

Centre Policy for Determining Teacher Assessed Grades – Summer 2021

Sir John Deane's Sixth Form College

Centre Number: 40417

1. Statement of intent

The purpose of this policy is:

- to ensure that the teacher assessed grading system is one which is fair, consistent, free from bias, has integrity, makes reasonable adjustments, and ensures that students are only assessed on what they have studied.
- to ensure this consistency of approach is both within and across subjects.
- to ensure decisions made are evidence based and reflect the student's standard of performance in terms of their knowledge, skills and understanding.
- to ensure processes and decision making are in alignment with the Joint Council for Qualifications' guidance, and all other requirements set out by the Department for Education, Ofqual and awarding organisations.
- that teachers involved clearly understand their roles and responsibilities, with clear guidelines, processes and support.
- to ensure that there is a high standard of internal quality assurance throughout the whole process, led by the senior leadership team.
- to support the college in meeting its obligations in relation to equality legislation.
- to ensure that as part of the teacher assessed grade awarding there is appropriate consideration of historical results.
- to ensure there is effective and clear communication of the process and relevant evidence with students and parents, as appropriate, throughout the process.

2. Roles and responsibilities

Head of Centre

- Miss Kirkwood, Principal (Head of Centre) is responsible for this Centre Policy and has approved it.
- The Head of Centre has overall responsibility for Sir John Deane's Sixth Form college as an examinations centre and ensures that teachers and support staff have clear roles and responsibilities in the teacher assessed grading process.
- The Head of Centre will confirm that teacher assessed grading decisions represent appropriate academic judgement by teachers and that appropriate processes are in place to ensure that these decisions are in alignment with the guidance on standards provided by awarding organisations.

- The Head of Centre will ensure that a robust internal quality assurance process is in place and signed-off in advance of results being submitted.

Senior Leadership Team and Heads of Department will:

- throughout the teacher assessed grading process provide training and guidance to teachers and support staff as appropriate.
- support the Head of Centre and fully participate in internal quality assurance conducted throughout the process of teacher assessed grading.
- ensure an effective approach both within and across departments throughout the process including the final teacher assessed grade awarding decisions and that these processes have been followed.
- be responsible for ensuring teachers and support staff have a clear understanding of both the internal and external quality assurance processes and their roles within these.
- ensure that all teachers within their department make consistent holistic judgements about student evidence in deriving a grade.
- ensure that all teacher assessments have been conducted under appropriate levels of control with reference to guidance provided by the Joint Council of Qualifications.
- ensure that teachers have the appropriate information required to make accurate and fair judgements for teacher assessed final grades.
- ensure that each Head of Department completes the *Teacher Assessed Grade Checklist* for each subject in their department.

Teachers and relevant support staff 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 awarded to each student is a fair, valid and reliable reflection of assessment evidence available for each student reflecting the standard of performance of a student in terms of their knowledge, skills and understanding.
- make judgements based on what each student has been taught and what they have been assessed on, as outlined in the main Joint Council for Qualifications guidance.
- maintain an appropriate *Assessment Record* for each subject's cohort which includes reference to the nature of assessment evidence used, the level of control for assessments considered and any other evidence that explains the determination of the final teacher assessed grades. This is to include any variation for individual students.
- securely store and be able to retrieve sufficient evidence to justify their decisions.

Examinations Officer will:

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

3. Training

- Teachers involved in determining grades in the college will engage fully with centre-based training to help achieve consistency and fairness to all students.
- Teachers will engage fully with training and support that has been provided by the Joint Council for Qualifications and awarding organisations.

4. Support for newly qualified teachers and teachers less familiar with assessment

- We will provide appropriate mentoring and guidance from experienced teachers, including Heads of Department, to NQTs and teachers less familiar with teaching Year 13 and final year assessments.

5. Use of Evidence

- The centre has identified 4 key assessments to be considered by teachers in making a holistic grade decision. Two assessments were conducted remotely, invigilated over Microsoft Teams, with cameras on, under timed conditions and closed book, during the national lockdown in January and February (medium control). A further two assessments will be conducted in the college in April and May, and invigilated by teachers, closed book and be under timed conditions (high control). Of the two assessments conducted remotely, the highest assessment result will be carried forward for inclusion as evidence. Therefore, teacher assessed grading will be a holistic decision based on the consideration of the performance of students over 3 teacher invigilated assessments.
- In individual cases where any of the 4 key assessments were not able to be taken, the college will use previous assessment results as appropriate to reflect the process as above to ensure a sufficient evidence base is being considered.
- For subjects with non-examined assessment, this will be marked, even if not complete, and be used to inform the holistic teacher assessed grading decision.
- Candidate evidence from the last 3 scheduled assessments, which will include the April and May in-college teacher invigilated assessments will be retained for the purposes of external quality assurance and appeals.
- Teacher assessments are all constructed in line with the specification and awarding organisation formats and question structures, and all are marked in accordance with awarding organisation marking materials and guidance and therefore appropriate consideration is made of both the specification and assessment objectives in the assessments used.

- The 4 key assessments have been designed to cover an appropriate range of topics, skills and question types. Only material that has been taught will be included in the teacher invigilated assessments.
- We will ensure that we authenticate the work as the student's own.
- In a case where the results from the medium controlled assessment is judged to be significantly out-of-line with the high control assessments, and in accordance with Joint Council of Qualifications guidance, this will be investigated and may result in the grade being discounted. In such circumstances the student will be given another opportunity to complete a different assessment under high control conditions.

6. Awarding teacher assessed grades based on evidence

- The teachers will determine grades based on evidence which is commensurate with the standard at which a student is performing in terms of their demonstrated knowledge, understanding and skills across the range of content they have been taught.
- The teachers will identify the evidence used to arrive at a fair and objective grade, free from bias.
- The teachers will produce an *Assessment Record* for each subject cohort and include any variations for individual students.

7. Internal quality assurance

- We will ensure that all teachers involved in deriving teacher assessed grades read and understand this Centre Policy document.
- In all subjects there will be formal marking moderation and standardisation meetings after the completion of each of the 4 key assessments, to ensure consistency in marking by teachers and across the subject. Teachers will use appropriate mark schemes and awarding organisation support materials. In single teacher subjects, the Head of Department or designated senior leader will support the teacher to quality assure the consistency in marking.
- All subjects had their assessment plan for the 4 key assessments approved by the Senior Leadership team to ensure a suitable range of topic coverage, skill assessment, question type and alignment with awarding organisation materials.
- We will ensure that the *Assessment Record* will form the basis for internal standardisation and discussion across teachers to agree the awarding of teacher assessed grades.
- For each of the 4 key assessments, further quality assurance will be applied by the senior leadership team in meetings with each Head of Department to ensure the appropriate application of mark schemes and that grade profiles are in approximate alignment to those from the previous examination cohort.
- There will be appropriate training to support leaders and teachers in determining the final grade decision to ensure they take a consistent approach to:
 - arriving at teacher assessed grades

- applying the use of evidence and awarding organisation support materials
- reaching a holistic decision
- Where there is a single teacher involved in the marking of assessments and determining grades, then the teacher will be supported and these will be reviewed by the appropriate Head of Department or designated senior leader.
- Where necessary, we will review and reflect on individual grading decisions to ensure alignment with the standards as outlined by the awarding organisations.
- There will be internal standardisation of grade awarding at both a subject level and Senior Leadership Level. This will include, in respect of equality legislation, the range of evidence for students of different protected characteristics. Where appropriate, amendments to individual grade decisions will be made to ensure alignment with the standards outlined by awarding organisations.

8. Comparison of teacher assessed grades to results for previous cohorts

- The college has ensured both an extremely consistent and outstanding A level performance over the past 3 years (2017, 2018 and 2019), earning an ALPs grade 2 (top 10 % of all A level providers) for each year. The college is an extremely high achieving centre with a Level 3 Value Added score of +0.53 in 2019, placing the college in the top 1 % of all 16-18 A level state and private sector providers. The overall college cohort and subject cohort sizes have also been very stable over the same time period. Therefore, each subject will consider the grade profile of the examination cohort from 2019 when awarding the teacher assessed grade profile.
- The college also has a cohort significantly better qualified than the national average, due to oversubscription. The Year 13 cohort of 2021 is significantly better qualified than students from 2017, 2018 and 2019. The average GCSE score per A level entry has risen significantly from 6.20 to 6.61 in comparison to the 2019 cohort, with a substantial growth in higher qualified A level students. This has been considered in subject level variation in assessment outcomes, and will be considered where appropriate in final grade awarding.
- We will prepare a succinct narrative on the outcomes of the review against historic data where final grade profiles significantly differ to the 2019 profile.

9. Reasonable adjustments and mitigating circumstances (special consideration)

- Where students have agreed access arrangements or reasonable adjustments in place we have and will continue to make every effort to ensure that these arrangements are in place when assessments have been and are being taken.
- Where a temporary illness or other personal circumstances might have affected performance in an assessment(s) used in determining a student's standard of performance, we will take account of this when making judgements. This will be recorded as part of the *Assessment Record*.

- To ensure consistency in the application of Special Consideration, we will ensure all teachers have read and understood the document: [*A guide to the special consideration process with effect from 1st September \(Joint Council for Qualifications \)*](#)

10. Addressing disruption / differentiated lost learning

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

11. Objectivity

- Senior Leaders, Heads of Department and the Head of Centre will consider:
 - sources of unfairness and bias (situations/contexts, difficulty, presentation and format, language, conditions for assessment, marker preconceptions);
 - how to minimise bias in questions and marking and hidden forms of bias); and
 - bias in teacher assessed grades.
- To ensure objectivity all leaders and teachers 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
 - During the internal standardisation processes of assessment moderation and final grade awarding the importance of objectivity will be appropriately considered.

12. Recording decisions and retention of evidence and data

- We will ensure that teachers and Heads of Department maintain records of the teachers assessed grading process, including the evidence used to develop a holistic view of each student's demonstrated knowledge, understanding and skills in the areas of the content taught.
- We will put into place recording requirements of 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 the actual student assessments used as evidence for the last 3 of the 4 key assessments is retained electronically or in paper, along with marks and grades for all key assessments in a secure college-based system that can be readily shared with any awarding organisation. This also applies to non-examined assessment.

13. Authenticating evidence

- Each of the 4 key assessments were invigilated under timed conditions and closed book. The first 2 assessments were conducted during lockdown3 via Microsoft Teams with cameras on, and were invigilated by a teacher during normal lesson time (medium control).
- The last 2 assessments were each conducted in a two day test window in the college, arranged by teaching block, invigilated by teachers under timed conditions and closed book (high control).
- In a case where the results from the medium controlled assessment is judged to be significantly out-of-line with the high control assessments, and in accordance with Joint Council of Qualifications guidance, this will be investigated and may result in the grade being discounted. In such circumstances the student will be given another opportunity to complete a different assessment under high control conditions.

14. Confidentiality

- All leaders, teachers and support staff have been made aware of the need to maintain the confidentiality of teacher assessed grades.
- All leaders and 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 grade decisions remain confidential.
- Relevant details from this Policy, including requirements around sharing of details of evidence and the confidentiality requirements, have been shared with parents/ guardians.

15. Malpractice

- All staff 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 we know to be inaccurate
- failure to keep appropriate records of decisions made and teacher assessed grades
- centres enter students who were not originally intending to certificate a grade in the Summer 2021 series
- failure to engage appropriate records of decisions made and teacher assessed grades
- The consequence of malpractice or maladministration as published in the JCQ guidance: [JCQ Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures](#) and include a risk of a delay to students receiving grades, up to, and including, removal of centre status have been outlined to all relevant staff.

16. Conflicts of interest

- To protect the integrity of assessments, all relevant staff involved have been asked to declare any conflict of interest such as relationships with students to our Head of Centre for further consideration.
- The Head of Centre has taken appropriate action to manage any conflicts of interest arising with college staff in accordance with the Joint Council for Qualifications document: [General Regulations for Approved Centres, 1st September 2020 to 31st August 2021](#)

17. Private Candidates

- The college's approach to private candidates is similar to that of internal candidates.
- All private candidates were former students of the college.
- All private candidates are being asked to complete the same 4 key assessments but in two sittings, invigilated, under timed conditions and closed book (high control). Assessment 1 + 2 are to be taken consecutively, and then on a separate occasion assessment 3 + 4 are to be taken consecutively.
- In-line with internal candidates, broad guidance has been given as to the assessments to be taken.
- No non-examination assessment will be considered.
- All assessments will be marked to the same standard as those from internal candidates and marks and grades awarded accordingly.
- Teachers will use a holistic judgement based on the best 3 out of the 4 assessments.
- The grades from private candidates will not be considered when the college considers its overall grade profile for each subject.

18. External Quality Assurance

- All staff involved have been made aware of the awarding organisation requirements for External Quality Assurance as set out in the Joint Council for Qualifications guidance
- All student evidence from the last 3 key assessments on which decisions regarding the determination of grades has been retained and can be made available for review as required as will any non-examined assessment as appropriate.
- All subject records and data in relation to the determination of grades have been properly kept and can be made available for review as required.
- In cases where the student evidence is not available, as this may refer to earlier material previously returned to students and cannot be retrieved is clearly recorded in the subject records.
- All staff have been briefed on the possibility of interaction with awarding organisations during the different stages of the external quality assurance process and suitable college representatives can respond promptly and fully to enquiries, including attendance at virtual visits if required.
- Arrangements are in place for the college to be able to respond fully and promptly to any additional requirements / reviews that may be identified as a result of the external quality assurance process.
- Staff have been made aware that a failure to respond fully and effectively to such additional requirements may result in further action by the awarding organisations, including the withholding of results.

19. Results

- All staff involved have been made aware of the specific arrangements for the issue of results in Summer 2021, including the issuing of A level 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 students.
- Arrangements will be in place for the provision of all necessary advice, guidance and support, including pastoral support, to students on receipt of their results.
- Such guidance will include advice on the appeals process in place in 2021.
- Appropriate staff will be available to respond promptly to any requests for information from awarding organisations, for example regarding missing or incomplete results, to enable such issues to be swiftly resolved.
- Parents/guardians will be made aware of arrangements for results days.

20. Appeals

- All staff involved have been made aware of the arrangements for, and the requirements of, appeals in Summer 2021, as set out in the Joint Council of Qualifications guidance.
- Internal arrangements will be in place for the 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.
- 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 students and parents/guardians in the event of raising a query.