



**Policy:** Centre Policy for Determining Teacher Assessed Grades – Summer 2021

**Date:** 30 March 2021

**Person Responsible for policy:** Liz Lang, Deputy Head

**Authorised by:** Chiquita Henson, Head of Centre

**Reviewed by:** Submitted to the Exam Boards as part of their external quality assurance process

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## 1. Statement of Intent

Cirencester Deer Park School is required to provide teacher assessed grades for all pupils who were meant to sit formal qualifications in 2021, following the cancellation of GCSEs and A-Levels by the government.

This policy outlines how the school complies with the guidance provided by the Joint Council for Qualifications (<https://www.jcq.org.uk/summer-2021-arrangements/>).

The purpose of this policy is:

- 1.1 To ensure that teacher assessed grades are determined fairly, consistently, free from bias and effectively within and across faculties.
- 1.2 To ensure the operation of effective processes with clear guidelines and support for staff.
- 1.3 To ensure that all staff involved in the processes clearly understand their roles and responsibilities.
- 1.4 To support teachers, working as a faculty, to take evidence-based decisions in line with Joint Council for Qualifications guidance.
- 1.5 To ensure the consideration of historical centre data in the process, and the appropriate decision-making in respect of, teacher assessed grades.
- 1.6 To support a high standard of internal quality assurance in the allocation of teacher assessed grades.

- 1.7 To support our centre in meeting its obligations in relation to equality legislation.
- 1.8 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.
- 1.9 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 outlines the roles and responsibilities identified within our centre.

### **Head of Centre**

Our Head of Centre, Ms Chiquita Henson, will be responsible for approving our policy for determining teacher assessed grades. Our Head of Centre will:

- 2.1 ensure that clear roles and responsibilities of all staff are defined and has overall responsibility for Cirencester Deer Park School as an examinations' centre;
- 2.2 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;
- 2.3 ensure a robust internal quality assurance process has been produced and signed-off in advance of results being submitted.

### **Strategic Leadership Team and Heads of Faculty**

Our Strategic Leadership Team and Heads of Faculty will:

- 2.4 provide training and support to our other staff;
- 2.5 support the Head of Centre in the quality assurance of the final teacher assessed grades;
- 2.6 ensure an effective approach within and across faculties and authenticating the preliminary outcome from single teacher subjects;
- 2.7 be responsible for ensuring staff have a clear understanding of the internal and external quality assurance processes and their role within it;
- 2.8 ensure that all teachers within their faculty make consistent judgements about pupil evidence in deriving a grade;
- 2.9 ensure all staff conduct assessments under the appropriate levels of control with reference to guidance provided by the Joint Council for Qualifications;
- 2.10 ensure teachers have the information required to make accurate and fair judgments;
- 2.11 ensure that a Head of Faculty Checklist is completed for each qualification that they are submitting.

### **Teachers/ SENCo**

Our teachers and SENCo will:

- 2.12 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 pupil they have entered for a qualification;
- 2.13 ensure that the teacher assessed grade they assign to each pupil is a fair, valid and reliable reflection of the assessed evidence available for each pupil;
- 2.14 make judgements based on what each pupil has been taught and what they have been assessed on, as outlined in the section on grading in the main JCQ guidance;
- 2.15 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 pupils will also be recorded;
- 2.16 securely store and be able to retrieve sufficient evidence to justify their decisions.

## **Examinations Officer**

Our Examinations Officer will:

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

## **3. Training**

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

- 3.1 Teachers involved in determining grades in our centre will attend any centre-based training to help achieve consistency and fairness to all pupils.
- 3.2 Teachers will be involved in the moderation of assessment papers, as a form of professional development and training, with support and guidance from more experienced staff.
- 3.3 No single teacher, regardless of experience, will make grading decisions for pupils alone. Every grade decision will be reviewed at faculty level, with involvement from the Strategic Leadership Team throughout the process.
- 3.4 Teachers will engage fully with all training and support that has been provided by the Joint Council for Qualifications and the awarding organisations.

## **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 and teachers less familiar with assessment.

- 3.5 We will provide mentoring from experienced teachers to NQTs and teachers less familiar with assessment.
- 3.6 We will provide training and support with the moderation of assessment papers to NQT staff and staff with less experience in the delivery and assessment of GCSE qualifications.
- 3.7 We will put in place additional internal reviews of teacher assessed grades for NQTs and other teachers as appropriate.
- 3.8 No single teacher, regardless of experience, will make grading decisions for pupils alone. Every grade decision will be reviewed at faculty level, with involvement from the Strategic Leadership Team throughout the process.

## **4. Use of evidence**

This section gives details in relation to our use of evidence.

- 4.1 Teachers making judgements will have regard to the Ofqual Head of Centre guidance on recommended evidence, and further guidance provided by awarding organisations.
- 4.2 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.
- 4.3 We will be using pupil 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.
- 4.4 We will use non-exam assessment work (often referred to as coursework), even if this has not been fully completed, for example Art.
- 4.5 We will use pupil 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.
- 4.6 We will use formal internal assessments taken by pupils in March 2021 and May 2021.
- 4.7 We will use mock exams (pupils only sat English and Maths) taken in December 2020.

- 4.8 We will use records of a pupil's capability and performance over the course of study in performance-based subjects such as music, drama and PE. We will provide as much video and audio recorded evidence as possible when this form of evidence is used.
- 4.9 All Heads of Faculty will work with the Strategic Leadership Team to identify the evidence that will be used to determine a pupil's grade and the weighting given to each part of this evidence.

### **Additional Assessment Materials**

As a centre we have planned to assess pupils using as many 'complete' exam papers from previous series as possible. Where this is not possible we will ensure the following, when using Additional Assessment Materials provided by the exam board/s. We will use additional assessment materials to:

- 4.10 give pupils the opportunity to show what they know, understand or can do in an area of content that has been taught but not yet assessed;
- 4.11 give pupils an opportunity to show improvement, for example, to replace an existing piece of evidence. Consistency of judgement will be maintained between teachers or classes by giving everyone the same task to complete;
- 4.12 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:

- 4.13 We will consider the level of control under which an assessment was completed.
- 4.14 We will ensure that we are able to authenticate the work as the pupil's own, especially where that work was not completed within the school (this applies particularly to NEA work where some of this may have been completed outside of school).
- 4.15 Assessment papers will not be completed by pupils in anything other than High Control conditions. Evidence will not include assessments completed for homework/during remote learning.
- 4.16 We will consider the limitations of assessing a pupil's performance when using assessments that have been completed more than once, or drafted and redrafted.
- 4.17 We will consider the specification and assessment objective coverage of the assessment.
- 4.18 We will consider the depth and breadth of knowledge, understanding and skills assessed, especially higher order skills within individual assessments.

## **5. Awarding teacher assessed grades based on evidence**

- 5.1 Our teachers will determine grades based on evidence which is commensurate with the standard at which a pupil is performing, i.e. their demonstrated knowledge, understanding and skills across the content of the course they have been taught.
- 5.2 Our teachers will record how the evidence was used to arrive at a fair and objective grade, which is free from bias (See 'Objectivity' section of policy for more details).
- 5.3 All faculties will produce an Assessment Record for each subject cohort and Heads of Faculty will share this with their line manager (a member of the Strategic Leadership Team) and Liz Lang, Deputy Head, overseeing the awarding of grades (see 4.9). Any necessary variations for individual pupils will also be verified by line managers. (See 9.2)

## **6. Internal Quality Assurance**

Our centre takes the internal standardisation of teacher assessed grades, and the assessments that form these grades, very seriously. We will apply the things listed below to ensure consistency, fairness and objectivity of decisions.

- 6.1 We will ensure that all teachers involved in deriving teacher assessed grades read and understand this Centre Policy document.
- 6.2 In subjects where there is more than one teacher and/or class in the faculty, we will ensure that our centre carries out an internal standardisation process.
- 6.3 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
- 6.4 We will conduct internal standardisation across all grades.
- 6.5 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.
- 6.6 Where necessary, we will review and reflect on individual grading decisions to ensure alignment with the standards as outlined by our awarding organisation(s).
- 6.7 Where appropriate, we will amend individual grade decisions to ensure alignment with the standards as outlined by our awarding organisation(s).
- 6.8 Where there is only one teacher involved in marking assessments and determining grades, the output of this activity will be reviewed by Liz Lang, Deputy Head, in addition to the Head of Faculty and line manager for this subject.
- 6.9 Where there is only one teacher involved in marking assessments and determining grades, cross school moderation of assessment materials completed by pupils will be sought, where this is possible.
- 6.10 In respect of equality legislation, we will consider the range of evidence for pupils of different protected characteristics that are included in our internal standardisation.
- 6.11 Where pupils are dual registered and educated offsite (for example, under Hospital Education) we will work with the staff delivering education provision to the pupil/s concerned and will determine their grade using the evidence that they provide. We will require verification of the authenticity of the evidence provided. The final grading decision will sit with the Head of Centre in school.

## **7. Comparison of Teacher Assessed Grades to results for previous cohorts**

As part of our internal moderation process we will look at comparative data from the same qualifications taken by cohorts in recent previous years

- 7.1 We will compile information on the grades awarded to our pupils in past June series in which exams took place in 2017, 2018 and 2019, for English Language, English Literature and Maths.
- 7.2 We will compile information on the grades awarded to our pupils in past June series in which exams took place in 2018 and 2019 for all subjects other than English Language, English Literature and Maths.
- 7.3 We will consider the size of the cohorts from year to year.
- 7.4 We will consider the ability profile of the cohorts from year to year.
- 7.5 We will consider the stability of our centre's overall grade outcomes from year to year.
- 7.6 We will consider both subject and centre level variation in our outcomes during the internal quality assurance process.
- 7.7 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, address the reasons for this divergence. This commentary will be available for subsequent review during the QA process.

If our initial teacher assessed grades for a qualification are viewed as overly lenient or harsh compared to results in previous years

- 7.8 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.
- 7.9 We will bring together other data sources that will help to quality assure the grades we intend to award in 2021.
- 7.10 We will omit subjects that we no longer offer from the historical data.

## **8. Reasonable adjustments and mitigating circumstances (special consideration)**

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

- 8.1 Where pupils 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.
- 8.2 Where illness or other personal circumstances might have affected performance in assessments used in determining a pupil's standard of performance, we will take account of this when making judgements, in accordance with the usual guidelines provided by JCQ on the application of special consideration.
- 8.3 We will ensure all Heads of Faculty have read, understood and disseminated the relevant information to their faculties from the following document, in order that any possible cases needing consideration are raised with the Exams Officer: [JCQ – A guide to the special consideration process, with effect from 1 September 2020](#)
- 8.4 Decisions regarding special consideration for pupils will be administered centrally, by our Exams Officer, to ensure any special consideration is applied in the same way as it would have been in previous years. The process will be overseen by a member of the Strategic Leadership Team before any adjustments are applied.
- 8.5 As in previous years, not all pupils/parents who request Special Consideration will be granted it: the guidance provided by JCQ will steer our decisions regarding the application of Special Consideration.
- 8.6 Section 3.3 in the JCQ Guide for Special Consideration will be applied to cases that meet the criteria for the application of Special Consideration when adjusting pupil results/grades.
- 8.7 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 pupils in assessments.

## **9. Addressing Disruption/Differentiated Lost Learning (DLL)**

We are aware that there have been different disruptions to learning over the past 2 years and we will ensure that pupils are not disadvantaged as a result of this. We will ensure the following:

- 9.1 Teacher assessed grades will be determined based on evidence of the content that has been taught and assessed for each pupil.
- 9.2 Robust evidence for pupils who have missed formal assessments (in December, 2020, March 2021 and May 2021) will be found in alternative format/s in order to determine an accurate grade to award.

## **10. Objectivity**

As a centre, Staff will fulfil their duties and responsibilities in relation to relevant equality and disability legislation.

### **Senior Leaders, Heads of Faculty and the Head of Centre will consider:**

- 10.1 sources of unfairness and bias (situations/contexts, difficulty, presentation and format, language, conditions for assessment, marker preconceptions);
- 10.2 how to minimise bias in questions and marking and hidden forms of bias; and
- 10.3 bias in teacher assessed grades.

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

- 10.4 unconscious bias can skew judgements;
- 10.5 the evidence presented should be valued for its own merit as an indication of performance and attainment;
- 10.6 teacher assessed grades should not be influenced by candidates' positive or challenging personal circumstances, character, behaviour, appearance, socio-economic background, or protected characteristics;
- 10.7 unconscious bias is more likely to occur when quick opinions are formed.
- 10.8 As of March 2021, to ensure objectivity and remove conscious and unconscious bias:
  - pupils completing formal assessments (in March and May 2021) will not put their names on their assessment paper. Candidate numbers will be used instead, to anonymise assessment scripts;
  - Where there is more than one teacher for a subject assessment scripts will be randomly distributed for marking across the teaching team, again removing bias and supporting objectivity in the assessment process.

Our internal standardisation process, both at faculty level and centre level, will help to ensure that there are different perspectives to the quality assurance process.

## **11. Recording Decisions and Retention of Evidence and Data**

Our approach to recording decisions and retaining evidence and data is comprehensive and robust. We will:

- 11.1 ensure that teachers and Heads of Faculty's maintain records that show how the teacher assessed grades process operated, including the rationale for decisions in relation to individual marks/grades;
- 11.2 ensure that evidence is maintained across a variety of tasks to develop a holistic view of each pupil's demonstrated knowledge, understanding and skills in the areas of content taught;
- 11.3 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;
- 11.4 retain all assessment scripts from the March 2021 and May 2021 Internal Assessments. These will not be returned to the pupils after they have been marked by teachers, in order to preserve this evidence;
- 11.5 comply with our obligations regarding data protection legislation;
- 11.6 ensure that the grades accurately reflect the evidence submitted;
- 11.7 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**

We will ensure that, as a centre, we are confident in the authenticity of evidence used to determine pupil grades.

- 12.1 Robust mechanisms have been implemented at faculty and centre level. These include ensuring pupils complete internal assessments in high controlled conditions (the same as would be used for external examinations).
- 12.2 Faculties where NEA forms part of the course will implement the same procedures in order to ensure the authenticity of pupil work. Practical assessments (in subjects such as Food Preparation and Hygiene and Music Technology) will also be held, again in high control conditions, in order to ensure authenticity in the work produced by pupils.

Where we have concerns about the authenticity of evidence we will investigate this at centre level to determine whether the work has been completed by the pupil concerned.

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 (below) to support these determinations of authenticity.

AQA - [www.aqa.org.uk](http://www.aqa.org.uk)

Edexcel – [www.qualifications.pearson.com](http://www.qualifications.pearson.com)

OCR – [www.ocr.org.uk](http://www.ocr.org.uk)

Eduqas – [www.eduqas.co.uk](http://www.eduqas.co.uk)

NCFE – [www.ncfe.org.uk](http://www.ncfe.org.uk)

### **13. Confidentiality**

We will share with pupils and parents the range of evidence that each subject is using to determine a pupil's grade. Parents have been informed that no one teacher will be responsible for determining a pupil's grade, even if the teacher is the sole teacher for the course.

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

### **14. Malpractice**

As a centre we have a range of measures in place to prevent malpractice and, where that proves impossible, to handle cases in accordance with awarding organisation requirements.

- 14.1 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.
- 14.2 All staff involved have been made aware of these policies, and have received training in them as necessary.
- 14.3 Exam malpractice in internal assessments will be treated in the same way as an external exam, following the JCQ Suspected Malpractice Policy (see link below)
- 14.4 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 pupils;
  - failure to appropriately authenticate a pupil's work;
  - over direction of pupils in preparation for common assessments;



- allegations that centres submit grades not supported by evidence that they know to be inaccurate;
  - centres enter pupils 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.
- 14.5 The consequences of malpractice or maladministration as published in the JCQ guidance: [JQC Suspected Malpractice Policies and Procedures](#) and including the risk of a delay to pupils receiving their grades, up to, and including, removal of centre status have been outlined to all relevant staff.

## 15. Conflicts of Interest

We are very aware how important it is that we take a robust approach to addressing conflicts of interest.

- 15.1 To protect the integrity of assessments, all staff involved in the determination of grades must declare any conflict of interest such as relationships with pupils to our Head of Centre for further consideration.
- 15.2 Our Head of Centre will take appropriate action to manage any conflicts of interest arising with centre staff in accordance with the JCQ documents - [JQC Guidance 2020-2021](#)
- 15.3 Heads of Faculty will be made aware of the agreed appropriate action regarding any colleagues in their faculty with a conflict of interest, to ensure robust protocols and process remain.
- 15.4 We will also carefully consider the need to separate duties and personnel to ensure fairness in later process reviews and appeals.

## 16. External Quality Assurance

Our centre will ensure the relevant documentation and assessment evidence can be provided in a timely manner for the purposes of external quality assurance sampling. Staff will be made available to respond to enquiries from the awarding organisations or JQC/Ofqual.

- 16.1 All staff involved have been made aware of the awarding organisation requirements for External Quality Assurance as set out in the JCQ Guidance.
- 16.2 All necessary records of decision-making in relation to determining grades have been properly kept and can be made available for review as required.
- 16.3 All pupil evidence on which decisions regarding the determination of grades has been retained and can be made available for review as required.
- 16.4 Instances where pupil evidence used to decide teacher assessed grades is not available, for example where the material has previously been returned to pupils and cannot now be retrieved, will be clearly recorded on the appropriate documentation.
- 16.5 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.
- 16.6 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.
- 16.7 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.

## **17. Results**

We know how important the issuing of results to pupils, and the provision of advice and guidance for them is on results day. We have planned for the GCSE results day as outlined below.

- 17.1 All staff involved have been made aware of the specific arrangements for the issue of results in Summer 2021, including the issuing of GCSE results.
- 17.2 Arrangements will be made to ensure the necessary staffing, including the Head of Centre and other member of the Strategic Leadership Team, the Exams Office and additional support staff, to enable the efficient receipt and release of results to our pupils.
- 17.3 Arrangements will be in place for the provision of all necessary advice, guidance and support, including pastoral support, to pupils on receipt of their results.
- 17.4 Such guidance will include advice on the appeals process in place in 2021 (see below).
- 17.5 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.
- 17.6 Parents/guardians have been made aware of the revised date for the issuing of GCSE results day and they will be made aware of the specific arrangements for results day.

## **18. Appeals**

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

- 18.1 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.
- 18.2 Internal arrangements will be in place for the swift and effective handling of Centre Reviews in compliance with the requirements.
- 18.3 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.
- 18.4 Pupils have been appropriately guided as to the necessary stages of appeal.
- 18.5 Arrangements will be in place for the timely submission of appeals to awarding organisations, including any priority appeals, for example those on which college/sixth form places depend.
- 18.6 Arrangements will be in place to obtain the written consent of pupils to the initiation of appeals, and to record their awareness that grades may go down as well as up on appeal.
- 18.7 Appropriate information on the appeals process will be provided to parents/carers.