



Tonbridge Grammar School

Centre Policy for determining teacher assessed grades in Summer 2021

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Approved: 22 April 2021

Head Teacher

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Linked documents

- TGS Assessment and Reporting Policy
- [JCQ Guidance on the determination of grades for A/AS Levels and GCSEs for summer 2021](#)
- [JCQ – Grade descriptors GCSE Summer 2021](#)
- [JCQ Guidance worked examples GCSE Summer 2021](#)
- [JCQ – A guide to the special consideration process, with effect from 1 September 2020](#)

Background

This policy is based on the JCQ model policy for determining teacher assessed grades in Summer 2021. This policy takes into account the guidance provided in the document: *JCQ Guidance on the determination of grades for A/AS Levels and GCSEs for summer 2021*. It is a supplement to Tonbridge Grammar School’s (“the School”) Assessment & Reporting Policy.

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Statement of intent

The purpose of this policy is to ensure:

- Teacher assessed grades are determined fairly, consistently, free from bias and effectively within and across departments.
- The operation of effective processes with clear guidelines and support for staff.
- All staff involved in the processes clearly understand their roles and responsibilities.
- Teachers are supported to take evidence-based decisions in line with Joint Council for Qualifications guidance.
- Historical school data is considered as part of the process, and in the appropriate decision making in respect of, teacher assessed grades.
- There is a high standard of internal quality assurance in the allocation of teacher assessed grades.
- The School is supported in meeting its obligations in relation to equality legislation.
- The School meets all requirements set out by the Department of Education, Ofqual, the Joint Council for Qualifications and awarding organisations for Summer 2021 qualifications.
- The process for communicating to students and their parents or carers how they will be assessed is clear, in order to give confidence.

Roles and responsibilities

This section outlines specific roles and responsibilities in the process of determining teacher assessed grades in Summer 2021.

Head of Centre

The Head Teacher is the Head of Centre. The Head of Centre:

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

Strategy Group and Subject Leaders

The Senior Leadership Team (Strategy Group) and Subject Leaders will:

- 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 subject teams and authenticating the preliminary outcome from single teacher subjects.

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- 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 subject team 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.
- ensure that a Subject Leader Checklist is completed for each qualification that they submit.

Teachers/ Specialist Teachers / SENCo

Teachers, specialist teachers and SENCo will:

- ensure they conduct assessments under the School's appropriate levels of control and have sufficient evidence, in line with this 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 will be 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 students will also be recorded.
- securely store and be able to retrieve sufficient evidence to justify their decisions.

Examinations Officer

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 outlines the training, support and guidance that the School will provide to those determining teacher assessed grades this year.

Training

Teachers involved in determining grades will:

- attend school-based training to help achieve consistency and fairness to all students.
- engage fully with all training and support that has been provided by the Joint Council for Qualifications and the awarding organisations.

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Support for Newly Qualified Teachers and teachers less familiar with assessment

The School will:

- provide mentoring from experienced teachers to NQTs and teachers less familiar with assessment.
- put in place additional internal reviews of teacher assessed grades for NQTs and other teachers as appropriate.

Use of appropriate evidence

This section indicates how the School will give due regard to the section in the JCQ guidance entitled: *Guidance on grading for teachers*.

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.
- 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.
- The School will use as evidence:
 - 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.
 - non-exam assessment work (often referred to as coursework), even if this has not been fully completed.
 - student work produced in centre-devised tasks that reflect the specification, that follow the same format as awarding organisation materials, and will be marked in a way that reflects awarding organisation mark schemes.
 - substantial class or homework (including work that took place during remote learning).
 - internal tests taken by pupils.
 - mock exams taken over the course of study.
 - 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

The School will use additional assessment materials 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.
- give students an opportunity to show improvement, for example, to validate or replace an existing piece of evidence.
- support consistency of judgement between teachers or classes by giving everyone the same task to complete.

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The School 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.

Appropriate and balanced evidence

To ensure the appropriateness of evidence and balance of evidence in arriving at grades, the School will:

- consider the level of control under which an assessment was completed, for example: whether it was completed in timed conditions, there was an opportunity for redrafting or was supervised.
- ensure that teachers are able to authenticate the work as the student's own, especially where that work was not completed within the school or college.
- 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.
- consider the specification and assessment objective coverage of the assessment.
- consider the depth and breadth of knowledge, understanding and skills assessed, especially higher order skills within individual assessments.

Determining teacher assessed grades

This section outlines the approach the School will take to awarding teacher assessed grades.

Awarding teacher assessed grades based on evidence

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.
- 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 will share this with their Subject Leader. Any necessary variations for individual students will also be shared.

Internal quality assurance

This section outlines the approach the School will take to ensure internal standardisation of teacher assessed grades, to ensure consistency, fairness and objectivity of decisions.

Internal quality assurance

The School will:

- ensure that all teachers involved in deriving teacher assessed grades read and understand this Centre Policy document.

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- conduct an internal standardisation process in subjects where there is more than one teacher or class in that subject. In subjects where there is only 1 teacher involved in marking assessments and determining grades, the output of this activity will be reviewed by their Strategy Group Line Manager.
- 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
- conduct internal standardisation across all grades.
- ensure that the Assessment Record will form the basis of internal standardisation and discussions across teachers to agree the awarding of teacher assessed grades.
- review and reflect on individual grading decisions to ensure alignment with the standards as outlined by our awarding organisations, where necessary.
- amend individual grade decisions to ensure alignment with the standards as outlined by our awarding organisation(s), where appropriate.
- consider the range of evidence for students of different protected characteristics that are included in our internal standardisation, in respect of equality legislation.

Comparison of teacher assessed grades to results for previous cohorts

This section outlines the approach the School will take to compare our teacher assessed grades in 2021 with results from previous cohorts taking the same qualification.

The School will:

- compile information on the grades awarded to students in past June series in which exams took place: 2017 – 2019. Subjects that are no longer offered will be omitted from the historical data.
- consider the size of the cohort from year to year.
- consider the stability of the School'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 QA process.

If initial teacher assessed grades for a qualification are viewed as overly lenient or harsh compared to results in previous years, the School will:

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- compile historical data giving appropriate regard to potential mixtures of A*-G and 9-1 grades in GCSEs. Where required, the School will use the Ofqual guidance to convert legacy grades into the new 9 to 1 scale.
- include grades from international GCSEs (for example, in mathematics) where we have offered these examinations in 2017-2019.
- bring together other data sources that will help to quality assure the grades the School intends to award in 2021.

Access Arrangements and Special Considerations

This section outlines the approach the School will take to provide students with appropriate access arrangements and how the School will take into account mitigating circumstances in particular instances.

Reasonable adjustments and mitigating circumstances (special consideration)

The School will:

- make every effort to ensure that, where students have agreed access arrangements or reasonable adjustments (for example a reader or scribe) these arrangements are in place when assessments are being taken.
- remove an assessment from the basket of evidence and obtain alternative evidence where that assessment has taken place without an agreed reasonable adjustment or access arrangement
- take account, when making judgements, where illness or other personal circumstances might have affected performance in assessments used in determining a student's standard of performance
- record, as part of the Assessment Record, how any necessary variations have been incorporated to take account of the impact of illness or personal circumstances on the performance of individual students in assessments.
- ensure all teachers have read and understood the document: [JCQ – A guide to the special consideration process, with effect from 1 September 2020](#) to ensure consistency in the application of Special Consideration

Addressing disruption/differential lost learning (DLL)

To address disruption or differentiated lost learning, teacher assessed grades will be determined based on evidence of the content that has been taught and assessed for each student.

Objectivity

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

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

The Head of Centre, Strategy Group members, and Subject Leaders 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 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 students' 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; and

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

Recording decisions and retention of evidence and data

This section outlines the School's arrangements to recording decisions and to retaining evidence and data.

The School 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 marks and grades.
- ensure that evidence is maintained across a variety of tasks to develop a holistic view of each student's demonstrated knowledge, understanding and skills in the areas of content taught.
- 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.
- comply with our obligations regarding data protection legislation.
- ensure that the grades accurately reflect the evidence submitted.
- ensure that evidence is retained electronically or on paper in a secure centre-based system that can be readily shared with our awarding organisations.

Authenticating evidence

This section 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, which will include a signed student declaration, 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.
- 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 outlines the measures in place to ensure the confidentiality of the grades the School determines, and to make students aware of the range of evidence on which those grades will be based.

- 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 students' grades have been 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 and carers.

Malpractice

This section outlines the measures in place to prevent malpractice and other breaches of exam regulations, and to deal with such cases if they occur in accordance with awarding organisation requirements.

- Our general school 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 have received 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;

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- 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 will be outlined to all relevant staff.

Conflicts of Interest

This section outlines the measures in place to address potential conflicts of interest and how the School 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.
- 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](#).
- The School 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 outlines our approach to working with Private Candidates to arrive at appropriate and quality assured grades.

- 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 will be 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 will be excluded from our analysis.

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External Quality Assurance

This section outlines the arrangements the School has 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 will be 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 will be 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 will be 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.
- All 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.

Results

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

- All staff involved will be made aware of the specific arrangements for the issue of results in Summer 2021, including the issuing of 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.

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- Parents and carers will be made aware of arrangements for results days in a timely manner.

Appeals

This section outlines the School's approach to Appeals (including Centre Reviews and subsequent appeals to awarding organisations), to ensure that they are handled swiftly and effectively, and in line with JCQ requirements.

- 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**.
- 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.
- Students will 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.

Confirmation of training



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