

- 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 (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.
- Students and parents/carers will be made aware of arrangements for results days.

## 17 Appeals

### 17.1 Appeals

*This section details our approach to managing appeals, including Centre Reviews, and subsequent appeals to awarding organisations.*

- 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.
- All necessary staff will be briefed on the process for, and timing of, such reviews, and will be available to ensure their prompt and efficient handling.
- Students (and their parents/carers) will receive appropriate information on the appeals process and will be guided as to the necessary stages of appeal.
- Arrangements will be in place for the timely submission of appeals to awarding organisations.
- 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.