

Grace College Centre Policy

FOR A/AS LEVELS AND GCSES FOR SUMMER 2021



Centre Policy for determining teacher assessed grades in Summer 2021

Background

Every centre is required to create a Centre Policy that reflects its individual circumstances. All staff in centres must understand and actively implement the centre policy adopted, although this template is provided for information and does not constitute legal advice.

This policy must take account of the guidance provided in the document: *JCQ Guidance on the determination of grades for A/AS Levels and GCSEs for summer 2021*

A separate policy relating to vocational qualifications is available [here](#) and must be read by all staff involved with the awarding of grades in those qualifications.

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Centre Policy for determining teacher assessed grades – summer 2021: Grace 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 document is to:

- Ensure that TAGs are determined fairly, consistently, free from bias and effectively within and across all of the teaching departments at Grace College.
- Ensure that effective processes with clear guidance and support to the teaching staff of Grace College are implemented across departments.
- Ensure that all staff involved in the processes clearly understand their roles and responsibilities in awarding TAGs.
- Provide support to teaching staff as they seek to make evidence-based decisions on grading in line with national guidance, including the guidance published by the JCQ.
- Ensure that rigorous internal quality assurance takes place at every stage of the TAG process, and where appropriate, support from schools within the multi-academy trust, is utilised effectively.
- Ensure that the historical data of Joseph Swan Academy is considered in reaching decisions in relation to Teacher Assessed Grades.
- Ensure that we, as an institution, meet our obligations in regard to equalities legislation and the requirements set out by the Department of Education, Ofqual, the JCQ and awarding bodies in relation to the awarding of grades.
- Provide confidence to teachers, parents/carers and students in the TAG process, especially in relation to what material will be considered as evidence in arriving at a grade.

It is important to note that the JCQ guidance states that,

“It is the responsibility of everyone involved in the determination of teacher assessed grades to read, understand and implement the Centre Policy.”

Failure to read, understand and effectively implement this policy on the part of teaching, support and leadership staff is unacceptable and, where identified, would be considered a disciplinary matter by the College.

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:

The **Principal** (Head of Centre, Mr Mark Hall, MHA):

- Will be responsible for approving our policy and processes for determining teacher assessed grades.
- Has overall responsibility for Grace College as an examinations centre and will ensure that the roles and responsibilities of all staff are clearly defined.
- Will confirm that TAG decisions represent the academic judgment of the teaching staff, and that the grades decided by teacher align with the guidance on standards published by the awarding organisations.
- Will ensure that reasonable adjustments for disabled students under the Equality Act, in relation to work set where the need for such adjustments have been identified.

The **Vice Principal** (Mr David Greenshields, DGR), supported by colleagues within the **Senior Management Team**:

- Will support the Principal in developing and implementing the TAG process so that all grade decisions are informed by the best evidence and in line with national guidance.
- Will provide training and support to Heads of Department so that they can effectively administer the TAG process within their teaching departments.
- Will ensure that an effective approach is taken within and across teaching departments so that individual teacher judgments are consistent within the department and whole school.
- Will be responsible for ensuring that all staff have a clear understanding of the process that will be followed internally and externally to quality assure the TAG decisions, and the role that each member of staff plays within these processes.
- Will ensure that all staff conduct assessments under the appropriate levels of control, with specific reference to the guidance provided by the JCQ.

Heads of Department:

- Will be responsible for ensuring that teachers understand the approach taken within their department in reaching TAG decisions, with specific reference to:
 - Consistency of approaches to assessment and assessment conditions, informed by the appropriate levels of control as discussed in the JCQ guidance.
 - Consistent judgment of student evidence within the teaching department, so that TAG decisions are comparable across teaching groups.
 - Ensuring that all teachers have the information they require to make an accurate and fair judgment of all of their students.
- Will complete the 'Assessment Record Template', 'Heads of Department Checklist', 'Confirmation of Curriculum Coverage' and 'Confirmation of Evidence Base' documentation.

- Will 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 students will also be recorded.

Teachers and the SENCo:

- Will ensure that all assessments are conducted under the appropriate levels of control, as outlined within the JCQ guidance and this policy.
- Will ensure that all TAG decisions are made in light of sufficient evidence, as outlined within the JCQ guidance and this policy.
- Will 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.
- Use their expertise to decide the range of evidence that will enable their students to show what they know and can do, within parameters set by the exam boards.
- Will complete the *Assessment Record* for their teaching group, providing their Head of Department with all of the information required.
- Will 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.
- Securely store and be able to retrieve sufficient evidence to justify their decisions.

The examinations officer will:

- 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.

- All teaching staff involved in reaching TAG decisions will receive training on the Grace College TAG Process via the weekly briefing material circulated by DGR to ensure consistency and fairness for our students.
- Heads of Department will continue to receive training from DGR and Mr C Gates (Assessment Lead, CGA) on how to construct effective assessments and the weighting that each element of their evidence base should be given in relation to a TAG decision in light of the level of control and nature of the task.
- Heads of Department will be given a morning or afternoon session to review the evidence gathered up to and including in the week beginning the 4th May.
 - This session will be followed by a 45 minute discussion with DGR on the evidence gathered and trajectory for TAGs within the department and the final confirmation of the final assessment process for each department.
- Teachers will engage fully with the training and support provided. This will include engaging with the training and support provided by the JCQ and awarding organisations.

Support for Newly Qualified Teachers and teachers less familiar with assessment

This section provides details of our approach to *training, support and guidance for newly qualified teachers and teachers less familiar with assessment*

- Heads of Department will be responsible for ensuring that newly qualified or inexperienced staff within their department teams receive appropriate support and mentoring from a delegated colleague.
 - The TAG decisions for these staff will receive an additional layer of review within our internal quality assurance from the member of the Senior Management Team responsible for the oversight of the relevant department.

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.
- We will 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.
- 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). These pieces of work have been referred to as 'progress tasks' within the centre.
- We will use internal tests taken by pupils.
- 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 such as music, drama and PE.

Additional Assessment Materials

- We will use elements of the additional assessment materials provided by awarding bodies to give students the opportunity to show what they know, understand or can do in an area of content that has been taught but not yet assessed.
- We will use additional assessment materials to give students 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.
- 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.
- 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 school or 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 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 teachers will record how the evidence was used to arrive at a fair and objective grade, which is free from bias.
- Our Heads of Department will produce an Assessment Record for each subject cohort, which will be populated by the teachers within their department. Any necessary variations for individual students will also be shared.

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.

This section of our policy outlines the approach that we will take to ensure that our TAG process is consistent fair and object, with reference to the wider process and our internal standardisation.

To achieve this, all teacher involved in deriving teaching assessed grades will:

- Read and understand this policy document, and the following national documentation:
 - [Ofqual guidance on the awarding of qualifications in the Summer, 2021](#)
 - [Ofqual guidance on making objective judgments](#)
 - [JCQ GCSE grade descriptors](#)
 - [JCQ A/AS Level grade descriptors](#)
 - Where relevant, the [Notice to Centres in relation to NEA](#)
 - Additional assessment materials, including exemplification materials, provided by the awarding organisations for their subject.
 - The [Joint Council for Qualifications guidance on special considerations](#)
- All tasks completed in classrooms to provide evidence for the teacher assessment grades and 'final assessments' will complete an internal moderation and standardisation process. This will include:
 - Submission of samples of student work from within each teaching group to be moderated by teaching teams.
 - Moderation activities within department time to ensure that there is agreement and a consistency of approach within the teaching team.
 - Minutes of the discussion will be compiled and stored by the Head of Department.
- All teachers will be provided with training and support at a whole school and department level in relation to arriving at TAGs and reaching holistic grading decisions via a weekly briefings and, where appropriate, additional training.
- 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 the Vice Principal, Mr D Greenshields.
- Heads of Department will provide training and support within teams to ensure consistency of marking of evidence and effective application of the grading support documentation.
- We will conduct internal standardisation across all departments and grades, which will also take into consideration the Assessment Records compiled by Heads of Department.

- This standardisation will also take into account the historic performance of Grace College/Joseph Swan Academy.
- 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 necessary, this process will review, reflect on, and amend individual grading decisions to ensure alignment with the standards outlined by the relevant awarding organisation.
- 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.

- Compile information on the grades awarded to our students in past June series in which exams took place (2017 – 2019), including the size of the cohort from year to year and the apparent stability of the historic centre's (Joseph Swan Academy) grade outcomes.
- Consider both subject and centre level variation in our outcomes during the internal quality assurance process.
- Prepare a succinct narrative on the outcomes of the review against historic data which addresses any significant divergence in the grade profile of our TAG decisions. 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 (for the former school, Joseph Swan Academy) giving appropriate regard to potential mixtures of A*-G and 9-1 grades in GCSEs. Where required, we will use the Ofqual guidance to convert legacy grades into the new 9 to 1 scale.
- We will bring together other data sources that will help to quality assure the grades we intend to award 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.

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 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 students in assessments.
- To ensure consistency in the application of Special Consideration, we will ensure all teachers have read and understood the document: [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.

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.

All staff will fulfil their duties and responsibilities in relation to relevant equality and disability legislation. All staff involved in determining TAGs must have read and understood [Ofqual's guidance on awarding grades objectively](#).

The Principal, Vice Principal, members of the Senior Management Team and Heads of Department will consider:

Whether or not there are any sources of unfairness and bias within our internal processes, including:

- The situations and contexts in which assessment evidence is completed,
- The individual difficulties of students,
- The presentation and format of assessment evidence materials,
- Language, especially where English is an additional language,
- Marker preconceptions of students' capacity for achievement.
- How to minimise bias in question selection and marking, including 'hidden forms of bias'; and
- bias in teacher assessed grades.

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.

Our internal standardisation process will help to ensure that there are different perspectives within the quality assurance process.

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.

The **Principal**, supported by the **Examinations Officer**, will ensure that:

- We comply with our obligations regarding equalities and data protection legislation.
- The grades submitted accurately reflect the evidence submitted.
- Evidence is retained, either electronically or in hard copy, in a secure system that can be readily shared with the relevant awarding organization.

The **Vice Principal** will:

- Put in place recording requirements for all evidence cited in the TAG process to ensure the accurate and secure of retention of the evidence used to make decisions.

Heads of Department will:

- Maintain clear records of how the TAG process operated within the departments, including a clear record of achievement in all pieces of evidence used, and the rationale for decisions in relation to individual marks and grades.
- Ensure that evidence is maintained across a variety of tasks to develop a rounded, holistic view of a students' demonstrated knowledge, understanding and skills.

Teachers will:

- Maintain records that demonstrate that the TAG process was followed effectively, including relevant notes to support the grading of students with less evidence than others.
- Retain the work produced by their students since 24th March 2021 in the event of an appeal on our Teacher Assessment Grade decisions.

Authenticating evidence

D. Authenticating evidence

This section of our 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.

- Where a students' work is suspected of not being authentic robust mechanisms, including an investigation by the academic office or Student Achievement Team and a meeting between parent, student and teacher, will be in place to ensure that we can be confident that the work used as evidence is the students' own.
- It is understood that, where awarding organisations are not confident that student work is authentic, there will be an external investigation process.
 - In such an event where an awarding body is concerned that 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 have been made aware that it is critical that a students' final grade is not discussed with parents or students under any circumstances.
- 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.
- Students or parents may seek to exercise their right to request their personal data under Article 15 of the General Data Protection Regulation. However, personal data such as marks or other information processed by a Data Controller (the academy) for the purposes of determining results are exempt from this article under paragraph 25(2) of the Data Protection Act. Centres may therefore delay disclosure of such information until after results have been issued (Tuesday 10 August for Year 13; Thursday 12 August for Year 11).

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

All staff involved have been made aware of this policy, and existing policies in relation to their professional practice, including the Emmanuel Schools Foundation Staff Handbook.

All staff involved in reaching a TAG decision 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.

Private candidates

This section of our Centre Policy outlines our approach to working with Private Candidates to arrive at appropriate grades.

A. Private Candidates

This section details our approach to providing and quality assuring grades to Private Candidates.

- Our arrangements for assessing Private Candidates to arrive at appropriate grades are identical to the approaches utilised for internal candidates.
- Where it has been necessary to utilise different approaches, the **JCQ Guidance on Private Candidates** has been followed and any divergences from our approach for internal candidates have been recorded on the appropriate class/student documentation.
- In undertaking the review of cohort grades in conjunction with our centre results profiles from previous examined years, the grades determined by our centre for Private Candidates have been excluded from our analysis.

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.

In order to ensure that we are prepared for any external quality assurance activities:

- All staff involved have been made aware of the awarding organisation requirements for External Quality Assurance as set out in the **JCQ Guidance** and all necessary records of decision-making in relation to determining grades will be properly kept and 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.
- 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 will be made aware of the specific arrangements for the issuing of results in the Summer 2021, including the issuing of A level results on the 10th August and GCSE results on the 12th August.
- Arrangements will be made to ensure that the necessary staffing will be made to ensure the efficient receipt and release of results to our students. This will include the examinations officer, Vice Principal and members of the administrative team.
- Arrangements will be made to ensure the provision of necessary advice, guidance, academic and pastoral support will be available for students on receiving their results. This will include advice on the appeals process.
- Appropriate staff will be available to respond promptly to requests for information from awarding organisations to enable such issues to be swiftly resolved.
- Parents/guardians will be made fully aware of the arrangements for the receipt of results.

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**.
- Internal arrangements will be in place for the swift and effective handling of Centre Reviews in compliance with the requirements.
- 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.
- Learners have been, and will continue to be, 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.