

Teacher Assessed Grades Policy

For A/AS Levels and GCSEs Summer 2021

Responsible Senior Manager: Vice Principal Students, Learning & Quality

Effective Date: May 2021

Related Policies: Teacher Assessed Grades Policy for Vocational Provision Summer 2021

Approved By: Senior Leadership

Next Review Date: None – policy valid summer 2021



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Foreword

Background:

Every centre is required to create a Centre Policy that reflects its individual circumstances. The JCQ pre-populated template has been utilised to devise this policy; with minor amendments to reflect HSDC practices.

This policy takes into account the guidance provided in the document: [JCQ Guidance on the determination-of-Grades-for-A/AS-Levels-and-GCSEs for Summer-2021](#)

1. Statement of intent:

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

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 make evidence-based decisions in line with Joint Council for Qualifications guidance ([hyperlink above](#)).
- 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 the process for communicating to candidates and their parents/carers how they will be assessed is clear, in order to give confidence.

2. Roles and Responsibilities:

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

Head of Centre

- Our Head of Centre, Mike Gaston, will 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 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.

College Leadership Team and Heads of Faculty

Our College Leadership Team and Heads of Faculty 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.

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- 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 Head of Faculty checklist is completed for each qualification that they are submitting. **See Appendix A.**

Teachers/Specialist Teachers

Our teachers & specialist 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.
- securely store and be able to retrieve sufficient evidence to justify their decisions.

Examinations Officer

Our Examinations Officer will:

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

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.

Training

- Teachers involved in determining grades in our centre will attend training to help achieve consistency and fairness to all students.
- Teachers will engage fully with all training and support that has been provided.
- We will provide mentoring from experienced teachers to NQTs and teachers less familiar with assessment.
- We will put in place additional internal reviews of teacher assessed grades for NQTs and other teachers as appropriate.

4. Use of Appropriate Evidence

This section of our Centre Policy indicates how our centre will give due regard to the section in the JCQ guidance entitled: *Guidance on grading for teachers*. <https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/JCQ-Guidance-on-the-Determination-of-Grades-for-A-AS-Levels-and-GCSEs-Summer-2021.pdf> (See page 20).

Use of Evidence

This section gives details in relation to our use of evidence: NEW voc basket - mention May banking.

- Teachers making judgements will have regard to the Ofqual types of evidence guidance:
 1. Student work produced in response to assessment materials normally provided by the exam board including past papers, and the groups of questions being provided to support evidence gathering this summer, or similar materials such as practice or sample papers.
 2. Non-exam assessment (NEA) work (often referred to as coursework), even if this has not been fully completed.
 3. Student work produced in centre-devised tasks that reflect the specification, that follow the same format as exam board materials and have been marked in a way that reflects exam board mark schemes. This can include substantial class or homework (including those that took place during remote learning), internal tests taken by pupils and mock exams taken over the course of study.
 4. Records of a student's capability and performance over the course of study in performance-based subjects such as music, drama and PE.
 5. Records of each student's standard of work over the course of study.
- Candidate evidence that was produced after 15th March 2021 used to determine teacher assessed grades will be retained and made available for the purposes of external quality assurance and appeals.
- Documentation relating to assessments prior to 15th March 2021 (this includes the recorded marks, assessment papers and mark schemes) will be available for the purposes of external quality assurance and appeals.
- 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 combine and/or remove elements of questions where, for example, a multi-part question includes a part which focuses on an element of the specification that has not been taught.

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

- We will ensure that the level of control under which an assessment was completed, for example, whether the evidence was produced under high control and under supervision or at home, taken into account by teachers so that they can factor in levels of control into their judgements when awarding a grade.
- Teachers will make a judgement that the work produced is the student's own.

- We will consider the limitations of assessing a student's performance when using assessments that have been completed more than once (or drafted and redrafted).
- We will consider the specification and assessment objective coverage of the assessment.

Determining Teacher Assessed Grades

This section of our Centre Policy outlines the approach our centre will take to awarding teacher assessed grades.

Awarding Teacher Assessed Grades Based on Evidence

- 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 Faculty.
- Any necessary variations for individual students will also be shared.

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

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:
 - Arriving at teacher assessed grades.
 - Marking of evidence
 - Reaching a holistic grading decision
 - Applying the use of grading support and documentation (See grade descriptors here:
<https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Summer-2021-Grade-Descriptors-A-AS-Levels.pdf>,
<https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Summer-2021-Grade-Descriptors-GCSE.pdf>)
- 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 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.
- 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.

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.

- We will compile 3-year trend information on the grades awarded to our students in past Summer exam series.
- 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 will be available on the Head of Faculty checklist. This commentary will be available for subsequent review during the QA process.

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.

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 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 OR we will take into account that access arrangements were not provided when making teacher assessment grading decisions.
- 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](#)

5. Addressing Disruption/Differential Lost Learning

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.

Objectivity

This section of our Centre Policy outlines the arrangements in place to ensure objectivity of decisions.

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

Senior Leaders will consider bias in teacher assessed grades based on trends from previous years.

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 students' 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 process will help to ensure that there are different perspectives to the quality assurance process.

6. Recording Decisions and Retention of Evidence and Data

This section of our Centre Policy outlines our arrangements to recording decisions and to retaining evidence and data.

- We will ensure that teachers and Heads of Faculty maintain records that show how the teacher assessed grades process operated, including internal standardisation records.
- We will ensure that we capture evidence of 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 organisations.

7. 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.

- Teachers will ensure that, to the best of their ability, they are able to confirm that the work being used as evidence is the student's own work.
- It is understood that awarding organisations will investigate instances where it appears evidence is not authentic.

8. Confidentiality, Malpractice and Conflicts of Interest

Confidentiality

This section of our Centre Policy outlines the measures in place to ensure the confidentiality of the grades our centre determines, and to make students aware of the range of evidence on which those 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**.
- Relevant details from this policy, including requirements around sharing details of evidence and the confidentiality requirements, have been shared with parents/guardians.

Malpractice

This section of our Centre Policy outlines the measures in place to prevent malpractice and other breaches of exam regulations, and to deal with such cases if they occur.

Reporting to Awarding Bodies will be required in the cases where students or parents apply undue pressure regarding Teacher Assessed Grades. This is considered as a form of malpractice and will be investigated by the Awarding Body.

- This policy is compliant with other relevant policies at HSDC.
- 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 keep appropriate records of decisions made and teacher assessed grades;
 - failure to engage as requested with awarding organisations during the External Quality Assurance and appeal stages.
- 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. https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Malpractice_20-21_v2-1.pdf

Conflicts of Interest

This section of our Centre Policy outlines the measures in place to address potential 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.

9. Private Candidates

This section of our Centre Policy outlines our approach to working with Private Candidates to arrive at appropriate grades.

- Our arrangements for assessing Private Candidates to arrive at appropriate grades are identical to the approaches utilised for internal candidates.
- Where it has been necessary to utilise different approaches, the **JCQ Guidance on Private Candidates** has been followed and any divergences from our approach for internal candidates have been recorded on the appropriate class/student documentation.

10. External Quality Assurance

This section of our Centre Policy outlines the arrangements in place to comply with awarding organisation arrangements for External Quality Assurance of teacher assessed grades in a timely and effective way.

- All staff involved have been made aware of the awarding organisation requirements for External Quality Assurance as set out in the **JCQ Guidance**. See here: <https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/JCQ-Guidance-on-the-Determination-of-Grades-for-A-AS-Levels-and-GCSEs-Summer-2021.pdf> (Page 13).
- All necessary records of decision-making in relation to determining grades have been properly kept and can be made available for review as required.
- Student assessment from 15th March 2021 on which decisions regarding the determination of grades has been retained and can be made available for review as required.
- Student assessments undertaken prior to 15th March 2021 will retain relevant materials such as mark records, assessment tasks and mark schemes.
- Staff 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.

11. Results

This section of our Centre Policy outlines our approach to the receipt and issue of results to students and the provision of necessary advice and guidance.

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 results in Summer 2021, including the issuing of A/AS 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 support for 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 days.

12. Appeals

This section of our Centre Policy outlines our approach to Appeals, to ensure that they are handled swiftly and effectively, and in line with JCQ requirements.

- 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**: <https://www.icq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/JCQ-Guidance-on-the-Determination-of-Grades-for-A-AS-Levels-and-GCSEs-Summer-2021.pdf> (See Page 49).
- 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.
- Students 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.

Appendix 1- Head of Faculty Checklist

The Head of Faculty must complete the following checklist/declaration before submitting subject outcomes for final internal standardisation, which will be undertaken by the College Leadership Team.

Statement	Declaration Y/N
1. Students' grades have been determined using only the evidence detailed in the subject's assessment record, including any variations for individual students.	
2. Where applicable, the students were given their approved access arrangements whilst producing the evidence contributing to the final grade and the access arrangements have been documented in the assessment record. Where access arrangements were not in place this was taken into account when formulating teacher assessed grades.	
3. Where applicable, mitigating circumstances (special consideration) that affected candidates in producing evidence that contributed to their grade was taken into account in determining candidates' grades according to the document JCQ Guidance on the determination of grades for A/AS Levels and GCSEs for summer 2021 , and this has been documented in the assessment record.	
4. The teacher has confirmed that the evidence is the candidates' own work and confirmed this on the assessment record.	
5. The grades for this year's cohort have been compared to cohorts from previous years when exams have taken place. Significant deviations are explained below.	
6. At departmental level, we have determined which evidence will be considered and the relative merits of each to be consistently applied across all candidates, where appropriate, by all teachers.	
7. At departmental level, the teaching team have considered the various sources of potential evidence against the criteria (including consistency of marking).	

8. Records have been retained detailing all staff involved in the process, work reviewed, judgements and any adjustments made at a Department level. These records are readily available.	
9. Consideration has been given to ensure decisions made are free from bias.	
10. The teacher assessed grades for this subject have been signed off as being accurate by the Head of Faculty and one other teacher within the department.	
11. Heads of Faculty have identified what programmes have reduced assessments based on awarding body guidance.	
12. Exams department to confirm reduced unit assessments with Awarding Organisations at point of submission of TAGs.	

Provide detail and justification where you have indicated N to any of the above:

Head of Faculty Department Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Second Teacher Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____