

***Centre Policy for Determining
Teacher Assessed Grades for
A/AS Levels and GCSEs
in Summer 2021***



1. Background

- 1.1 This policy takes account of the guidance provided in the document:
JCQ Guidance on the determination of grades for A/AS Levels and GCSEs for Summer 2021

2. Statement of intent

2.1 This policy will:

- Ensure that teacher assessed grades are determined fairly, consistently, free from bias and effectively within and across departments.
- Ensure the operation of effective processes with clear guidelines and support for staff.
- Ensure that all staff involved in the processes clearly understand their roles and responsibilities.
- Support teachers to take evidence-based decisions in line with Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) guidance.
- Ensure the consideration of historical centre data in the process, and the appropriate decision making in respect of, teacher assessed grades.
- Support a high standard of internal quality assurance in the allocation of teacher assessed grades.
- Support the centre in meeting its obligations in relation to equality legislation.
- Ensure the centre meets all requirements set out by the Department for Education, Ofqual, the JCQ and awarding organisations for Summer 2021 qualifications.
- Ensure the process for communicating to candidates and their parents¹ how they will be assessed is clear, in order to give confidence.

¹ Within this document, the term parent refers to those with parental responsibility for a learner



3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The Head of Centre, Mrs McGuirk

- Approves The JCB Academy's policy for determining teacher assessed grades.
- Has overall responsibility for The JCB Academy as an examinations centre and for ensuring that clear roles and responsibilities of all staff are defined.
- Confirms 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.
- Ensures a robust internal quality assurance process has been produced and signed-off in advance of results being submitted.

3.2 The Senior Leadership Team and Heads of Department

- Provide training and support to 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 authenticate the preliminary outcome from single teacher subjects.
- Ensure staff have a clear understanding of the internal and external quality assurance processes and their role within it.
- Ensure all teachers within their department make consistent judgements about learner evidence in deriving a grade.
- Ensure all staff conduct assessments under the appropriate levels of control with reference to guidance provided by the JCQ.
- Ensure teachers have the information required to make accurate and fair judgments.
- Ensure that a Head of Department Checklist is completed for each qualification that they are submitting.

3.3 Teachers and the SENDCO

- Ensure they conduct assessments under the centre's appropriate levels of control and have sufficient evidence, in line with this policy and guidance from the JCQ, to provide teacher assessed grades for each learner they have entered for a qualification.



- Ensure that the teacher assessed grade they assign to each learner is a fair, valid and reliable reflection of the assessed evidence available for each learner.
- Make judgements based on what each learner has been taught and what they have been assessed on, as outlined in the section on grading in the main JCQ guidance.
- 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 learners will also be recorded.
- Securely store and be able to retrieve sufficient evidence to justify their decisions.

3.4 Examinations Officer

- Administers final teacher assessed grades and manages the post-results services.

4. Training, support and guidance

4.1 Training

- Teachers involved in determining grades will attend any centre-based training to help achieve consistency and fairness to all learners.
- Teachers will engage fully with all training and support that has been provided by the JCQ and the awarding organisations.

4.2 Support for Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) and teachers less familiar with assessment

- Mentoring will be provided from experienced teachers to NQTs and teachers less familiar with assessment.
- Additional internal reviews of teacher assessed grades for NQTs and other teachers will be put in place as appropriate.

5. Use of appropriate evidence

- ### 5.1
- Due regard will be given to the section in the JCQ guidance entitled: *Guidance on grading for teachers.*



- 5.2 Teachers making judgements will have regard to the Ofqual Head of Centre guidance on recommended evidence and further guidance provided by awarding organisations.
- 5.3 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.
- 5.4 The centre will use learner work produced in response to assessment materials provided by awarding organisation(s), including groups of questions, past papers or similar materials such as practice or sample papers.
- 5.5 The centre will use non-exam assessment work (often referred to as coursework), even if this has not been fully completed.
- 5.6 The centre will use learner 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.
- 5.7 The centre will use substantial classwork, including work that took place during remote learning.
- 5.8 The centre will use internal assessments taken by learners over the course of study.
- 5.9 The centre will use records of a learner's capability and performance over the course of study in PE.
- 5.10 Additional assessment materials will be used to give learners the opportunity to show what they know, understand or can do in an area of content that has been taught but not yet assessed.
- 5.11 Additional assessment materials will be used to give learners an opportunity to show improvement, for example to validate or replace an existing piece of evidence.
- 5.12 Additional assessment materials will be used to support consistency of judgement between teachers or classes by giving everyone the same task to complete.
- 5.13 Elements of questions will be combined and/or removed where, for example, a multi-part question includes a part which focuses on an element of the specification that hasn't been taught.



- 5.14 The appropriateness of evidence and balance of evidence in arriving at grades will be ensured by:
- considering 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;
 - ensuring that the work can be authenticated as the learner's own, especially where that work was not completed within the academy;
 - considering the limitations of assessing a learner's performance when using assessments that have been completed more than once, or drafted and redrafted, where this is not a skill being assessed;
 - considering the specification and assessment objective coverage of the assessment;
 - considering the depth and breadth of knowledge, understanding and skills assessed, especially higher order skills within individual assessments.

6. Determining teacher assessed grades

6.1 Teachers will:

- Determine grades based on evidence which is commensurate with the standard at which a learner is performing, i.e. their demonstrated knowledge, understanding and skills across the content of the course they have been taught.
- Record how the evidence was used to arrive at a fair and objective grade, which is free from bias.
- Produce an Assessment Record for each subject cohort and share this with their Head of Department. Any necessary variations for individual learners will also be shared.

7. Internal quality assurance

- 7.1 The centre will ensure internal standardisation of teacher assessed grades to ensure consistency, fairness and objectivity of decisions.
- 7.2 All teachers involved in deriving teacher assessed grades will read and understand this policy.



- 7.3 An internal standardisation process will be carried out in subjects where there is more than one teacher and/or class in the department.
- 7.4 All teachers will be 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.
- 7.5 Internal standardisation will be conducted across all grades.
- 7.6 The Assessment Record will form the basis of internal standardisation and discussions across teachers to agree the awarding of teacher assessed grades.
- 7.7 Where necessary, individual grading decisions will be reviewed and reflected upon to ensure alignment with the standards as outlined by the awarding organisation(s).
- 7.8 Where appropriate, individual grade decisions will be amended to ensure alignment with the standards as outlined by the awarding organisation(s).
- 7.9 Where there is only one teacher involved in marking assessments and determining grades, the output of this activity will be reviewed by an appropriate member of staff within the centre.
- 7.10 In respect of equality legislation, consideration will be given to the range of evidence for learners of different protected characteristics that are included in internal standardisation.

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

- 8.1 In order to ensure a comparison of teacher assessed grades at qualification level to results for previous cohorts in the centre taking the same qualification, the centre will:
- compile information on the grades awarded to learners in past June series in which exams took place, for example 2017-2019;
 - consider the size of the cohort from year to year;



- consider the stability of the centre’s overall grade outcomes from year to year;
 - consider both subject and centre level variation in outcomes during the internal quality assurance process;
 - 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 quality assurance process.
- 8.2 If initial teacher assessed grades for a qualification are viewed as overly lenient or harsh compared to results in previous years, the centre will:
- compile historical data giving appropriate regard to potential mixtures of A*-G and 9-1 grades in GCSEs. Where required, Ofqual guidance will be used to convert legacy grades into the new 9 to 1 scale;
 - bring together other data sources that will help to quality assure the grades the centre intends to award in 2021.
- 8.3 Subjects that are no longer offered will be omitted from the historical data.

9. Access arrangements and special considerations

- 9.1 Where learners have agreed access arrangements or reasonable adjustments, for example a reader or scribe, every effort will be made to ensure that these arrangements are in place when assessments are being taken.
- 9.2 Where an assessment has taken place without an agreed reasonable adjustment or access arrangement, that assessment will be removed from the basket of evidence and alternative evidence obtained.
- 9.3 Where illness or other personal circumstances might have affected performance in assessments used in determining a learner’s standard of performance, account will be taken of this when making judgements.
- 9.4 How any necessary variations to take account of the impact of illness or personal circumstances on the performance of individual learners in assessments have been incorporated will be recorded as part of the Assessment Record.



9.5 To ensure consistency in the application of Special Consideration, all teachers will read and understand the document: *JCQ - A guide to the special consideration process, with effect from 1 September 2020*.

10. **Addressing disruption/differential lost learning**

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

11. **Objectivity**

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

11.2 Senior Leaders, Heads of Department and 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.

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

- unconscious bias can skew judgements;
- the evidence presented should be valued for its own merit as an indication of performance and attainment;
- teacher assessed grades should not be influenced by 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.

11.4 Internal standardisation process will help to ensure that there are different perspectives to the quality assurance process.



12. Recording decisions and retention of evidence and data

- 12.1 Teachers and Heads of Departments will maintain records that show how the teacher assessed grades process operated, including the rationale for decisions in relation to individual marks/grades.
- 12.2 Evidence will be maintained across a variety of tasks to develop a holistic view of each learner's demonstrated knowledge, understanding and skills in the areas of content taught.
- 12.3 Recording requirements will be put in place for the various stages of the process to ensure the accurate and secure retention of the evidence used to make decisions
- 12.4 Obligations regarding data protection legislation will be complied with.
- 12.5 Grades will accurately reflect the evidence submitted.
- 12.6 Evidence will be retained electronically or on paper in a secure centre-based system that can be readily shared with awarding organisation(s).

13. Authenticating evidence

- 13.1 Mechanisms will be put 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.
- 13.2 It is understood that awarding organisations will investigate instances where it appears evidence is not authentic. The centre will follow all guidance provided by awarding organisations to support these determinations of authenticity.

14. Confidentiality, malpractice and conflicts of interest

14.1 Confidentiality

- All staff involved will be made aware of the need to maintain the confidentiality of teacher assessed grades.
- All teaching staff will be briefed on the requirement to share details of the range of evidence on which learners' 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, will be shared with parents.

14.2 Malpractice

- General centre policies regarding malpractice, maladministration and conflicts of interest will be reviewed to ensure they address the specific challenges of delivery in Summer 2021.
- All staff involved will be made aware of these policies and will receive training in them as necessary.
- All staff involved will be made aware of the specific types of malpractice which may affect the Summer 2021 series including:
 - breaches of internal security;
 - deception;
 - improper assistance to learners;
 - failure to appropriately authenticate a learner's work;
 - over-direction of learners in preparation for common assessments;
 - allegations that centres submit grades not supported by evidence that they know to be inaccurate;
 - centres enter learners 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 learners receiving their grades, up to, and including, removal of centre status will be outlined to all relevant staff.

14.4 Conflicts of interest

- To protect the integrity of assessments, all staff involved in the determination of grades must declare any conflict of interest such as relationships with learners to the Head of Centre for further consideration.
- 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*.



- Careful consideration will be given to the need to separate duties and personnel to ensure fairness in later process reviews and appeals.

15. Private candidates

- 15.1 Arrangements for assessing private candidates to arrive at appropriate grades will be identical to the approaches utilised for internal candidates.
- 15.2 Where it is necessary to utilise different approaches, the JCQ guidance on private candidates will be followed and any divergences from the approach for internal candidates will be recorded on the appropriate class/learner documentation.
- 15.3 In undertaking the review of cohort grades in conjunction with the centre's results profiles from previous examined years, the grades determined by the centre for private candidates will be excluded from the centre's analysis.

16. External quality assurance

- 16.1 All staff involved will be made aware of the awarding organisation(s) 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 will be properly kept and will be made available for review as required.
- 16.3 All learner evidence on which decisions regarding the determination of grades will be retained and will be made available for review as required.
- 16.4 Instances where learner evidence used to decide teacher assessed grades is not available, for example where the material has previously been returned to learners and cannot now be retrieved, will be clearly recorded on the appropriate documentation.
- 16.5 All staff involved will be briefed on the possibility of interaction with awarding organisations during the different stages of the external quality assurance process and will respond promptly and fully to enquiries, including attendance at virtual visits should this prove necessary.



16.6 Arrangements will be put 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 will be 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

17.1 All staff involved will be 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.

17.2 Arrangements will be made to ensure the necessary staffing, including exams and support staff, to enable the efficient receipt and release of results to learners.

17.3 Arrangements will be put in place for the provision of all necessary advice, guidance and support, including pastoral support, to learners on receipt of their results. Such guidance will include advice on the appeals process in place in 2021 (see section 18).

17.4 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.

17.5 Parents will be made aware of arrangements for results days.

18. Appeals

18.1 Appeals will be handled swiftly and effectively and in line with JCQ requirements.

18.2 All staff involved will be made aware of the arrangements for, and the requirements of, appeals in Summer 2021, as set out in the JCQ guidance.

18.3 Internal arrangements will be put in place for the swift and effective handling of centre reviews in compliance with the requirements.

18.4 All necessary staff will be briefed on the process for, and timing of, such reviews and will be available to ensure their prompt and efficient handling.



- 18.5 Learners will be appropriately guided as to the necessary stages of appeal.
- 18.6 Arrangements will be put in place for the timely submission of appeals to awarding organisations, including any priority appeals, for example those on which university places depend.
- 18.7 Arrangements will be put in place to obtain the written consent of learners to the initiation of appeals, and to record their awareness that grades may go down as well as up on appeal.
- 18.8 Appropriate information on the appeals process will be provided to parents.

