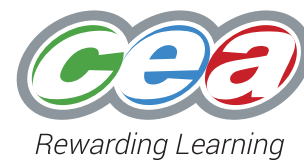


Summer 2021



# GCSE, AS and A Level Awarding Summer 2021

## Alternative Arrangements – Process for Heads of Centre



Revised Version 2.0: 15 March 2021



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## 1. BACKGROUND

On 6 January 2021, the Minister of Education, Peter Weir MLA, cancelled all CCEA GCSE, AS and A2 examinations scheduled for January, February, May and June 2021. Instead, by Formal Direction of the Minister dated 2 March 2021, the approach to awarding grades in Summer 2021 will be based on teacher professional judgements, with moderation. This guidance, which applies to GCSE, AS and A level qualifications offered by CCEA awarding organisation, is intended to support teachers and school leaders in submitting appropriate Centre Determined Grades for each student.

In 2021, centres are asked to use a range of evidence to arrive at a professional and academic judgement of the standard at which each student is performing in the context of the specification for which they are entered **and from this provide a grade to CCEA.**

This is different from 2020, when centres were asked to supply a centre assessment grade based on their judgement of the grade a student would likely have achieved if they had been able to complete examinations. It will require centres and CCEA to develop and use different processes from those used last year.

The Department of Education has issued information outlining the key stages of the alternative awarding arrangements for 2021 drawn from the Formal Ministerial Direction dated 2 March 2021. An overview of this five step awarding process is included in **Appendix 1**. Subject-specific guidance will also be issued by CCEA from mid-March. Guidance on other CCEA qualifications including Occupational Studies, Entry Level, OLA and Vocationally Related Qualifications will be issued separately.

## 2. OVERVIEW OF PROCESS FOR 2021

To enable progression for students, it is important that each CCEA qualification grade awarded in Summer 2021 is valid and reliable.<sup>1</sup> This ensures qualifications have credibility with users, including higher education institutions and employers. Standards are normally maintained year on year through comparable outcomes from accredited examinations and assessments and managed by the awarding organisations offering GCSE and A level qualifications. This approach will not be possible this year because of the alternative arrangements in place. Therefore, it is important for centres, when awarding grades, to be cognisant of the need to be fair and consistent, and to ensure they have a clear understanding of the requirements that must be demonstrated in each specification. The five step process set out in this guidance has been designed with fairness and consistency as key aims, as the usual mechanisms of comparability cannot be applied.

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<sup>1</sup> [Education \(Northern Ireland\) Order 1998, Article 79 1\(c\)](#) states that CCEA shall 'seek to ensure that the standards of examinations and assessments conducted by bodies or authorities in Northern Ireland are recognised as equivalent to the standards of examinations and assessments conducted by bodies or authorities exercising similar functions elsewhere in the United Kingdom.'

Each Centre Determined Grade is a judgement of the final grade for a qualification. It must be based on a holistic review of a student's performance as indicated by assessment evidence, gathered and retained at centre level. In the interests of fairness within and across centres, each Centre Determined Grade must be a realistic, evidence-based judgement of the standard at which a student is performing, i.e. their demonstrated knowledge, understanding and skills in the content of the specification they have covered. This means students **do not** need to have completed a specified amount of content, or demonstrate skills, knowledge and understanding across every area of the specification, as they would normally. In this way, disruption to teaching and learning can be taken into account. An example of an approach to assigning Centre Determined Grades is included as **Appendix 2**.

We acknowledge that the ongoing pandemic creates a unique situation which presents significant challenges for teachers and school leaders, and we thank you for your continued co-operation and support. The knowledge, expertise and professionalism of teachers and school leaders are key to achieving fairness and consistency in the implementation of the alternative assessment and grading process. The five step alternative assessment and grading process that will underpin the arrangements this year has been designed to support centres in forming consistent judgements, while enabling the use of a wide range of evidence to accommodate flexibility. See **Appendix 3** for a timeline of key activities to take place.

### **3. GCSE, GCE AS AND A LEVELS NOT PROVIDED BY CCEA**

Northern Ireland operates an open qualifications market. This means that students can take GCSE, AS and A level qualifications with AQA, OCR, Pearson, WJEC, Eduqas (part of WJEC) and CCEA.

The respective awarding organisations and regulators (Ofqual and Qualifications Wales) in England and Wales will publish information on how GCSEs, AS and A levels will be awarded in Summer 2021. If you have students entered for a GCSE, AS or A level qualification with AQA, OCR, Pearson, WJEC or Eduqas (part of WJEC), you should refer to the awarding organisation for guidance and requirements, which may differ from this information. You will also wish to familiarise yourself with the regulatory requirements published by Ofqual and Qualifications Wales.

**The remainder of this document addresses GCSEs, AS and A levels provided by CCEA only.**

This information is provided in the context of the most up-to-date advice for educational settings set out by the Department of Education and HSC Public Health Agency. If that advice changes, Heads of Centre should consider this information in the light of any updated guidance.

## 4. CENTRE POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Heads of Centre must develop a Centre Determined Grades policy outlining their approach to providing Centre Determined Grades, taking into account the support and guidance provided by CCEA. CCEA will request a copy of this policy from all centres for submission by 23 April. The policy should be approved by the centre's Board of Governors. The centre policy should include:

- an outline of the training, support and guidance provided to staff involved in the grading process;
- roles and responsibilities of centre staff;
- a process overview to demonstrate how a consistent approach will be implemented across departments;
- what evidence will be considered in arriving at grades that will be recorded in the Departmental Assessment Evidence Grid that will form part of the evidence base;
- how the evidence will be used to arrive at a fair grade;
- the approach to differential teaching and learning due to the impact of the pandemic, i.e. ways in which assessments will be adapted;
- steps taken to ensure all centre judgements will be free from bias and discrimination;
- how all student-specific factors which may impact on their performance will be considered when assigning grades including, for example, illness at time of assessment (see Section 9: Ensuring Fairness to all Students – Special Consideration);
- quality assurance of grades in subjects where there is more than one teacher and/or class; and
- the documentation and retention of evidence and data so that it is readily accessible for internal or external review.

The centre policy should **not** be an exhaustive restatement of a centre's general Internal Quality Assurance Policies. It should be a succinct document focused on the process of arriving at Centre Determined Grades for Summer 2021. CCEA has provided a template to assist centres in developing a policy. This is set out in **Appendix 4**.

The policy should be accessible to students and parents to ensure they are aware of the evidence that will be used for producing Centre Determined Grades.

## 5. PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS BEFORE REVIEWING EVIDENCE

In arriving at a Centre Determined Grade for a student, it is not necessary to assess every aspect of the specification exhaustively. A selection of key tasks or assessments carried out under appropriate conditions and with a suitable level of demand, which allows the teacher to authenticate the work as the student's own, will give a good indication of the standard at which the student is performing in the qualification.

To make accurate judgements, teachers must have a clear understanding of:

- the range of skills, knowledge and understanding covered by the specification;
- the assessment requirements and the structure of the specification;

- the grade descriptions at key grades;
- the level of demand of the qualification assessments; and
- the weighting of each component/unit and the type of assessment.

Information on these aspects can be found in each specification, specimen assessment materials, past papers<sup>2</sup>, and controlled assessment/coursework assessment tasks available on the CCEA website at [www.ccea.org.uk](http://www.ccea.org.uk)

When judging evidence you should consider its value, both in terms of the individual pieces of evidence and as part of the overall judgement for each student. You should exercise caution where work completed has been unsupervised. This work should not be discounted, but it must only be used as evidence when reliably authenticated as the student's own work. You must satisfy yourself that such work is authentic work, for example by asking questions and recording responses about how it was produced and the student's knowledge of it.

A piece of evidence has high validity and reliability if a student who performs well in the task would reasonably be expected to perform equally well in the qualification as a whole. Some considerations that may impact on evidence are noted below.

- **Specification Coverage**

A piece of evidence that covers a greater breadth of the specification content, knowledge, understanding and skills from a unit (or units) with a higher weighting may give a better indication of a student's standard of performance than a piece with lesser breadth or with a lower weighting. Evidence does not need to cover the entire specification content.

- **Similarity to Actual Qualification Assessments**

Evidence that is similar to a CCEA assessment for the qualification will be more useful in determining a student's grade than evidence that is considerably different from the qualification assessment in terms of question structure, content and/or assessment arrangements.

- **Controls**

If evidence is generated under less controlled conditions than a qualification assessment, its value may be less than a piece generated under conditions that are similar. Centres should keep a record of the conditions under which an assessment was completed, i.e. high, medium or limited levels of control – see **Appendix 5** for definitions. However, CCEA understands the difficult public health context in which schools have been working since March 2020, which has included two extended periods of remote learning. Schools may, therefore, need to utilise evidence generated within more limited levels of control.

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<sup>2</sup> Past papers and mark schemes will be available for all CCEA GCSE, AS and A level qualifications subject to copyright clearance.

- **Level of Demand**

The evidence you gather must be set at an appropriate level of demand for it to be a good indicator of a student's standard of performance.

- **When Evidence Is Generated**

It should be borne in mind that a student's knowledge, understanding and skills may develop over the period of a course of study; you should consider when any piece of evidence was generated and ensure, if possible, that evidence generated recently is taken into account.

## 6. CCEA SUPPORT FOR CENTRES

### CCEA Training and Guidance

As part of the support package for Summer 2021, CCEA has partnered with the Chartered Institute of Educational Assessors (CIEA) to deliver a programme to schools and colleges to support fairness and consistency in alternative awarding arrangements. This programme is optional; however, it is designed to help centres develop a shared understanding of the process of arriving at judgements and reinforce existing knowledge and understanding in assessment. On completion of the training, attendees should act as Lead Assessors in their centre and disseminate the content of the programme to colleagues. Their role will be in quality assuring the process required to produce fair and robust judgements for Summer 2021. The training programme comprises the following four modules:

- The Validity Chain;
- Standardisation and Moderation;
- Using Data; and
- The 2021 Process.

CCEA subject-specific guidance and subject-specific webinars will also be provided to support centres at Head of Department and subject teacher level. The support guidance and webinars will reconfirm earlier examination policies, such as the omission of units at GCSE and A level. They will also include information on how to adapt CCEA assessment resources to manage content not covered due to COVID disruption, grade descriptors and determining grades that do not have grade descriptors, using the CCEA assessment resources and application of mark schemes.

Access will also be provided to existing support which may be used in checking understanding of qualification standards (demand and performance), such as past papers, mark schemes, grade boundaries, Chief Examiner's reports, Principal Moderator's reports, agreement trials, exemplification of examination performance, CCEA Analytics and specimen assessment materials.

**This support, including webinars, will be available on CCEA's website for teachers to access at their convenience. Support will be rolled out from 19 March, commencing with A level, followed by AS and GCSE subject-specific support. Assessment resources will not be provided for units/components where endorsement arrangements in lieu of assessments were in place for Summer 2021.**



## CCEA Assessment Resources

In 2020, many students seeking a GCSE or GCE qualification grade had been awarded notional unit grades or uniform mark scores to use as evidence in determining centre assessment grades; however, this is not the case in 2021. In the absence of this information, CCEA will supply assessment resources to your centre. These will be quality assured question papers and mark schemes for **all** units/components that normally have examinations<sup>3</sup>. They will contain new questions and tasks not previously released to centres and must therefore be stored securely. These materials are not to be seen as high stakes assessments but rather viewed as materials which could form part of the evidence used to inform Centre Determined Grades, as recommended by the Department of Education in its [High level guide for schools and colleges – Alternative awarding arrangements 2021](#).

While the use of the assessment resources is optional, we would encourage centres to use the assessment resources under high control conditions, where the public health situation allows (definitions of levels of control are included as **Appendix 5**), to ensure they have the greatest value. Centres do not have to use all the assessment resources, but we advise centres to use at least one per qualification. CCEA will provide mark schemes to centres ideally at the same time that the resources are made available at the end of March. Where more than one teacher is involved in marking assessments, guidance on the internal standardisation process is set out in Section 11 of this document.

If a student indicates that they want to take an assessment, it is recommended that the centre facilitates this request provided that the school feels that the subject content has been covered in a way that enables the student to complete all or part of the assessment resource.

We appreciate that decisions were taken in October and December 2020 in respect of unit omissions in GCSE, AS and A level qualifications. We also acknowledge disruption to teaching and learning may mean that even in the context of these omissions, certain content may not have been covered. In such cases, the assessment resources may be adapted accordingly.

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<sup>3</sup> Assessment resources will not be provided for units/components where endorsement arrangements in lieu of assessments were in place for Summer 2021, for example GCSE Languages Unit 2: Speaking.

## 7. EVIDENCE TO INFORM CENTRE DETERMINED GRADES

This section provides guidance on the information that centres should use in confirming Centre Determined Grades.

The evidence used must be at the level of the qualification being graded and generated during the teaching period of the specification.

For a GCSE qualification taken over two years, evidence completed in Year 11 may be considered.

For A level, AS evidence may be considered alongside A2 evidence if a centre deems this appropriate and/or necessary; however, the differences between AS and A2 should be borne in mind. For example, the AS qualification is weighted at 40% of the overall A level and has different grade descriptions. There is also no A\* grade at AS. If AS evidence is to be used, it should be included in the Centre Determined Grades policy, the Candidate Assessment Record (or similar) and evidence submitted to CCEA for sampling in the CCEA review stage.

You should consider all the key evidence you have for each student and reflect on how much it tells you about the student's standard of performance, as measured against the requirements of the relevant specification. For example, this could be, but is not limited to:

- the consistency of a student's practical or performance evidence;
- their depth or breadth of knowledge and understanding in relation to questions on key topics;
- their degree of analytical or evaluative skills demonstrated on key topics; and/or
- quality of student responses to discriminating questions or tasks.

Centres should be clear in their policy what types of evidence will be used in determining the grade. Centres should also be clear with students the evidence that will be used to determine their grades. Where possible, centres should aim to use consistent sources of evidence for a qualification cohort. Some examples of evidence are noted in the table that follows:

Evidence
<p><b>CCEA assessment resources</b> – When taken under high control conditions, where the public health situation allows, these assessments will be a good indicator of the standard of student performance as they are fully aligned to specification content and the level of demand of past papers.</p>
<p><b>Performance in any mock examinations taken</b> – These are likely to be a good indicator of performance, particularly if they are taken under high control conditions and assess the skills, knowledge and understanding required by the CCEA specification or are similar to CCEA question papers.</p>
<p><b>Performance in CCEA past paper questions and mark schemes</b> – These assessments are in the public domain and can be readily accessed by students. Therefore, in their entirety, they do not form strong evidence. However, elements of these can be incorporated into mock exams or class tests. You may wish to access grade boundaries and/or Chief Examiner’s reports which relate to these papers, available at <a href="http://www.ccea.org.uk">www.ccea.org.uk</a>. If the examinations in the qualifications you deliver are marked online, you can also avail of the data held in the CCEA Analytics application. Further information can be obtained by contacting CCEA at <a href="mailto:CCEA.Analytics@ccea.org.uk">CCEA.Analytics@ccea.org.uk</a></p>
<p><b>Performance in class tests</b> – If class tests only assess specific content, you should use a series of marked class tests. A series of such assessments, done under high control conditions and sampling the key aspects of the specification, should provide good evidence of student performance. Many class tests will be recorded as a mark or percentage, and centres should ensure there is a consistent approach in mapping these to a grade.</p>
<p><b>Records of each student’s performance throughout their study</b> – This includes, for example, progress review/tracking data, classwork, bookwork and/or participation in performances in subjects where this is assessed, for example Music, Drama and PE.</p>
<p><b>For GCSE students who sat units prior to Summer 2021, their notional unit grades in that subject</b> – It is likely that only students studying Single and Double Award Science will have completed prior units.</p>
<p><b>Performance in any controlled assessments/coursework or other assessments required for the qualification</b> – This can be even if these have not been fully completed.</p>
<p><b>Performance in any class assessments taken throughout their study</b> – This may consist of a variety of evidence types, produced under different conditions. Evidence of this kind is unlikely to form a strong evidence base on its own, but it may supplement other evidence types.</p>
<p><b>Tiers</b> – In GCSE subjects that include units available at Foundation or Higher, the tier entered by students should be considered. The Centre Determined Grade should not be higher than the maximum grade allowable through the combination of Foundation and Higher Tier units selected.</p>
<p><b>For resitting students</b>, prioritise evidence generated during the 2020/21 academic year.</p>

We would encourage centres to use at least one of the CCEA assessment resources. We realise that the evidence available will vary across individual students and subjects. Generating, assessing and documenting this evidence in a narrow timeframe will be challenging. Therefore, we do not wish to be prescriptive in the amount of evidence used but would rather encourage centres to consider the reliability and validity of the evidence. CCEA will review all centre grades and undertake an evidence sampling exercise. Details of the format in which evidence is required will be provided in the coming weeks as CCEA application systems are finalised.

Initially, CCEA will request key evidence that best reflects the student's performance for a sample of students for one subject, chosen at specific grades. Centres must be prepared to provide this evidence within 48 hours.

## **8. BIAS AND DISCRIMINATION**

Each Centre Determined Grade must be an objective decision based on evidence of a student's knowledge, understanding and skills in relation to the subject. Other factors should not affect this judgement. The law protects people from discrimination on a number of specified characteristics including age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, political opinion, or sexual orientation. When making judgements, there is always the possibility of bias, even if unconsciously, which may originate from assumptions or stereotypes based on characteristics. Unconscious bias is underlying attitudes and stereotypes that people attribute to another person or group of people, without realising, that may affect how they understand or make judgements about that person or group.

When the centre is determining a student's grade, it must base judgements on the evidence of their individual academic performance rather than positive or challenging personal circumstances, character, behaviour, appearance, socio-economic background, or performance of their siblings. This will ensure you are as consistent and objective as possible. The evidence should be valued for its own merit as an indication of performance and attainment.

Being aware of the possibility of bias reduces the chance that it will influence your decision-making. A conscious effort must be made to avoid bias. It may be useful to carry out blind or cross-marking exercises, as this could decrease the potential for bias in grading decisions. Centres may also wish to reflect on decisions across departments in this context. It is important that decisions made throughout the process are reflected on at teacher, department and centre level.

CCEA has provided an optional support package for school leaders through Chartered Institute of Educational Assessors (CIEA) training. The training incorporates modules and supporting materials including guidance on determining the validity of assessments. The relevant module focuses on the idea of the validity chain and explains the importance of applying principles of fairness and avoiding bias, as well as other aspects of validity. The module provides an opportunity to explore the challenges and solutions relevant to a holistic approach to assessing the validity of assessment judgements and includes:

- sources of unfairness and bias (situations/contexts, difficulty, presentation and format, language, conditions for assessment, marker preconceptions);
- minimising bias (how to minimise bias in questions and marking, hidden forms of bias); and
- bias in teacher assessments.

Centres should include a section on Bias and Discrimination in their centre policy for awarding Centre Determined Grades, Summer 2021.

## 9. ENSURING FAIRNESS TO ALL STUDENTS

In the present context, fairness requires that Centre Determined Grades are reached on the basis of objective and unbiased assessment of evidence, taking account of relevant considerations and leaving out of account those that are irrelevant.

It is recognised that some students have experienced particular disruption to teaching and learning due to the pandemic. Lost teaching and learning time is being addressed via the flexibility afforded to the centre in the content that will be assessed. Centres must set out, as part of their Centre Determined Grades policy, how they will assess students.

For example, a student who has covered 40% of the specification content and, based on the available evidence, is judged to be performing at a higher level than a student who has covered 70% of the content, should receive a higher grade. Such judgement must be based on the evidence of the student's performance against the areas of the qualification specification which have been taught. In this example the centre would record the judgement within the Candidate Assessment Record.

### Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments

Access arrangements and reasonable adjustments allow students with specific needs, such as special educational needs or disabilities, to access assessments, meeting the needs of the individual without affecting the integrity of the assessment. They are agreed before an assessment takes place and should reflect a student's normal way of working. Where students have agreed access arrangements or reasonable adjustments (for example a reader or scribe), the centre must make every effort to ensure that these arrangements are in place when assessments are being taken. Where, for some reason, it has not been possible to have arrangements in place, the judgements made *in regards to each item of evidence* should reflect performance had these arrangements been in place. *A record should be kept of adjustments made to outcomes as a result of such consideration.*

Details on access arrangements can be found on the JCQ website at [Joint Council for Qualifications: Regulations and Guidance](#).

### Special Consideration

Special consideration is a post-assessment adjustment to a student's mark or grade to reflect temporary illness, injury or trauma **at the time of the assessment**. Special consideration in the usual manner will not apply this summer as public examinations have been cancelled. However, where illness or other personal circumstances as set out in JCQ 'A guide to the special consideration process' might have affected performance in

assessments used in determining students' grades, centres should take account of this when making their judgements. Centres should keep a record of how they have determined any impact of illness or personal circumstances on students' performance in assessments and how this was incorporated into their judgements. Details on special consideration can be found on the JCQ website at [Joint Council for Qualifications: Regulations and Guidance](#). In the event that a student, for acceptable reasons specified in the JCQ guidance, was unable to sit an assessment taken by others in the cohort, a teacher can substitute this with an additional piece of evidence for this student. This must be recorded on the Candidate Assessment Record (see **Appendix 6**).

### **Conflicts of Interest**

Heads of Centre are responsible for managing any potential conflicts of interest in relation to the submission of Centre Determined Grades, for example where a member of centre staff is involved in the preparation of Centre Determined Grades for a family member.

The Head of Centre must ensure that records of a potential conflict of interest, and the steps taken to mitigate it, are retained. If the potential conflict of interest involves the Head of Centre, this should be notified to CCEA ahead of submission using the established routes for capturing declarations of interest of centre staff.

## **10. SUMMARY OF INFORMATION REQUIRED FROM CENTRES**

### **Entries**

The entry deadline for Summer 2021 has now passed, and we would like to thank you for submitting your main entry files. CCEA's entries team will be in communication with centres regarding entry eligibility over the next 8 weeks. This work is key to ensure that IT systems can accept and process all students' Centre Determined Grades in Summer 2021. CCEA will close entry systems on 16 April 2021 and will be unable to process any entry amendment files after this date. It is important that your Examinations Officer responds promptly to any emails received from the entries team in the coming weeks. CCEA must ensure that we have accurate entry data prior to collecting the Centre Determined Grades, as this information will be used to populate the online application for centre submission of data.

We would ask that you follow all guidance on entries provided to date and observe the deadlines issued to enable grading and issue of results to proceed as planned. This is particularly important if you wish to use a modified version of any CCEA assessment resource.

Please see CCEA's [Summary of Entry Requirements – Summer 2021](#) for further guidance.

Should you have any specific entry queries, please email [entries@ccea.org.uk](mailto:entries@ccea.org.uk)

## Modified Assessment Resources

As part of the package of support for Summer 2021, CCEA will provide a suite of modified versions of the assessment resources in order to cater for the needs of all candidates as far as possible. We will provide Modified Visual (MV18) versions of all units. If further modifications are required, this should be completed by the centre and must reflect the candidate's normal way of working in internal school tests and mock examinations.

We will also provide all Modified Language examinations, where the language has been modified to suit candidate needs. A full list of all modified versions available will be supplied to centres. Some units do not require the language to be modified.

Should you have a requirement for tactile diagrams or braille versions of the assessments, please contact Andrea Molloy in the Question Paper Production team ([amolloy@ccea.org.uk](mailto:amolloy@ccea.org.uk)).

All files (excluding braille and tactile) will be provided in a digital format to the Examinations Officer. A step-by-step guide on this will be provided to centres, and this will include the dates when the files will be available for download.

If you have any general queries, or if any other issue arises in relation to modified support materials for 2021, please contact [modifiedsupport@ccea.org.uk](mailto:modifiedsupport@ccea.org.uk)

## Students Eligible for Centre Determined Grades

Centres must submit a Centre Determined Grade for every student wishing to cash in a CCEA qualification grade as outlined below:

- All AS and A level students; and
- At GCSE, only Year 12 students (and above) and those in further education or training who are completing qualifications in 2021. Entries or grades must not be submitted for any students in Year 11 or below in 2021 with the following two exceptions:
  - GCSE Mathematics students who will be entering GCSE Further Mathematics in 2022; and/or
  - GCSE Irish students who may progress to GCSE Gaeilge or require GCSE Irish for progression to other courses delivered in Irish. This decision is in line with the statutory duty to encourage and facilitate Irish-medium education.

Notional unit grades or marks will not be required or accepted for individual units. If there is insufficient evidence to award a grade, a 'U' grade should be awarded unless the student is withdrawn.

## Submission Deadlines for Centre Determined Grades

GCE AS and A level – no later than 21 May 2021

GCSE – no later than 4 June 2021

These deadlines have been selected to maximise teaching and learning time and also to allow for the CCEA review of evidence process.

### **Using the Full Range of Grades**

Centres must ensure they use the full range of grades as appropriate to the evidence they have available. This includes grade 'U' for work that is below the threshold required for a grade and grade A\* for exceptional performance.

### **Subject-Specific Information**

*GCSE, GCE AS and A Level Double Awards*

Centre Determined Grades should be based on the double grading system A\*A\*, A\*A, AA, etc.

*GCSE Religious Studies (Short and Full Course)*

In submitting grades, centres will be asked to produce these separately for Religious Studies (Short Course) and Religious Studies (Full Course).

*GCSE Digital Technology (Multimedia) and Digital Technology (Programming)*

In submitting grades, centres will be asked to produce these separately for Digital Technology (Multimedia) and Digital Technology (Programming).

### **Students Who Are Taught at a Different Centre (Consortium<sup>4</sup>)**

Students who are being taught at a different centre from the one where the entry was made should be included in the grading of the centre that made the entry. The centre making the entry should consult with the teaching centre and compare evidence on student performance in both centres to determine an agreed grade. The home centre, which is making the entry for the student, has final responsibility for submitting a Centre Determined Grade. The centre making the entry will need to ensure they have access to all available students' evidence, as this may be requested of them to support the CCEA sampling process.

### **Transferred Students**

In cases where a student has transferred from one school or college to another part-way through their studies, the current Head of Centre may wish to consult with the previous centre about evidence they hold and may take this into account in reaching a judgement, where they are confident to do so. To ensure centres can provide a grade for transferred students, all grades in the grade range should be considered. If there is insufficient evidence, a 'U' grade should be awarded unless the student is withdrawn.

### **Private Candidates**

Private candidates are students who have not been taught in the centre because they might be home-schooled, are studying independently, or study at an institution that is not an examination centre.

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<sup>4</sup> In Northern Ireland, Consortiums often operate within Area Learning Communities (ALCs).



Where centres have accepted entries from private candidates, those students should be included where the Head of Centre is confident that they and their staff have seen sufficient evidence of the student's performance to make an objective judgement. Centres should ensure that private candidates can be facilitated to take any necessary assessments to ensure there is sufficient evidence on which to determine a grade. This includes the CCEA assessment resources. It may be that this is the only piece of evidence available for some private candidates. In these exceptional circumstances, basing a judgement solely on this piece of evidence will be acceptable. The Candidate Assessment Record should also be completed for private candidates.

Private candidates should not be withdrawn unless in agreement with the candidate. Deciding not to enter or to withdraw a private candidate should only be done in exceptional circumstances.

We appreciate that there may be instances where students do not have existing or substantive relationships with centres, and we understand that making judgements about these individuals' performances may be more difficult. Our expectation is that a centre can seek further information from teachers and other education professionals who have been supporting a student's learning to allow them to make secure judgements about Centre Determined Grades. This might include, for example, seeking information from teachers in another school, college or hospital setting, or from qualified teachers of deaf or visually impaired learners.

## 11. QUALITY ASSURANCE

### Internal Standardisation

In subjects where there is more than one teacher and/or class in the department, it is a requirement to carry out internal standardisation. The purpose of internal standardisation is to provide teachers with confidence in the Centre Determined Grades they have assigned, to ensure fairness and objectivity of decisions, and to ensure consistency in the application of assessment criteria and standards.

Where more than one teacher is involved in marking the assessment, the application of the mark scheme must be agreed before marking begins.

When marking is complete, internal standardisation must be conducted to ensure all markers have applied the mark scheme consistently and accurately.

Internal standardisation should include cross-marking samples of work across the full range of attainment and include students' work from each class **to ensure a common standard within a department is applied.**

To satisfy requirements in relation to equality and disability legislation, schools should consider ensuring students of different protected characteristics are included in the sampling and cross-checking.

The evidence within the Candidate Assessment Records (or similar) should form the basis of discussions around decisions made.

As a result of the internal standardisation process, it may be necessary to adjust a teacher's decision:

- to match the standards as established and understood in the guidance provided; and
- to bring judgements into line with those of other teachers in the centre.

In the context of departmental internal standardisation, any necessary decisions will be made by the Head of Department. They should complete the relevant checklist, which will record any adjustments and relevant information.

## **Centre Moderation**

When Centre Determined Grades have been assigned, these must be reviewed across subjects and at overall centre level to ensure fairness to all students and that standards are consistent. This centre moderation activity should be undertaken by senior leadership teams within your centre. The Head of Centre has overall responsibility for ensuring the fairness and consistency of the process and may wish to request further evidence at this stage to decide if the Centre Determined Grades require review.

The Head of Centre will be required to confirm that the Centre Determined Grades for students are a true representation of student performance. If the Head of Centre is unavailable to do this, the Board of Governors may delegate a deputy Head of Centre. However, the Board of Governors should notify CCEA of this change. It is vital to the awarding process that Centre Determined Grades are as accurate as possible to ensure that cohorts in one centre are neither advantaged nor disadvantaged over cohorts taking the same qualification in other centres. The Minister of Education, Northern Ireland, has directed, in his Formal Ministerial Direction of 2 March 2021, the need to maximise the remaining teaching and learning time available before Centre Determined Grades are determined and submitted. To that end, centre moderation should take place in a period shortly before the submission deadlines for Centre Determined Grades.

**In accordance with the Formal Ministerial Direction of 2 March 2021, the Head of Centre will be required to submit the following declaration when the data is submitted. One Head of Centre sign-off will be required for each data submission. Centres will not be able to submit data without this authorisation.**

As the Head of Centre, I confirm that:

- these Centre Determined Grades have been checked for accuracy, reviewed by a second member of staff (where possible) and are accurate and represent the professional judgements made by my staff
- entries were appropriate for each candidate, in that students entered were those already studying the course, and each candidate has no more than one entry per subject
- my centre has met the requirements set out for internal quality assurance
- I am satisfied that the evidence on which each student's grade is based is their own work and that CCEA's requirements have been met for any private candidates
- access arrangements and reasonable adjustments were provided with appropriate input from the SENCo and other specialists
- I and my staff have taken note of the guidance from CCEA about minimising bias, and I am confident that the judgements are fair, free from bias and compatible with legislative requirements in respect of equality and discrimination
- all relevant evidence and records are available for inspection, as necessary.

Head of Centre: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## 12. CCEA REVIEW OF EVIDENCE AND CENTRE MODERATION

In the interests of fairness to all students, it is important that teacher judgements on students' grades are fair and consistent within and across different centres. The five step process aims to support centres throughout each step by providing guidance and resources, particularly in steps 1–3. In addition, School Improvement Professionals from the Education Authority and CCMS Education Advisers will engage in conversation with Heads of Centre about their centre moderation approach and the effective implementation of their Centre Determined Grades policy.<sup>5</sup>

Step four of the overall process involves a CCEA review stage once Centre Determined Grades have been submitted. All centres will be asked to provide evidence for a minimum of one student at each grade within one subject at one qualification level, selected by CCEA. Key evidence used to arrive at the Centre Determined Grade that best reflects the student's performance should be submitted. Ideally no more than three pieces of key evidence should be submitted per student. Centres must be prepared to provide this evidence within 48 hours. Other supporting information, such as the centre checklists (provided in **Appendix 6**) and the Centre Determined Grades policy, will be reviewed alongside evidence.

If evidence submitted does not support the grades, CCEA may request additional evidence for different subjects and qualification levels. Samples of student evidence are likely to cover all available grades, and the sample size may be determined based on subject cohort size.

The approach to reviewing grades is aimed at securing fairness, whilst minimising, as much as is possible, burden on centres. Every centre will have a minimum of one subject at one qualification level sampled to support consistency and fairness. In accordance with the Formal Ministerial Direction of 2 March 2021, there may, for example, be additional sampling of schools such as those within the Formal Intervention Process, which have been previously identified as requiring additional external support to take forward improvement.

Where review gives rise to concern that grades submitted appear unduly lenient or severe, additional evidence will be requested for additional students and/or additional subjects and qualifications.

The evidence must be uploaded via the CCEA application used to submit the Centre Determined Grades. Evidence must be submitted by the deadlines which will be set by CCEA. Centres should therefore ensure that all evidence is stored and easily accessible to transfer electronically to CCEA promptly after the submission of grades on 21 May 2021 (for AS and A level) and 4 June 2021 (for GCSE).

**Where there are concerns that the evidence does not support the grades submitted by a centre, CCEA may undertake a more extensive review of the centre's evidence, engage in professional dialogue with the centre, and in some cases may require the centre to re-run their grading process. CCEA does not propose to adjust grades as part of the review stage as the expectation is that centres will take any necessary**

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<sup>5</sup> Please note that CCEA representatives will liaise with centres not covered by EA or CCMS.

**action in response to concerns raised by CCEA. However, CCEA reserves the right to adjust grades and action will be taken if a centre refuses to comply with our requests. For example, in the interest of retaining public confidence in all CCEA grades issued in 2021, we may request evidence for some or all of a centre's cohort, may re-grade the evidence and issue grades on that basis. This action may lead to a delay in the issue of results for that centre.**

### 13. MALPRACTICE

Even in the absence of formal assessments registered centres are required to act ethically, to uphold the integrity of the qualifications system, and to report potential cases of malpractice or maladministration to CCEA for investigation. There may be instances where schools and colleges or teachers are put under improper pressure from a student or their parent/guardian to influence the decision-making on a grade. Any improper pressure must be reported to CCEA, and we may investigate this as potential malpractice.

Other examples of potential malpractice include allegations of the centres submitting grades that they know to be inaccurate or centres entering students who were not originally intending to cash in a grade in the 2021 summer series. Additional examples of malpractice are included in the policy template provided in **Appendix 4**.

CCEA will investigate any allegations of acts which are intended to give an unfair advantage in the data collection and grading process or undermine the processes outlined. The consequences of malpractice are as published in the JCQ guidance [Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures, 1 September 2020 to 31 August 2021](#).

### 14. APPEALS

CCEA will be working with other awarding organisations over the coming months to make sure that an appeals process is put in place and will provide more detailed guidance in due course. This will be well in advance of the issue of results.

The standard post-results services such as access to scripts, reviews of marking and reviews of moderation will not be available this summer.

### 15. NEXT STEPS

Centres can now begin work to develop policies and collate evidence for Centre Determined Grades. However, centres must not try to submit information until the application becomes available.

The application will be accessible via CCEA Central Login. It will be pre-populated with the data for your centre to include information and student numbers for each qualification, based on the entry information. Within each qualification, a grade must be selected for each student from the drop-down menu. **No ranking is required for CCEA evidence collection purposes.**

We hope this guidance enables you to have your Centre Determined Grades ready for submission in May/June. We will issue further information through updates to this guidance if necessary and/or through a questions and answers resource to deal with any questions from centres as they are received.

CCEA appreciates that the success of this exceptional awarding series will require centre and CCEA staff working in partnership, and we thank you in advance.

You can also contact the CCEA helpline for further clarification on [helpline@ccea.org.uk](mailto:helpline@ccea.org.uk) or (028) 9026 1220.

**APPENDIX 1****OVERVIEW OF THE FIVE STEP AWARDING PROCESS**

Step and Indicative Timeframe		Activity	Personnel
1	<b>Guidance, Information and Readiness (March, April)</b>	CCEA guidance documentation shared and understood by all involved staff. Centre fully participates in support offered by CCEA and other partner bodies, such as EA and CCMS.	Centre Leadership Team, Heads of Department (HoD) and teaching staff
		Centres agree their quality assurance process to ensure consistency across teachers, subjects and departments.	Centre Leadership Team, HoD and teaching staff
		Centre policy for awarding Centre Determined Grades developed, documented and shared with all staff. Policies to be sent to CCEA by 23 April so they are available for review at grade submission stage.	Centre Leadership Team
		Preliminary consideration of value of available evidence	Centre Leadership Team and HoD
2	<b>Evidence Gathering and Provision of Assessment Resource (March, April and May)</b>	Completion and marking of defined assessments in line with centre policy; for example, this could comprise CCEA assessment resources which will be available from April 2021.	Centre Leadership Team, HoD and teaching staff
		All other available evidence collated and documented	Centre Leadership Team, HoD and teaching staff
3	<b>Centre Professional Judgement and Moderation (April and May)</b>	All available evidence moderated in line with centre policy	Centre Leadership Team, HoD and teaching staff
		Any potential bias in Centre Determined Grades and outcomes considered	HoD and teaching staff
		Centre Determined Grade outcomes reviewed by senior leadership teams	Centre Leadership Team
		Head of Centre sign-off and submission of Centre Determined Grades	Head of Centre
4	<b>Review of Evidence and Award (June and July)</b>	Centre evidence and grade outcomes reviewed	CCEA personnel
		If evidence submitted is considered reasonable, centre grades proceed to award. If necessary, additional evidence requested and reviewed.	CCEA personnel
		Where CCEA still has concerns, there will be engagement with the centre and, in some cases, this may require the centre to re-run their grading process.	Head of Centre and CCEA personnel
5	<b>Post-Award Review Service (August and September)</b>	After the issue of results, students will have the right to appeal to their centres and to CCEA.	Head of Centre and CCEA personnel

**APPENDIX 2****EXAMPLE OF APPROACH FOR ASSIGNING CENTRE DETERMINED GRADES**

<b>Process</b>	<b>Approach</b>
<b>Internal Policies and Procedures</b>	Develop an overarching procedure which, as far as possible, can be used in all qualifications/departments
	Based on CCEA guidance to ensure consistency with other centres
<b>Selection of Assessment Resources</b>	Each department discusses which assessment(s) are most appropriate for assessing the level of performance of their students in line with centre policy, taking into account disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.
	Confirm arrangements, i.e. time(s) for assessment(s) to be completed under high control conditions – ensure any access arrangements can be met, for example availability of modified papers
	Departments/Teachers review chosen assessment(s) and mark schemes to ensure a common understanding of the application of the mark scheme
	If more than one teacher is marking, then an internal standardisation exercise is conducted on a number of scripts to ensure consistency and accuracy of marking.
<b>Evidence to Inform Centre Determined Grades</b>	Each department compiles a list of evidence to be considered in decision-making in line with centre policy; this must be recorded in the Departmental Assessment Evidence Grid.
	Departmental evidence lists reviewed at a senior level to ensure fairness and equality across subjects
<b>Bias and Discrimination</b>	Checks in place to ensure all centre assessed grading processes have been free from bias and discrimination – checked at and across subjects and departments
	Ensure any private candidates and transferred or consortium taught students have been treated fairly
	Ensure no student is advantaged or disadvantaged through a conflict of interest
<b>Ensuring Fairness to All Students</b>	Confirm that all access arrangements in place for students, if required
	Consideration given to factors that may have affected student performance which, in a normal series, may have resulted in a Special Consideration request
<b>Internal Quality Assurance</b>	Where a qualification has more than one teacher/class, the Head of Department reviews evidence and outcomes.
	Centre Leadership Team reviews outcomes prior to Head of Centre sign-off
	Individual student profiles reviewed to identify and investigate anomalies – for example a student who has a grade A profile across almost all subjects but one grade E



**APPENDIX 3****TIMELINE OF KEY ACTIVITIES**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity (Shaded cell denotes CCEA support activity)</b>	<b>For the Attention of</b>	<b>Format</b>
<b>17 February– 19 March 2021</b>	Chartered Institute of Educational Assessors Training	Two representatives from each centre	Online via CIEA
<b>From 19 March 2021</b>	CCEA subject-specific guidance for A and AS level available	Heads of Department and subject teachers	Online CCEA webinars and subject documentation at <a href="http://www.ccea.org.uk">www.ccea.org.uk</a>
<b>From 26 March 2021</b>	CCEA subject-specific guidance for GCSE available	Heads of Department and subject teachers	Online CCEA webinars and subject documentation at <a href="http://www.ccea.org.uk">www.ccea.org.uk</a>
<b>w/b 29 March 2021</b>	CCEA assessment resources available, including modified and Irish-medium versions	Head of Centre, Heads of Department, subject teachers and Examinations Officer	Via secure portal
<b>w/b 29 March 2021 onwards</b>	Marks schemes released to centres	Head of Centre, Heads of Department, subject teachers and Examinations Officer	Via secure portal
<b>23 April 2021</b>	Submission of centre's CDG policy to CCEA	Head of Centre to CCEA	CCEA to specify secure portal
<b>April– 14 May 2021</b>	Support to centres	Head of Centre and Link Officer from EA/CCMS et al.	Dialogue on evidence gathering, staff training and preparation for CDG submission
<b>Mid/late May</b>	Centres finalise moderation and internal QA exercises to prepare grades to be submitted	Head of Centre, Examinations Officer, Heads of Department and subject teachers	
<b>21 May 2021</b>	A/AS grades submitted to CCEA	Head of Centre and Examinations Officer	Submitted online

Date	Activity (Shaded cell denotes CCEA support activity)	For the Attention of	Format
<b>25 May 2021– 30 June 2021</b>	Assessment evidence requested throughout this window – to be submitted to CCEA within 48 hours of request	Head of Centre, Examinations Officer, Heads of Department and subject teachers	Request via email – upload of evidence through CDG application by centre
<b>4 June 2021</b>	GCSE grades submitted to CCEA	Head of Centre and Examinations Officer	Submitted online
<b>10 August 2021</b>	A level and AS results issued by CCEA	Examinations Officer	
<b>12 August 2021</b>	GCSE results issued by CCEA	Examinations Officer	

## APPENDIX 4

### SAMPLE POLICY TEMPLATE

**[Name of Centre]**

#### **Sample Policy Template for Centre Determined Grades, Summer 2021**

*(This sample policy template provides a framework for Senior Leaders to support the production of a policy suitable for your centre. Centres<sup>6</sup> should amend as appropriate.)*

Adopted by Board of Governors on xx/xx/2021

Issued to staff on xx/xx/2021

Responsible: [Insert name of centre staff]

#### **Statement of Intent**

*This section should include information on the purpose of the policy. Centres should explain the principles and context of the centre approach for determining Centre Determined Grades in line with the process published by CCEA. For example:*

The purpose of this policy is:

- to ensure that the effective operation of the Centre Determined Grades process produces fair, objective, consistent and timely outcomes within and across departments;
- to ensure that all staff involved in producing Centre Determined Grades know, understand and can complete their roles in the process as published by CCEA;
- to ensure that Centre Determined Grades are produced in line with the process as published by CCEA, using the professional judgement of teachers, with internal moderation, ensuring quality and accuracy of the grades submitted to CCEA; and
- to ensure that the centre meets its obligations in relation to relevant legislation.

It is the responsibility of everyone involved in the generation of Centre Determined Grades to read, understand and implement this policy. The Centre Determined Grades policy will be in line with **CCEA Alternative Arrangements – Process for Heads of Centre**, subject-specific guidance and other CCEA guidance and information issued in relation to Summer 2021. All staff involved in centre determined grades will support the implementation of alternative arrangements as set out by CCEA, including the CCEA review stage. Staff will familiarise themselves with all relevant guidance provided by CCEA, the JCQ requirements and the relevant centre policies.

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<sup>6</sup> References to centre and Head of Centre in this document are in line with JCQ examination centre terminology.

## Process Overview

*This section should include brief information as an explanation of each part of the five step process, published by CCEA, from the centre context. This should include timelines/deadlines and key personnel against each stage of the CCEA process, including the review stage with CCEA. For example:*

There is a five step process for the Summer 2021 awarding arrangements as outlined in the **CCEA Alternative Arrangements – Process for Heads of Centre**. Internal deadlines relating to the steps of the CCEA process are provided in Appendix 4a.

## Roles and Responsibilities

*This section should include information on everyone within the centre who has a role in the CCEA process from start to finish. This should include information to outline the centre's governance arrangements. As a minimum, the roles and responsibilities should include information for the:*

- *Board of Governors;*
- *Head of Centre;*
- *Senior Leadership Team;*
- *Examinations Officer;*
- *Heads of Department; and*
- *Class Teachers.*

*For example:*

Roles and responsibilities of **[insert name of centre]** staff are outlined below:

The **Board of Governors** is responsible for approving the policy for producing Centre Determined Grades and must notify CCEA of arrangements should the Head of Centre be unavailable to confirm the Centre Determined Grades.

The **Head of Centre** has overall responsibility for the centre as an examinations centre and will ensure the roles and responsibilities of all staff are defined.

The Head of Centre will confirm that Centre Determined Grade judgements are accurate and represent the professional judgement made by staff. The Head of Centre will ensure that the method of determining grades by the centre (in line with processes published by CCEA) uses the professional judgement of teachers, with internal moderation and participation in an external review process set out by CCEA.

The Head of Centre will work collaboratively with CCEA in terms of engaging with professional dialogue and the provision of evidence as requested.

The **Senior Leaders** will provide support to staff involved in producing Centre Determined Grades. They will support the Head of Centre in the quality assurance of the final Centre Determined Grades. They have a role in achieving a consistent approach across departments and authenticating the preliminary outcomes in subjects where there is only one teacher. This will be agreed on a case-by-case basis but may include, for example,

Senior Leaders or the Head of Centre validating the outcomes after comparing them with outcomes in associated subject areas where applicable.

Those who attended the CCEA Chartered Institute of Educational Assessors (CIEA) training will act as Lead Assessors in their centre and disseminate the content of the programme to all teachers involved in producing Centre Determined Grades.

The **Examinations Officer** is responsible for ensuring accurate and timely entries are submitted to CCEA. They must ensure that all information from CCEA is shared promptly with all relevant staff. The Examinations Officer will ensure that they know, understand and can use the CCEA Centre Manager Applications. They will ensure that the centre's systems for data capture are enabled and that the Centre Determined Grades are submitted for each candidate entry by the published date(s) for Summer 2021.

The Examinations Officer is responsible for the administration of the final Centre Determined Grades and for managing the post-results services within the centre.

**Heads of Department** are responsible for supporting departmental staff and ensuring all staff conduct assessments under the appropriate levels of control and have the information required to make accurate and fair judgements. They will ensure that a Head of Department Checklist is completed for each qualification that they are submitting.

Additional support and, where appropriate, quality assurance measures will be provided for newly qualified teachers.

**Teachers** are responsible for ensuring that they conduct assessments (which may include the optional assessment resource) under the centre's appropriate levels of control, where it is safe to do so, and that they have sufficient evidence, in line with the centre policy, to support Centre Determined Grades for each candidate they have entered for a qualification. They must ensure that the Centre Determined Grade they assign to each candidate is a fair, valid and reliable reflection of the assessed evidence available for each candidate. Centres must ensure records are kept similar to the Candidate Assessment Record, to include a description of the assessment evidence used, the level of control for each assessment considered, and any other evidence that explains the final Centre Determined Grade submitted. Teachers have the responsibility for internal standardisation and moderating candidates' work, in conjunction with departmental colleagues and Senior Leaders as required. They must securely store and be able to retrieve evidence to support their decisions. The CCEA Candidate Assessment Records will be required for the candidates sampled by CCEA.

The knowledge, expertise and professionalism of the staff of **[insert name of centre]** is central to determining Centre Determined Grades.

## Training, Support and Guidance

*This section should include a list and, where appropriate, links to any training, support and guidance provided or available for anyone involved in the CCEA five step process, as published by CCEA. For example:*

Teachers involved in determining grades must attend any centre-based training provided.

**[Insert name of centre]** will engage fully with all training and support that CCEA has provided, including web-based support and training. Further general and subject-specific support and guidance can be found on the CCEA website at [www.ccea.org.uk](http://www.ccea.org.uk)

The centre policy will be supported through training provided by CCEA to Senior Leaders through the CIEA. Senior Leaders will disseminate this training to all teachers involved in producing Centre Determined Grades.

If relevant staff are unable to attend subject support meetings or training, they must delegate to the most suitable alternative member of staff and ensure that the information is shared at the earliest possible opportunity with all relevant staff. **[Senior Leaders' named person]** should be notified if no one from a department has been able to attend support meetings and **[insert named Senior Leader]** will consider how this is addressed.

## Appropriate Evidence

*This section should list the evidence that the centre will use in line with the **CCEA Alternative Arrangements – Process for Heads of Centre**. The policy should acknowledge any subject-specific differences in evidence used. Examples are listed below for illustrative purposes only. Heads of Centre, in advance of grading candidates, will determine key evidence appropriate to their centre's circumstances, along with contingency arrangements if some of the key evidence is not available for individual candidates. For example, the centre may decide that homework will be considered if other forms of key evidence (i.e. other evidence determined by the centre as being key evidence to be used for each cohort) are not available. It is also important to record the scheduling of any assessments used as evidence.*

**[Insert name of centre]** will use the following candidate evidence in arriving at Centre Determined Grades. The first part of the list indicates the key evidence that will be considered, and the asterisked evidence will be used if key evidence is not available:

*Delete/add/amend as appropriate:*

- CCEA assessment resources for 2021;
- CCEA past papers;
- mock examinations, which relate to the CCEA specification;
- coursework or controlled assessments, even where not completed – if applicable to the subject;
- class tests;
- homework\*;
- *[add other subject-specific evidence if appropriate]\**

**[Insert name of centre]** will base all evidence on the relevant CCEA qualification specifications as set out in the **CCEA Alternative Arrangements – Process for Heads of Centre**.

**[Insert name of centre]** has taken into account the information provided by CCEA about unit omissions before the cancellation of examinations. These are detailed on the Summer 2021 Information Pre-Examination Cancellation section of the CCEA website.

*[If the centre has adapted assessments beyond these unit omissions, for example to take into account reduced specification content due to disruption, these adaptations should be set out here.]*

*For example:*

**[Insert name of centre]** is taking account of disruption that candidates have faced to their learning a result of COVID-19 by **[insert how assessments will be adapted and the rationale for the adaptations]**.

Any adaptations that have been made will be recorded in the checklists provided by CCEA and will be based on the **CCEA Alternative Arrangements – Process for Heads of Centre**.

**Candidates will be made aware of the evidence that will be used in determining their grades.**

***[Insert name of centre]** must detail how and when evidence will be shared with candidates, for example the Candidate Assessment Record minus grade information.]*

### **Centre Determined Grades**

*This section should include information on the decision-making and recording process at departmental level. It should also include a requirement that departments record how the evidence was used to arrive at a fair and objective grade. For example:*

**[Insert name of centre]** will determine grades based on evidence that reflects the standard at which a candidate is performing, i.e. their demonstrated knowledge, understanding and skills in regard to the specification content they have covered.

To make accurate judgements, teachers must have a clear understanding of:

- the range of skills, knowledge and understanding covered by the specification;
- the assessment requirements and the structure of the specification;
- the grade descriptions at key grades;
- the level of demand of the qualification assessments; and
- the weighting of each component/unit and the type of assessment.

Information on these aspects for each qualification will be drawn from the CCEA specification, specimen assessment materials, past papers, controlled

assessment/coursework assessment tasks, and Chief Examiner and Principal Moderator reports, which are available on the CCEA website at [www.ccea.org.uk](http://www.ccea.org.uk)

All teachers will complete the Candidate Assessment Record and will forward to their Head of Department/Subject Leader. All teachers are responsible for ensuring that all evidence has been stored safely and is accessible to support the CCEA Review of Evidence and Award process. It is important that decisions are justified and recorded to show how the evidence was used to arrive at a fair and objective grade.

### **Internal Standardisation**

*This section should include instruction on carrying out quality assurance of grades and recording of decisions in subjects where there is more than one teacher and/or class at departmental level. For example:*

In subjects where there is more than one teacher and/or class in the department, it is a requirement to carry out internal standardisation. The purpose of internal standardisation is to provide teachers with confidence in the grades they have assigned, to ensure fairness and objectivity of decisions, and to ensure consistency in the application of assessment criteria and standards. This allows for any teachers' differences to be resolved.

#### ***[Refer to centre's Internal Assessment policy.]***

Internal standardisation should include cross-checking of marking across the full range of marks and include candidates from each class.

The Candidate Assessment Records, or similar records, should form the basis of discussions around decisions made.

As a result of the internal standardisation process, it may be necessary for a teacher or the Head of Department to adjust the original decision:

- to match the standards as established and understood in the guidance provided; and
- to bring judgements into line with those of other teachers in the department.

In the context of internal standardisation, any necessary decisions will be made by the Head of Department. They should complete the relevant checklist, which will record any adjustments and relevant information.

### **Head of Centre Moderation and Declaration**

*This section should include the senior leadership moderation exercise for reviewing grade outcomes for this year's cohort. This should include professional discussions with Heads of Department and the expectation that the Senior Leaders will consider both the subject and centre outcomes. For example:*

**[Insert name of centre]** undertakes to have a consistent approach across departments/subjects. Senior Leaders **[insert designation or name]** will carry out moderation, to include a review of marking and the internal standardisation arrangements,



and will investigate whether decisions have been justified. Unexplained grade profiles will be considered and may result in a review of the evidence used or remarking. A record of decisions should be retained.

The moderation exercise will include professional discussions with Heads of Department. **[Senior Leaders]** will consider both the subject and centre outcomes based on the evidence available.

The Head of Centre will submit a declaration on behalf of the centre. This will include a confirmation that the Centre Determined Grades for candidates are a true representation of their performance.

### **Access Arrangements and Special Consideration**

*This section should include the instruction to ensure that arrangements are in place when assessments are being taken where candidates have agreed access arrangements or reasonable adjustments, as per normal JCQ arrangements. There should also be a requirement to record such decisions, for example on the CCEA checklists.*

*It should also include arrangements for consideration and recording of any illness or personal circumstances, as per normal JCQ arrangements, that may have impacted on a candidate's performance in assessments. The policy must be clear that special consideration should not, as with in any year, be applied due to lost teaching and learning time. Lost teaching and learning is being addressed this summer via the flexibility afforded to the centre in the assessment methods used and in the content that will be assessed. Centre Determined Grades are based on the evidence produced by the candidate. For example:*

Where candidates have agreed access arrangements or reasonable adjustments (for example a reader or scribe), **[insert name of centre]** will make every effort to ensure that these arrangements are in place when assessments are being taken. Details on access arrangements can be found in the JCQ document [Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties](#), which is available on the JCQ website.

As public examinations have been cancelled, the normal application process to the awarding organisation for special consideration will not apply this summer in the usual manner. However, where illness or other personal circumstances, covered by the JCQ guidelines, might have affected the candidate's standard of performance, **[insert name of centre]** will take account of this when making judgements. The centre will record how they have determined any impact of illness or personal circumstances and how this was incorporated into their judgements in the Candidate Assessment Record, or similar records.

**[Insert name of centre]** will ensure consistency in the application of special consideration by following the guidance on pages 4–7 of the JCQ document [A guide to the special consideration process, with effect from 1 September 2020](#).

## Bias and Discrimination

*This section should acknowledge a centre's duties and responsibilities in relation to relevant equality and disability requirements. For example:*

**[Insert name of centre]** will fulfil its duties and responsibilities concerning relevant equality and disability requirements.

Senior Leaders **[insert name(s) of Senior Leader(s)]** will disseminate guidance from the CIEA training on potential bias in judgements, including the challenges and solutions relevant to a holistic approach to assessing the validity of assessment judgements. This will include information on:

- sources of unfairness and bias (situations/contexts, difficulty, presentation and format, language, conditions for assessment and marker pre-conceptions);
- minimising bias (how to minimise bias in questions and marking, and hidden forms of bias); and
- bias in teacher assessments.

To avoid bias and discrimination, all staff involved in Centre Determined Grades will consider that:

- unconscious bias can skew judgements;
- the evidence should be valued for its own merit as an indication of performance and attainment;
- Centre Determined Grades should not be influenced by positive or challenging personal circumstances, character, behaviour, appearance, socio-economic background, or the performance of candidates' siblings;
- unconscious bias is more likely to occur when quick opinions are formed; and
- having effective internal standardisation will help to ensure that there is consideration from different perspectives.

## Recording Decisions and Retention of Evidence and Data

*This section should include how decisions will be recorded for the appropriate stages of the process, as published by CCEA, to ensure accurate and safe retention of the evidence used to make decisions and the rationale for those decisions. For example:*

It is fundamental that teachers and Heads of Department maintain records that show how Centre Determined Grades have been produced and internally standardised, including the rationale for decisions in relation to individual marks/grades. All evidence used to support the grade determined for each candidate will be retained electronically on the C2k network.

**[Refer to the centre's Acceptable Use of Computers or an equivalent policy.]**

It is essential that there are robust, accurate and secure records of decisions and retention of evidence to comply with data protection legislation and in anticipation of centre moderation and the CCEA Review of Evidence and Award process and potential appeals.

When requested, evidence will be uploaded via the CCEA application used to submit the Centre Determined Grades.

The following documentation must be fully and accurately completed and retained securely:

- CCEA Candidate Assessment Records, or similar records;
- CCEA Head of Department Checklists and Departmental Assessment Evidence Grid; and
- CCEA Head of Centre Declaration.

## Confidentiality

*This section must include the instruction to all members of staff regarding non-disclosure of candidates' Centre Determined Grades in advance of the official issue of results. For example:*

**[Insert name of centre]** will not disclose any candidates' Centre Determined Grades in advance of the official issue of results. This is in keeping with the centre's GDPR policy and CCEA requirements.

## Malpractice/Maladministration

*This section should note that, even in the absence of formal assessments, registered centres are required to uphold the integrity of the qualifications system and to report potential cases of malpractice or maladministration to CCEA for investigation. For example:*

**[Insert name of centre]** will act ethically, to uphold the integrity of the qualifications system and to report potential cases of malpractice or maladministration to CCEA for investigation. There may be instances where the centre or individual teachers are put under improper pressure from a candidate or their parent/guardian to influence the decision-making on a grade. Any improper pressure must be reported to CCEA, who may investigate this as potential malpractice or maladministration.

Other examples of potential malpractice include:

- deception;
- improper assistance to a candidate;
- failure to appropriately authenticate a candidate's work;
- over-direction of candidates in preparation for assessments;
- the centre submitting grades not supported by evidence or that they know to be inaccurate;
- centres entering candidate(s) who were not originally intending to cash in a grade in the Summer 2021 series;
- failure to engage as requested with CCEA during the review stage of the process; and
- failure to keep appropriate records of decisions made and Centre Determined Grades.

The consequences of malpractice or maladministration are as published in the JCQ guidance [Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures](#), which is available on the JCQ website, and include the risk of a delay to candidates receiving their grades, up to and including removal of centre status.

## Private Candidates

*This section should be included where a centre has agreed to accept entries from private candidates and should include a statement about how the centre will ensure that they can confidently submit a Centre Determined Grade for each candidate. For example:*

For subjects where entries have been made for private candidates, centres will ensure that they have sufficient evidence to confidently submit an objective Centre Determined Grade. If evidence is limited, it is essential that these candidates complete the CCEA assessment resource or an appropriate adaptation of the assessment resource. Thereafter, decisions for the private candidate should be made with the same approach as for all other candidates at **[insert name of centre]**.

## Conflicts of Interest

*This section should include the requirement to declare and record potential conflicts of interest of any person involved in the Centre Determined Grades process. For example:*

To protect the integrity of assessments, staff must declare any potential conflicts of interest to the Head of Centre. Instances when there may be a conflict include teaching and preparing members of their family or close friends for qualifications that include internally assessed components.

The Head of Centre will take the appropriate actions to manage any potential conflicts of interest arising with centre staff, following the requirements set out in **CCEA's Alternative Arrangements – Process for Heads of Centre** document issued in March 2021.

**[Insert name of centre]** will also carefully consider the requirements of their centre policies, particularly in relation to the separation of duties and personnel to ensure fairness in later process reviews and appeals.

## Internal Appeals Procedure Relating to Centre Determined Grades

*This section should include information on the centre's internal appeals procedure and must be completed in line with CCEA requirements when the CCEA awarding organisation appeals process is confirmed. It must make clear the roles, responsibilities and steps involved in the internal appeals procedure. For example:*

A written internal appeals procedure is available to permit candidates recourse in relation to the production of a Centre Determined Grade. **[Insert name of centre]**'s internal appeals procedure is available for staff, candidates and parents on the centre website at **[insert link]**. It outlines the roles and responsibilities for centre staff and provides clarity on the various steps in the internal procedure. The various steps of the internal appeals procedure are timebound and in line with CCEA requirements. Candidates will be updated at each stage and will be informed in writing of the outcomes and recourse procedures.

## **Requirements as a JCQ Registered Centre**

*Centres are required to review and adapt, where necessary, their current assessment and examination-related policies and procedures to the current situation. For example:*

**[Insert name of centre]** has reviewed and amended, where necessary, all assessment and examination-related policies and procedures in line with the JCQ [General Regulations for Approved Centres, 1 September 2020 to 31 August 2021](#) to ensure appropriateness for the unique context of Summer 2021 qualifications.

## **Associated/Related Centre Documents**

**[Centre to insert name and location/web address of relevant policy and procedure documents.]**

**APPENDIX 4a****FIVE STEP AWARDING PROCESS**

Step and Indicative Timeframe		Activity	Personnel	Internal Deadlines
1	<b>Guidance, Information and Readiness (March, April)</b>	CCEA guidance documentation shared and understood by all involved staff. Centre fully participates in support offered by CCEA and other partner bodies, such as EA and CCMS.	Centre Leadership Team, Heads of Department (HoD) and teaching staff	
		Centres agree their quality assurance process to ensure consistency across teachers, subjects and departments.	Centre Leadership Team, HoD and teaching staff	
		Centre policy for awarding Centre Determined Grades developed, documented and shared with all staff. Policies to be sent to CCEA by 23 April so they are available for review at grade submission stage.	Centre Leadership Team	
		Preliminary consideration of value of available evidence	Centre Leadership Team and HoD	
2	<b>Evidence Gathering and Provision of Assessment Resource (March, April and May)</b>	Completion and marking of defined assessments in line with centre policy; for example, this could comprise CCEA assessment resources which will be available from April 2021.	Centre Leadership Team, HoD and teaching staff	
		All other available evidence collated and documented	Centre Leadership Team, HoD and teaching staff	
3	<b>Centre Professional Judgement and Moderation (April and May)</b>	All available evidence moderated in line with centre policy	Centre Leadership Team, HoD and teaching staff	
		Any potential bias in Centre Determined Grades and outcomes considered	HoD and teaching staff	
		Centre Determined Grade outcomes reviewed by senior leadership teams	Centre Leadership Team	
		Head of Centre sign-off and submission of Centre Determined Grades	Head of Centre	

Step and Indicative Timeframe		Activity	Personnel	Internal Deadlines
4	<b>Review of Evidence and Award (June and July)</b>	Centre evidence and grade outcomes reviewed	CCEA personnel	
		If evidence submitted is considered reasonable, centre grades proceed to award. If necessary, additional evidence requested and reviewed.	CCEA personnel	
		Where CCEA still has concerns, there will be engagement with the centre and, in some cases, this may require the centre to re-run their grading process.	Head of Centre and CCEA personnel	
5	<b>Post-Award Review Service (August and September)</b>	After the issue of results, students will have the right to appeal to their centres and to CCEA.	Head of Centre and CCEA personnel	

## APPENDIX 5

### DEFINITIONS OF LEVELS OF CONTROL

Levels of control for the conditions under which students have completed assessments that are internally marked in school are defined as High, Medium and Limited at GCSE. These definitions also align with the conditions of control for GCE and other CCEA qualifications. In recording the levels of control for evidence to be used in Centre Determined Grades for Summer 2021, the following should be used.

<b>High</b>	<p>The use of resources is tightly prescribed. The centre must ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• all students are within direct sight of the teacher/supervisor throughout the session(s);</li> <li>• display materials which might provide assistance are removed or covered;</li> <li>• there is no access to email, the internet or mobile phones;</li> <li>• students complete their work independently;</li> <li>• interaction with other students does not occur; and</li> <li>• no assistance of any description is provided.</li> </ul>
<b>Medium</b>	<p>Students do not need to be directly supervised at all times. The use of resources, including the internet, is not tightly prescribed. Centres should ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• there is sufficient evidence to ensure that the individual work can be authenticated; and</li> <li>• the work an individual student submits for assessment is their own.</li> </ul> <p>If work has been completed in groups, teachers must ensure that they can determine and assess the individual student's contribution to the work. If work has been completed remotely, it may be useful to ask questions about what they did and how/why they did it, to help authenticate the work.</p>
<b>Limited</b>	<p>Work is completed without any direct supervision and would not normally contribute to assessable outcomes.</p>

For more information, see the [Summer 2021 Assessment Arrangements](#) page on the CCEA website.



## APPENDIX 6

### CENTRE CHECKLISTS

#### Head of Department Checklist

This must be completed for the overall cohort, one for each subject at each qualification level.

<b>Centre Name:</b>	
<b>Centre Number:</b>	
<b>Specification Title/Code:</b>	
<b>Level:</b>	

The Head of Department must complete the following checklist before submitting subject outcomes for internal centre moderation.

Checklist	Y/N
1. Candidates' grades have been determined using the evidence identified. If requested by CCEA, the Candidate Assessment Record and evidence will be completed and provided for review.	
2. The evidence has been authenticated as the candidates' own work.	
3. Internal standardisation has been completed in line with the School Assessment and Centre Determined Grades policies. Records have been retained detailing all staff involved in the process, work reviewed, judgements and adjustments made as a result of internal standardisation. These records are readily available.	
4. Consideration has been given to ensure that judgements are fair, free from bias and compatible with legislative requirements in respect of equality and discrimination.	
5. Where applicable, the candidates were given their approved access arrangements while producing the evidence contributing to the final grade, and the access arrangements have been documented.	
6. Where applicable, special consideration was given to the candidates if they were disadvantaged when producing their evidence contributing to their final grade, according to the JCQ Special Consideration Guidance, and this has been documented.	
7. Subject cohort outcomes have been compared with those of previous years, and any significant changes can be justified with evidence.	
8. The Centre Determined Grades for this subject have been signed off as accurate by the Head of Department and one other teacher within the subject. (The Head of Centre may provide the second signature where there is a one-teacher department.)	
<b>Provide detail and justification where you have indicated 'N' to any of the above:</b>	
<b>Head of Department:</b>	<b>Date:</b>

## Departmental Assessment Evidence Grid

This must be completed by the Head of Department for the overall cohort, one for each subject at each qualification level.

Please detail the assessments used for the subject cohort (for example CCEA assessment resource, mock examination, controlled assessment and/or homework).

This document must be completed for subjects requested for review by CCEA. Please indicate which assessment objectives were covered, as relevant, in each piece of evidence (Y/N), and whether the assessment was conducted with a High (H), Medium (M) or Limited (L) level of control. A definition of [levels of control is provided](#).

			Assessment 1	Assessment 2	Assessment 3
Type of Assessment					
Level of Control H, M, L					
Unit _	AO1	Y/N			
	AO2	Y/N			
	AO3	Y/N			
	AO4	Y/N			
	AO5	Y/N			
Unit _	AO1	Y/N			
	AO2	Y/N			
	AO3	Y/N			
	AO4	Y/N			
	AO5	Y/N			
Unit _	AO1	Y/N			
	AO2	Y/N			
	AO3	Y/N			
	AO4	Y/N			
	AO5	Y/N			
<p><b>If an assessment objective has been omitted at cohort level and/or further adaptations to assessments have been made, please briefly outline the reasons why:</b></p>					
<b>Head of Department:</b>					
<b>Signature:</b>					<b>Date:</b>

## Sample Candidate Assessment Record

Records must be retained by the centre containing the information below, in Candidate Assessment Records or similar records. The CCEA assessment record provided below must be submitted for candidates selected for CCEA sampling.

<b>Candidate Name:</b>	
<b>Candidate Number:</b>	
<b>Centre Name:</b>	
<b>Centre Number:</b>	

<b>Select Level:</b>	GCE A2	GCE AS	GCSE	ELQ	OS	OLA	Other
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<b>Section 1: COVID-Related Disruption – Learner Context</b>	<b>Y/N</b>
Did the candidate face <u>additional</u> disruption to their teaching and learning as a result of COVID-19, <u>when compared with</u> their class peers?	
Was there any other specific disadvantage considered for this candidate in arriving at their Centre Determined Grade, when compared with their class peers?	
<b>If 'yes', please provide details of the action taken to ensure the candidate was not disadvantaged (for example, content reduction):</b>	

<b>Section 2: Access Arrangements and Special Consideration</b>	<b>Y/N</b>
Is the candidate entitled to access arrangements?	
Were the approved access arrangements in place during the assessments used in candidate evidence?	
<b>Please provide details:</b>	
Record any enhancements to the mark as a result of a special consideration in line with JCQ – <a href="#">A Guide to the Special Consideration Process</a> .	<b>Tariff</b>
<b>Reason for Special Consideration tariff:</b>	

## Candidate Assessment Record (continued)

### Section 3: Subject-Level Assessment of Individual Candidate Evidence

Record student attainment for each of the assessments contributing towards the overall grade awarded. Attainment for each assessment may be captured by recording marks in percentages and/or grades.

	Date of Assessment	Mark %	Grade
Assessment 1			
Assessment 2			
Assessment 3			

<b>Overall Grade Awarded</b>	
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Please provide any additional information that you feel is relevant to support the grade awarded. In line with your policy, this should include justification of any discretionary variation from the **Departmental Assessment Evidence Grid** (maximum 50 words):

## Candidate Assessment Record (continued)

<p><b>Section 4: Teacher Checklist</b>                  Please indicate that you have complied with the conditions outlined below (Y/N).                  For Conditions 3 and 4, indicate Y, N or N/A.</p>	
<p><b>Compliance conditions</b></p>	
1. The grade for the candidate has been determined on the basis of the evidence produced by the candidate and available to me.	
2. The grade awarded has been determined using only the evidence detailed in the Departmental Assessment Evidence Grid. Justification for the need to use any alternative evidence has been provided in Section 3, as per centre policy.	
3. Where applicable, the candidate was given their approved access arrangements while producing the evidence contributing to the final grade, and the access arrangements have been documented.	
4. Where applicable, special consideration was given to the candidate according to the JCQ Special Consideration Guidance, if they were disadvantaged when producing their evidence contributing to their final grade, and this has been documented.	
5. Consideration has been given to ensure that judgements are fair, free from bias and compatible with legislative requirements in respect of equality and discrimination.	
6. To the best of my knowledge, the assessment evidence used to contribute to the candidate's overall subject grade is the candidate's own work.	
<p><b>Teacher Signature:</b></p>	<p><b>Date:</b></p>

## Summary of Changes since First Issue

(Most recent changes are indicated by a green line on the latest version.)

Revision History Number	Date of Change	Page Number/s	Change Made
Version 1.0 Published 5 March 2021	N/A	N/A	First Issue
Version 2.0 Published 15 March 2021	15 March 2021	8, 16, 27, 30, 31, 33, 39, 40, 41 and 42	Text additions
		35	Paragraph omitted





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