



Centre Policy for Grade Confirmation 2020/2021
HEART OF WORCESTERSHIRE COLLEGE

Statement of intent

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.*



Roles and responsibilities

Roles and Responsibilities

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

Head of Centre

- *The Head of Centre will be responsible for approving our policy for determining teacher assessed grades.*
- *The Head of Centre has overall responsibility for the Heart of Worcestershire College as an examinations centre and will ensure that clear roles and responsibilities of all staff are defined.*
- *The 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.*
- *The Head of Centre will ensure a robust internal quality assurance process has been produced and signed-off in advance of results being submitted.*

Senior Leadership Team

The Senior Leadership Team will:

- *provide training and support to staff.*
- *support the Head of Centre in the quality assurance of the final teacher assessed grades.*
- *ensure an effective approach within and across departments*
- *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 have a consistent approach 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 use evidence to make accurate and fair judgments.*

Curriculum Leaders, Managers, Directors

Curriculum Leaders, Managers, Directors 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 grades 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.*
- *keep a record of the process; that includes the nature of the assessment evidence being used, details of any adaptations or amendments made to standard practice and any other evidence that explains the determination of the final grades. Any necessary variations for individual candidates will also be recorded.*
- *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 grades and for managing the post-results services.*



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

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 determining grades will participate in course level training to help achieve consistency and fairness to all candidates.*
- *Teachers will engage fully with all training and support that has been provided by the Joint Council for Qualifications and the awarding organisations.*
- *Staff will access webinars provided by Awarding Bodies and other communications to ensure they stay informed of changes and adaptations.*
- *Members of the Senior Leadership Team, Quality Office and the Examinations Officer will provide training in advance of the grade presentation process to ensure there was consistency in making judgements, the gathering of evidence as well as the process for entering and confirming grades*
- *Advanced Quality Practitioners will provide bespoke and course specific support to each individual course lead.*
- *Course Teams will meet in advance of any group process to discuss the Awarding Body criteria requirements and to agree on evidence sources.*
- *Curriculum teams are placing particular attention on new teaching staff, who will be new to the current process and assessment principles generally.*



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*.

A. Use of evidence

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

- *Teachers making judgements will have regard to the Ofqual Head of Centre guidance on recommended evidence, and further guidance provided by awarding organisations.*
- *Candidate evidence used to determine grades, and associated documentation, will be retained, where available, and made available for the purposes of external quality assurance and appeals.*
- *We will, where necessary or appropriate, 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, as part of the evidence, when required.*
- *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, where relevant*
- *We will use substantial class-based activity evidence or homework (including work that took place during remote learning), as part of the range of evidence to draw from.*
- *We will use internal tests.*
- *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 provide further detail in the following areas:

Additional Assessment Materials, will be used when necessary in the following areas;

- *We will use additional assessment materials to give candidates the opportunity to show what they know, understand or can do in an area of content that has been taught but not yet assessed, where necessary.*
- *We will use additional assessment materials to give candidates 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 teachers or classes by giving everyone the same task to complete.*



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

- *We will take into account 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.*
- *We will seek to authenticate the work as the student's own, especially where that work was not completed within the school or college.*
- *We will consider the specification and assessment objectives coverage of each assessment.*
- *We will be mindful of the depth and breadth of knowledge, understanding and skills assessed, especially higher order skills within individual assessments.*



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

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.*
- *Set timeframes will provide a framework for staff and students on what needs to be completed by when to meet set deadlines. Once all the evidence is in, the team will begin the process of confirming grades.*
- *Curriculum Teams will meet to review the evidence available, where necessary or suitable they will employ the appropriate Q-TAG, Ext Circumstance or other process approved by the Awarding Body to enable them to make a judgement on levels of attainment*
- *These will take place through Grade Presentation Boards, where contributions from the whole team will be included. The College's Quality Nominee's from this process will attend these Boards to provide oversight of the process.*
- *Our teachers will use this evidence to arrive at a fair and objective grade, which is free from bias.*



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

Internal quality assurance

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

- *We will ensure that staff involved in the process for concluding grades, reads and applies this Centre Policy document.*
- *The College's existing quality assurance processes, will continue to monitor Moderation and standardisation through this process.*
- *We will ensure that all teachers are provided with training and support to ensure they take a consistent approach to:*
 - *Arriving grades*
 - *Marking of evidence*
 - *Reaching a holistic grading decision*
 - *Applying the use of awarding body documentation*
- *Where necessary, we will review and reflect on individual grading decisions to ensure alignment with the standards as outlined by our awarding organisation(s).*
- *Where appropriate, we will amend individual grade decisions to ensure alignment with the standards as outlined by our awarding organisation(s).*



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.

Comparison of Teacher Assessed Grades to results for previous cohorts

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 candidates 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.*
- *In the event of significant divergence from the qualification profiles attained in previous examined years, we will gather succinct narratives on the outcomes of the review, which address the reasons for this divergence. This commentary will be available for subsequent review during the QA process.*

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

- *We will use the process as set out above, to confirm the context and background to any review on proposed grades. This will include compiling historical data over three years and giving appropriate regard to changes in the nature of candidates starting points, and any quality improvement processes.*
- *We will bring together other information that will help to further assure the suitability of proposed grades in 2021.*

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 examine any change in the choice of curriculum being assessed.*



Access Arrangements and Special Considerations

This section of our Centre Policy outlines the approach our centre will take to provide candidates 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 candidates 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 candidates in assessments.*
- *To assist with this and ensure consistency in the application of Special Consideration, we will provide all teachers and curriculum leads with access to - [JCQ – A guide to the special consideration process, with effect from 1 September 2020](#)*



Addressing disruption/differential lost learning (DLL)

B. 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.
- Where necessary and appropriate, curriculum teams will make changes to assessment plans to accommodate these principles.



Objectivity

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

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, Heads of Department and Centre will consider:

- *the use of evidence sources to reduce or overcome any potential unfairness and bias (situations/contexts, difficulty, presentation and format, language, conditions for assessment, marker preconceptions);*
- *Quality Nominees will attend and monitor the team-based Presentation Boards to see the process in action and maintain a keen eye for any sense of subjectivity in the process*

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;*
- *grade decisions should not be influenced by candidates' positive or challenging personal circumstances, character, behaviour, appearance, socio-economic background, or protected characteristics;*



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.

C. 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 Heads of Departments curriculum teams maintain records that show how the grading process operated, including the rationale for decisions in relation to individual marks/grades.*
- *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, where available, is retained electronically or on paper in a secure centre-based system that can be readily shared with our awarding organisation(s).*



Authenticating evidence

D. 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, including the use of electronic plagiarism checking software and the common practice of moderation, will be in place to ensure that teachers are confident that work used as evidence is the candidates' own*
- *Actions to substantiate that no inappropriate levels of support have been given to candidates to complete assessments, either within the centre or externally.*
- *We will follow all guidance provided by awarding organisations to support these determinations of authenticity.*



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 candidates aware of the range of evidence on which those grades will be based.

A. 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 candidates' 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.

B. 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 candidates;*
 - *failure to appropriately authenticate a student's work;*
 - *over direction of candidates in preparation for common assessments;*



- *allegations that centres submit grades not supported by evidence that they know to be inaccurate;*
- *centres enter candidates 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 candidates receiving their grades, up to, and including, removal of centre status have been outlined to all relevant staff.*
- *Staff are aware of how to identify, notify and deal with cases where there are questions of authenticity.*

Conflicts of Interest

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

C. 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 using the Register of Interest on the How College portal.*
- *The 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.*



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.

A. 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.*
- *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 candidates and cannot now be retrieved, will have assessment records to show the assessment decision on that piece*
- *All staff involved have been briefed on the possibility of interaction with awarding organisations during the different stages of the External Quality Assurance process and can respond promptly and fully to enquiries, including attendance at Virtual Visits should this prove necessary.*
- *Arrangements are in place to respond fully and promptly to any additional requirements/reviews that may be identified as a result of the External Quality Assurance process.*
- *Staff have been made aware that a failure to respond fully and effectively to such additional requirements may result in further action by the awarding organisations, including the withholding of results.*

Results

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

A. Results

This section details our approach to the issue of results to candidates 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.*
- *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 candidates.*
- *Arrangements will be in place for the provision of all necessary advice, guidance and support, including pastoral support, to candidates 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.*



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.

A. 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** and all applicable awarding bodies*
- *Internal arrangements will be in place for the swift and effective handling of Centre Reviews in compliance with the requirements.*
- *All necessary staff have been briefed on the process for, and timing of, such reviews, and will be available to ensure their prompt and efficient handling.*
- *Learners 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 candidates to the initiation of appeals, and to record their awareness that grades may go down as well as up on appeal.*
- *Guidance and information on the appeals process will be provided to candidates*