

HELSTON COMMUNITY COLLEGE

ASPIRATION ▪ AMBITION ▪ ACHIEVEMENT



Centre Policy – Helston Community College

FOR A/AS LEVELS AND GCSES FOR SUMMER 2021

Centre Policy for determining teacher assessed grades – summer 2021 Helston Community College

Statement of intent

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

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

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

Roles and Responsibilities

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

Head of Centre

- Our Head of Centre, Mr W Jenkins, 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.

Senior Leadership Team, Heads of Faculty and Subject Leaders

Our Senior Leadership Team, predominantly Ms P Martin, Mrs J Hart and Mr D Dudley, Heads of Faculty and Subject Leaders will:

- Work together to produce an *Evidence Grid* for each qualification, which identifies the evidence that will be considered for grading purposes;
- provide training and support to our other staff;
- support the Head of Centre in the quality assurance of the final teacher assessed grades;
- ensure an effective approach within and across departments and authenticating the preliminary outcome from single teacher subjects;
- be responsible for ensuring staff have a clear understanding of the internal and external quality assurance processes and their role within it;
- ensure that all teachers within their department make consistent judgements about student evidence in deriving a grade;
- ensure all staff conduct assessments under the appropriate levels of control with reference to guidance provided by the Joint Council for Qualifications;
- ensure teachers have the information required to make accurate and fair judgments;
- produce an *Assessment Record* for each subject cohort, that references the *Evidence Grid*, and explains how the evidence should be selected and/or weighted when determining the final teacher assessed grades;
- ensure that a *Subject Leader Checklist* is completed for each qualification that they are submitting.

Teachers and SENCo

Our teachers and SENCo, Mr E McFadden, 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;
- record a commentary in an *Evidence Variations* form for individual students where variations from the *Assessment Record* guidelines have been deemed appropriate, due to mitigating circumstances for example;
- securely store and be able to retrieve sufficient evidence to justify their decisions.

Examinations Officer

Our Examinations Officer, Ms H-J Varker, will:

- put a timetable together for May terminal assessments and ensure that they are carried out under examination conditions;
- liaise with our SENCo to ensure that appropriate access arrangements or reasonable adjustments are catered for;
- be responsible for the administration of our final teacher assessed 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 in our centre will attend any centre-based and subject-based training to help achieve consistency and fairness to all students.
- Teachers will engage fully with all training and support that has been provided by the Joint Council for Qualifications and the awarding organisations.

Support for Recently Qualified Teachers and teachers less familiar with assessment

This section provides details of our approach to training, support and guidance for recently qualified teachers and teachers less familiar with assessment. We have no NQTs this year.

- For the vast majority of terminal assessments we will use experienced teachers for marking scripts.
- We will provide mentoring from experienced teachers to Recently Qualified Teachers and teachers less familiar with assessment when they are the main assessor.
- We will put in place additional internal reviews of teacher assessed grades for RQTs and other teachers as appropriate.

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.
- 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.
- Where candidate evidence completed before 24th March 2021 is no longer available, appropriate records should be included instead. For example, where mock exam scripts were returned to students for feedback, a copy of the mock exam paper and the grade boundaries used should be included alongside a record of the mark a student achieved.
- We will be using student work produced in response to assessment materials provided by our awarding organisation(s), including past papers or similar materials such as practice or sample papers.
- We will use non-exam assessment work where applicable, even if this has not been fully completed.
- 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.
- We will use substantial class or homework (including work that took place during remote learning if we are confident that it is the student's own work).
- We will use internal tests taken by students in class under typical test conditions with teacher supervision.
- We will use mock exams taken over the course of study under formal examination conditions.
- We will use terminal assessments in May, which will be based on past papers, to support consistency of judgement between teachers or classes by giving everyone the same test to complete at the same time under examination conditions.
- We will use records of a student's performance over the course of study in subjects such as music and drama.

We provide further detail in the following areas:

Additional Assessment Materials

- We will use additional assessment materials provided by exam boards to fill a gap in students' evidence, where it is deemed necessary in order to reach a valid judgement of performance.
- If we choose to use these materials, 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 hasn't been taught.

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

- We will consider the level of control under which an assessment was completed, for example, whether the evidence was produced under high control and under supervision or at home. The terminal assessments carried out in May will be under high control.
- We will ensure that we are able to authenticate the work as the student's own, especially where that work was not completed within the college.
- 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, where this is not a skill being assessed.
- We will consider the specification and assessment objective coverage of the assessment.
- We will consider the depth and breadth of knowledge, understanding and skills assessed, especially higher order skills within individual assessments.

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 previously identified 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 Subject Leaders will provide clear guidance to teachers to assist them with using the range of evidence consistently to produce their final holistic grades. The methodology will be recorded in the *Assessment Record*.
- For each qualification we will record how the evidence was used to arrive at a fair and objective grade, which is free from bias.
- Systems will be put into place to standardise marking and minimise any opportunities for bias, such as using anonymised scripts for terminal assessments and single markers for a whole cohort, who mark a complete script or specific questions.
- Our teachers will add commentary to the *Evidence Variations* form for each subject cohort where variations from the *Assessment Record* guidelines have been deemed necessary for individual students, due to mitigating circumstances for example.

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 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
- 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 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).
- Where there is only one teacher involved in marking assessments and determining grades, then the output of this activity will be reviewed by an appropriate member of staff within the centre.
 - This will be an experienced middle leader from within the same faculty
 - or a member of SLT
- 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.

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 students in past June series in which exams took place (e.g. 2017 - 2019).
- We will consider the size of our cohort and their prior attainment from year to year.
- We will consider the stability of our centre's overall grade outcomes from year to year and the impact of the College Development Plan.
- 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, in the event of significant divergence from the qualifications-levels profiles attained in previous examined years, 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 compile historical data giving appropriate regard to potential mixtures of A*-G and 9-1 grades in GCSEs. A substantial amount of work was done on this last year.
- We will bring together other data sources, such as prior attainment, that will help to quality assure the grades we intend to award in 2021.
- Terminal assessment grade boundaries will be determined centrally with the support of Subject Leaders and will be based on historical grade boundaries and exemplification standards for each qualification. This should reduce the risk of overly lenient or harsh grading by teachers.
- If there is too much deviation between the initial teacher assessed grades and the expected profile of grades, a meeting will take place between the teacher, Subject Leader or Head of Faculty and a Senior Leader to determine whether the evidence available justifies a deviation from historical performance. A commentary will be produced, stored and made available for external review if we believe a deviation is justified.

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 take into account past students who may have missed examinations for significant reasons, due to health and wellbeing issues for example, and have skewed historical data at individual subject or centre level. This will be recorded in our commentary if applicable.

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 it has been identified that an assessment has taken place without an agreed reasonable adjustment or access arrangement, we will adjust the weighting of that piece of evidence or obtain alternative evidence if deemed necessary to reach a fair outcome.
- We will gather and validate information from students who suggest that they have experienced appropriate mitigating circumstances during assessment periods. Evidence will be cross referenced with each student's record.
- Where illness or other significant personal circumstances might have affected performance in assessments which are listed in the *Assessment Record*, we will take account of this when making judgements.
- We will record on the *Evidence Variations* form, which supplements 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 adopt a centralised approach, led by Senior Leaders, Heads of Faculty and our Examinations Manager. These nominated staff will be required to read: [JCQ – A guide to the special consideration process, with effect from 1 September 2020](#)

Addressing disruption/differential lost learning (DLL)

B. Addressing Disruption/Differential 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.
- Additional opportunities will be provided wherever possible for a student to complete assessments that have been missed in the May assessment window.

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.

We will share the Ofqual document 'Information for centres about making objective judgements', which is designed to help teachers make those judgements as objectively as possible, to promote fairness and minimise bias. This will assist staff in fulfilling their duties and responsibilities in relation to relevant equality and disability legislation.

Senior Leaders, Subject Leaders and our SENCo will consider:

- processes that will lead to objective judgements based on evidence
- potential sources of unfairness and bias, for example, variation in contexts, conditions for assessment, marker preconceptions;
- how to minimise the risk of bias in teacher assessed grades, including hidden forms of bias;

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

- unconscious bias can skew judgement s;
- 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;
- dialogue with others can support effective reflection and review and help minimise bias. It can be used to check that judgements are evidence-based, to challenge any possible biases and to review any other evidence that may identify possible bias.

Our internal standardisation process will help to ensure that there are different perspectives to the quality assurance process, including moderating and reviewing judgements with others.

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 Subject Leaders maintain records that show how the teacher assessed grades process operated, including the rationale for decisions in relation to individual grades.
- We will ensure that the evidence enables teachers to develop a holistic view of each student's demonstrated knowledge, understanding and skills in the areas of content taught.
- We will put in place recording requirements for the various stages of the process to ensure the accurate and secure retention of the evidence used to make decisions.
- We will comply with our obligations regarding data protection legislation.
- We will ensure that the grades accurately reflect the evidence submitted.
- We will ensure that evidence is retained electronically or on paper in a secure centre-based system that can be readily shared with our awarding organisation(s).

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, will be in place to ensure that teachers are confident that work used as evidence is the students' own and that no inappropriate levels of support have been given to students to complete it, either within the centre or with external tutors. For example, larger weighting given to evidence that was produced under examination conditions, plagiarism checks, comparison of student's work with typical classroom performance e.g. changes in writing style.
- Gathering signed *Candidate Authenticity* forms from students which indicates the potential consequences of plagiarism, collusion or other forms of malpractice.
- It is understood that awarding organisations will investigate instances where it appears evidence is not authentic. We will follow all guidance provided by awarding organisations to support these determinations of authenticity.

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.

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 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.

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. A new policy has been created for this purpose: *Malpractice, Maladministration and Conflict of Interest Policy 2021*
- All staff involved have been made aware of this new policy, and have received relevant training as necessary.
- All staff involved have been made aware of the specific types of malpractice which may affect the Summer 2021 series including:
 - breaches of internal security;
 - deception;
 - improper assistance to students;
 - failure to appropriately authenticate a student's work;
 - over direction of students in preparation for common assessments;

- allegations that centres submit grades not supported by evidence that they know to be inaccurate;
 - centres enter students who were not originally intending to certificate a grade in the Summer 2021 series;
 - failure to engage as requested with awarding organisations during the External Quality Assurance and appeal stages; and
 - failure to keep appropriate records of decisions made and teacher assessed grades.
- The consequences of malpractice or maladministration as published in the JCQ guidance: [JCQ Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures](#) and including the risk of a delay to students receiving their grades, up to, and including, removal of centre status have been outlined to all relevant staff.

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 such as relationships with students to our Head of Centre for further consideration.
- Our Head of Centre will take appropriate action to manage any conflicts of interest arising with centre staff in accordance with the JCQ documents - [General Regulations for Approved Centres, 1 September 2020 to 31 August 2021](#).
- We will also carefully consider the need 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 as set out in the **JCQ Guidance**.
- All necessary records of decision-making in relation to determining grades have been properly kept and can be made available for review as required.
- All student evidence on which decisions regarding the determination of grades has been retained and can be made available for review as required.
- Instances where student evidence used to decide teacher assessed grades is not available, for example where the material has previously been returned to students and cannot now be retrieved, will be clearly recorded on the appropriate documentation.
- All staff involved have been briefed on the possibility of interaction with awarding organisations during the different stages of the External Quality Assurance process and can respond promptly and fully to enquiries, including attendance at Virtual Visits should this prove necessary.
- Arrangements are in place to respond fully and promptly to any additional requirements/reviews that may be identified as a result of the External Quality Assurance process.
- Staff have been made aware that a failure to respond fully and effectively to such additional requirements may result in further action by the awarding organisations, including the withholding of results.

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.

A. Results

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

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

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. Appeals will be managed by SLT and the Examinations manager.

- All staff involved have been made aware of the arrangements for, and the requirements of, appeals in Summer 2021, as set out in the **JCQ Guidance**.
- Internal arrangements will be in place for the swift and effective handling of Centre Reviews in compliance with the requirements.
- All necessary staff 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.

Vocational, Technical and other qualifications

A. Vocational, Technical and other qualifications
For these qualifications we will follow the specific examination board qualification-level guidance for the awarding of teacher assessed grades, but the statement of intent, along with roles and responsibilities and many of the principles and procedures within this policy will be applicable.