



Centre Policy

FOR A/AS LEVEL, GCSE, CAMBRIDGE NATIONAL & CAMBRIDGE
TECHNICAL QUALIFICATIONS FOR SUMMER 2021

THE BROMFORDS SCHOOL & SIXTH FORM COLLEGE
STAFF LEAD: J. TREE
HEAD OF CENTRE: N. DUNN
CHAIR OF GOVERNORS: P. WHALLEY
DATE: APRIL 2021

Centre Policy for determining centre assessed grades in Summer 2021.

Background:

Every centre is required to create a Centre Policy that reflects its individual circumstances. The JCQ has produced a pre-populated template in full and The Bromfords School & Sixth Form College has chosen to use this when creating our policy.

Our policy has referred to the following guidance document when forming our policy and approach to awarding centre assessed grades for A/AS Level, GCSE, Cambridge National & Cambridge Technical Qualifications in Summer 2021:

<https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/JCQ-Guidance-on-the-Determination-of-Grades-for-A-AS-Levels-and-GCSEs-Summer-2021.pdf>

The Bromfords School & Sixth Form College Centre Policy for determining centre assessed grades – Summer 2021:

Statement of Intent:

Statement of Intent

This section outlines the purpose of this document in relation to **The Bromfords School & Sixth Form College, Grange Avenue, Wickford SS12 0LZ, Centre Number 16139**

The purpose of this policy is:

- To ensure that centre 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 (JCQ)** guidance.
- To ensure the **consideration of historical centre data** in the process, and the appropriate decision making in respect of centre assessed grades.
- To support a **high standard of internal quality assurance** in the allocation of centre 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, JQC** 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:

It is the responsibility of everyone involved to read, understand and implement the Centre Policy.

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 school assessed grades this year.

All staff will have specific roles and responsibilities during the process. These are outlined below:

Head of Centre

- Our Head of Centre, **Mr Neil Dunn (Headteacher)**, will be responsible for approving our policy for determining centre assessed grades.
- Our Head of Centre has overall responsibility for the school as an examinations centre and will ensure that **clear roles and responsibilities** of all staff are defined.
- Our Head of Centre will **confirm that centre assessed grade decisions represent the academic judgement made by the school** 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.
- Our Head of Centre will sign the Head of Centre declaration when submitting the final grades to awarding organisations.

Senior Leadership Team and Heads of Department

Our Senior Leadership Team and Heads of Departments will:

- Provide **training and support** to our other staff.
- Support the Head of Centre in the **quality assurance of the final centre 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 JCQ.
- Ensure teachers have the **information required to make accurate and fair judgments**.
- Produce an **overall 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 centre assessed grades. Any necessary variations for individual students will also be recorded.
- Ensure student portfolios of evidence and grades are **consistently used and securely stored** and are **accessible** in the event of student appeals in August 2021.
- Ensure that a **checklist is completed** for each qualification submitted by each Head of Department using the template provided.

Teachers

Our teachers will:

- Uphold the requirement to **keep any results confidential** and not enter into discussions with students and parents/carers about the grades awarded.
- Report any concerns about **malpractice**.
- 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 JCQ, to provide centre assessed grades for each student they have entered for a qualification.
- Ensure that the **initial teacher suggested** 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.
- **Securely store** and be able to retrieve sufficient evidence to justify their decisions.

SENCO

In addition to the above, our SENCO will:

- Assist with the moderation and quality assurance of grades awarded to students with SEN.

Examinations Officer

Our Examinations Officer will:

- **Co-ordinate** the arrangements for **supporting those students with approved access arrangements** during the two assessment windows between April and May 2021.
- Be **responsible for the administration of our final centre assessed grades** and for managing the post-results services.
- **Support with the secure storage of and access to students' evidence** portfolios should they be required during an appeals process in August 2021.

Training, Support and Guidance:

Training

- **All teaching staff were initially made aware** on March 4th 2021 via the Deputy Headteacher **of the approach to determining centre assessed grades.**
- **The internal timeline and additional information to support the process of awarding centre assessed grades was shared with Departments** on 16th March 2021.
- **The full JCQ guidance and a summary of the main points was shared with Heads of Department** on 9th & 10th April 2021 ahead of Faculty meetings on 14th April.
- **Students and parents were written to in March 2021** with details of a narrated presentation detailing the assessment procedures for the summer.
- **Further communication** to students and parents in April 2021 **shared both the official JCQ guidance for students and parents alongside updated information regarding internal assessment windows.**
- **Further training and documentation** provided by JCQ and the awarding organisations will be **sign-posted** to relevant staff.
- Where appropriate, we **will provide a mentoring system for NQTs and teachers less familiar with assessment.** This will make use of experienced exam board markers and teachers. Our **moderation process will build in reviews and discussions** about their assessments to support them.

Use of Appropriate Evidence:

Use of Appropriate Evidence

This section gives details in relation to our use of evidence.

- Heads of Department will **guide their teams in making judgements** using the OFQUAL guidance on recommended evidence, and further guidance provided by awarding organisations.
- All **evidence used to support centre assessed grades created must be kept for audit and quality assurance purposes**. Evidence prior to March 26th 2021 may have been passed to students for revision purposes in which case a mark book or electronic marksheet will be sufficient evidence.
- 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 and will ensure the normal weighting for this is used when awarding a centre assessed grade. **We will not however disadvantage students who were not able to complete NEA due to school closure or COVID related absence.**
- 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 may use **substantial class or homework** (including work that took place during remote learning, though this will be used with caution).
- We will use **internal tests** taken by students.
- We will use **internal progress 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.
- From April 12th 2021, **we will inform students in advance if they are to complete a task that will be used as evidence.**

April and May Assessment Windows

The internal assessments in these published assessment windows are not examinations. They will 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**.
- An opportunity to **show improvement**, for example, to validate or replace an existing piece of evidence.

These assessments further support our teachers to arrive at consistency of judgement 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 has not been taught.

The Balance of Evidence

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 **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 Centre Assessed Grades:

Awarded grades will represent a holistic, objective judgement based on the evidence produced for each subject as per the JCQ Guidance.

Awarding centre assessed grades based on evidence

We give details here of our centre's approach to awarding centre assessed grades.

- Each **department has reviewed their specification** and are clear on what content has not been delivered. Any **assessments will be adjusted to reflect this**.
- Teachers will initially suggest grades based on the students' **demonstrated knowledge, understanding and skills** across the content of the course they have been taught.
- As far as possible, our teachers will use a **consistent evidence base** and this will enable a consistent process is used to arrive at a **fair and objective grade**, which is **free from bias**.
- Teachers will **record how the evidence was used to** arrive at a fair and objective grade, which is free from bias. When any necessary variations for individuals are required these will be recorded centrally.
- Any non-exam assessment (**NEA**) **will be used with the same weighting**, as outlined in the course guidance.
- Decisions will **not be based** on a **student's potential** when awarding grades.
- Where a course has tiered entry, **the grade awarded will reflect the tier a student has been entered for**.
- The **grade descriptors** and **grading exemplification** will be used to support teachers and departments in awarding grades.

Internal Quality Assurance:

Internal Quality Assurance

- 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.
- We will conduct internal standardisation across all grades.
- 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.
- 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. This includes ensuring Access Arrangements are upheld.

Comparison of Centre Assessed Grades to results for previous cohorts:

Comparison of Centre Assessed Grades to results for previous cohorts

- The initial teacher suggested grades will be aggregated and **whole school and individual subject data will be generated.**
- We will **omit subjects that we no longer offer from the historical data** when looking at the distribution of grades for the centre as a whole.
- The **subject and whole school data will be compared with the years 2017, 2018 and 2019.**
- **Allowing for cohort and individual student variation**, any necessary adjustments will be made to bring outcomes into tolerance with the achievements of those two previous years, both in aggregate and at individual subject level.
- These adjustments will be made using a **ranking process** that Heads of Department are familiar with from the 2020 process for awarding centre assessed grades.
- We will prepare a **succinct narrative on the outcomes of the review against historic data** if there is a significant divergence from the qualifications-levels profiles attained in previous examined years. This will address the reasons for this divergence and this commentary will be available for subsequent review during the QA process.

Access Arrangements and Special Considerations:

Access Arrangements and Special Considerations

- Where a student has **agreed access arrangements** or reasonable adjustments (for example a reader or scribe) we will ensure that these arrangements are in place when assessments are being taken during our published assessment windows.
- Where an assessment has taken place without an agreed reasonable adjustment or access arrangement, we will consider removing that assessment from the student's portfolio 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.
- These access arrangements will be administered in accordance with [JCQ – A guide to the special consideration process, with effect from 1 September 2020](#).

Addressing disruption/differential lost learning (DLL)

- School assessed grades will be determined based on **evidence of the content that has been taught and assessed for each student**.
- This may mean that the **evidence for individual students may vary**, where for example a student was unable to access remote learning adequately.

Objectivity:

Objectivity

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

Senior Leaders and Heads of Department 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 centre assessed grades.

To ensure objectivity, all staff involved in determining centre 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.
- centre 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**.
- **Blind marking** of assessments used to help to reduce potential bias.
- 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:

A. Recording Decisions and Retention of Evidence and Data

- We will produce a **central database** for all teachers and Heads of Departments to record the centre assessed grades.
- We will also ensure that the school **maintains records** that show how the centre assessed grades process operated, including the rationale for decisions in relation to individual marks/grades.
- We will 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.
- 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:

B. Authenticating Evidence

- The purpose of the April and May assessment windows is to ensure a **robust and authentic** evidence base in addition to evidence that has already been designated by Heads of Department to be used in the awarding of a student's centre assessed grade.
- Teachers will be supported by their Heads of Department and SLT to ensure that they 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

A. Confidentiality

- All staff involved have been made aware of the need to **maintain the confidentiality** of centre 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.
- **This policy**, including requirements around sharing details of evidence and the confidentiality requirements, **will be shared with parents/carers**.

Malpractice

B. Malpractice

- 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.
- 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
 - **entering 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
 - **failure to keep appropriate records of decisions made** and centre 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

C. 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 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:

Private Candidates

- The Bromfords School and Sixth Form College will unfortunately **not be accepting entries from private candidates** for qualifications to be awarded in Summer 2021.

External Quality Assurance:

External Quality Assurance

- 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 new **student evidence on which decisions regarding the determination of grades has been retained** and can be made available for review as required. Historical evidence is retained where possible.
- Instances where **student evidence** used to decide centre 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:

Results

- **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.
- 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/carers will be made aware of the **arrangements for results days**.

Appeals:

Appeals

- **All staff** involved have been **made aware** of the **arrangements for**, and the **requirements of, appeals** in summer 2021, as set out in the 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.
- **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**.

Jochen Tree
Deputy Headteacher
April 2021

Approved by Governors *via Chair's Action* on: 21/04/21