

**YSGOL RHIWABON**

~ SINCE 1575 ~



## **Centre Determined Grades Policy**

**Assessment and quality assurance processes for the  
Summer 2021 alternative arrangements**

**April 2021 (Version 2)**

## **1. Introduction**

In November 2020, the Education Minister announced that there would be no external examinations in the Summer 2021. In January, it was confirmed that GCSE qualifications would be awarded using Centre Determined Grades (CDG). This means that Ysgol Rhiwabon staff determine the actual grades awarded for each qualification. This policy outlines how the school, as an examination centre, will apply the guidance provided by Qualification Wales to determine the grades in 2021.

## **2. Aims of the Policy**

- To ensure that Centre Determined Grades are fair, consistent and free from bias;
- To ensure that all staff understand their roles and responsibilities;
- To provide effective support to teachers when determining grades, in line with the detailed guidance set out by Qualifications Wales;
- To clarify the school processes with clear guidance and support for staff, students and families, supported by the Governing Body;
- To ensure robust, evidence-based quality assurance is applied to the allocation of Centre Determined Grades;
- To ensure that the school meets its obligations in relation to equality and disability when determining grades;
- To meet all statutory requirements in relation to awarding Centre Determined Grades in the Summer 2021 series.

## **3. Definition of Centre Determined Grade and its application**

A Centre Determined Grade is the grade awarded by the school in 2021, based on attainment demonstrated by students studying the revised specifications. Each grade will be based on robust evidence taken from a range of themes and skills set out in individual revised subject specifications. A Centre Determined Grade is not based on professional prediction or the potential of a student.

Assessment evidence can be gathered from a range of activities which could include:

- WJEC past papers (adapted to reflect the content covered);
- Mock examinations;
- Non-Examination Assessments (NEAs). This can include incomplete NEAs;
- Other assessed work which replicates WJEC questions and mark schemes.

For each qualification, teachers will make use of WJEC Assessment Frameworks, which include descriptors for key grades to support the accurate distribution of awards. Each grade awarded by the school must be underpinned by robust evidence to demonstrate a student's attainment across key themes and skills. These will vary per qualification, as determined by the requirements of each WJEC Qualification Assessment Framework, in line with revised specifications.

It will not be possible, or permitted for teachers, or the school, to attempt to issue a Centre Determined Grade based on professional prediction or the potential of a student. Teachers will be required to apply their professional judgement and decide whether the knowledge and skills demonstrated meet the usual standard for a specified grade, in line with the published guidance.

In determining grades, the school will be required to make 'best-fit' judgements. This means that students are not required to demonstrate all aspects of a grade descriptor to be awarded the grade; students should be awarded a grade which supports evidence of attainment across sufficient breadth of content, within the specified qualification, as determined by WJEC; and may achieve the same grades by demonstrating different combinations of knowledge, skills and

understanding. This ensures that strengths in some areas counterbalance shortcomings in others. As a result, the 'best-fit' grade may be awarded.

Where there is insufficient evidence, or where evidence suggests attainment is below that required of the lowest grade for a qualification (i.e. G grade at GCSE) then a student will be awarded a Centre Determined Grade of U.

While the standard expected for any particular grade will not be lowered in 2021, the use of Centre Determined Grades acknowledges that the volume of work completed by a student will be less than in previous years, owing to the ongoing impact of the global health crisis. The use of Centre Determined Grades seeks to ensure students are not unfairly disadvantaged by the process. At the same time, they are designed to enable all students to progress to their next stage of learning and/or employment.

#### **4. Roles and Responsibilities**

The specific roles and responsibilities of staff in school in relation to preparing students for their qualifications remains the same for 2021 apart from following the processes involved in determining grades rather than preparing students for external examinations. This addition to normal practice is clarified in this section of the policy.

**Chair of Governors** – will be responsible for ratifying the Centre Determined Grades Policy and supporting the assessment processes in school, particularly through the Standards and Curriculum Committee.

**Headteacher** – as Head of Centre the Headteacher is responsible for all aspects of examinations, working closely with the Senior Leadership Team and Examinations Officer to disseminate relevant information and support all staff with appropriate training and guidance. The Headteacher will ensure roles and responsibilities are clearly outlined, quality assurance processes adhered to robustly, an accurate submission of CDGs to the WJEC is documented and the Head of Centre Declaration is signed. The Headteacher will also be responsible for the Appeals Process as documented in Section 12.

**Senior Staff** - will support the role of the Headteacher to quality assure individual subject specific Assessment Plans to ensure consistency and fairness. The team will work with the Headteacher to provide training and support for teachers and staff involved in the process. They will be responsible for monitoring the delivery of the Assessment Plans in their designated subject areas and to work together to oversee the quality assurance processes across the school (Sections 5-10). They will check the subjects they lead to verify safe storage of student assessment plans and supporting evidence.

**Examinations Officer** – will lead the administration of qualifications. The Examinations Officer will work with the Headteacher, Senior Leadership Team and Curriculum Leaders to share all information from the WJEC in a timely manner. The Examinations Officer will ensure accurate and timely collation of entries for appropriate qualifications and assist the Senior Leadership Team and Curriculum Leaders, adhering to the WJEC published timeline (Appendix 1&2) and supporting communications.

**ALNCo** – To liaise with Curriculum Leaders to ensure that all access arrangements are in place for individual students to support student Centre Determined Grades and to oversee any additional support required, for example reasonable adjustments for students entitled to special consideration. The ALNCo will be responsible for allocating Teaching Assistants to individual students and supporting them in that role. A detailed record of that support will be kept by the ALNCo and adapted according to individual need.

**Curriculum Leaders** – will be responsible for the decisions on the appropriate range of evidence included in the Subject Assessment Plan, in line with the guidance and their revised subject specifications. They will work with teachers in their subject area to support the application of the assessment criteria accurately and consistently. This process will include moderation and quality assurance as outlined in Section 10. The Subject Lead will be responsible for storing the records and evidence in a safe place.

**Teaching Staff** – will be responsible for ensuring the subject assessments are completed as agreed in the Assessment Plan and that there is sufficient evidence to determine the grade to be awarded. As above, individual teachers will be responsible for the safe collation and storage of records and evidence.

**Teaching Assistants** – will support the assessment process in line with the guidance and needs of the individual student and their support plan. They will be supported in their role by the ALNCo and will be responsible for reporting the progress of individual students to allow for the support to be adapted where required.

## **5. Professional Learning and support for staff**

From January, additional line management meetings will be in place during the remote learning phase of the Spring Term. These meetings will facilitate detailed discussions around the new arrangements in place to award grades at centre level for the 2021 Summer qualifications series. Whole staff briefings weekly during this phase and line management meetings will discuss guidance and support documents as they are published.

From March 15<sup>th</sup>, increased Line Management meetings will continue until Easter to ensure that Curriculum Leaders are supported as they finalise assessment plans and assessment arrangements as face-to-face learning resumes.

A Staff Training Day on April 13<sup>th</sup> will facilitate further planning time and adherence to published guidance at whole Centre level, paying attention to managing workload.

All staff will have access to the WJEC training outlined in Appendix 2. Working with Welsh Government, Qualifications Wales and WJEC, the school will ensure that appropriate training is provided for staff at all levels, in order to ensure that the assessment plans, and associated processes, are implemented fully.

Identified staff will also attend specific training on equality issues, including public sector duties; managing conscious and unconscious bias; data processing and data protection, with particular reference to fair processing notices.

## **6. Subject Assessment Plans**

The Subject Assessment Plans outline the evidence (Section 3) to be used to arrive at the Centre Determined Grade. The plans will be devised in line with the Qualification Assessment Frameworks and the WJEC revised specification.

They will be developed through;

- The use of the WJEC exemplars in each subject area;
- A support meeting to ensure all Curriculum Leaders have discussed the plans and the appropriate information required, in line with the Qualification Assessment Frameworks;
- A consistent selection of the type of evidence across subjects, whilst recognising the evidence will vary from subject to subject;

- Additional weekly Line Management Meetings will be timetabled to support the plans quality assurance and submission by March 15<sup>th</sup>;
- The Senior Leadership Team will quality assure and approve the plans for consistency across the school by March 19<sup>th</sup> and where appropriate will cross check with other centres, ready for implementation;
- The assessments will follow all WJEC past papers, NEAs and adapted questions which replicate WJEC examination questions and supporting mark schemes. This will ensure consistency across all teachers/assessors and learners for each qualification;
- Without stipulating specific papers/questions a student friendly summary of the Assessment Plans will be shared with learners and families by March 26<sup>th</sup>;
- This evidence will be replicated on each Student Decision Making Record Sheet, which will include the eventual 'best fit' grade and include any personal information/mitigating circumstances related to the overall determined grade;
- The Assessment Plans will be monitored through the Line Management Structure in school and the quality assurance processes outlined in Section 10.

## **7. Centre Devised Assessments**

Ysgol Rhiwabon Teachers will be delivering WJEC devised assessments and NEAs. Where subject leads include minor changes to WJEC tasks the centre will follow the relevant section of the WJEC Centre Assessment Creation.

## **8. Assessment Delivery**

The evidence generated post March 15<sup>th</sup> will not be completed in the form of an examination. Students will produce work within a specified timeframe, appropriate to the specific assessment, across an appropriate series of lessons.

It is anticipated that the time to produce evidence would not exceed the length of the unseen examination in the qualification. However, unlike an unseen examination, evidence would be produced over a series of not more than three lessons, with extra time built in for those students who would normally access this arrangement.

Work will be completed independently by students, under similar levels of control similar to existing arrangements, as set out in the school's Non-Examination Assessment Policy. This is to ensure evidence produced is the student's own.

Wherever possible, this work will be completed in class. Where external factors prevent this from happening, such as school or regional lockdowns or individual student's personal circumstances, work will need to be completed at home. Where this is the case, the school will introduce mechanisms to support the authenticity of student's work through:

- A clear home-school agreement;
- Submission of work to a strict deadline;
- A consideration of work produced against previously assessed work to verify authenticity;
- Support with access to technology and devices to support home learning.

Where Learners have approved access arrangements, the ALNCo will coordinate in class support across all subject areas as assessments are completed and a record of this will be kept for each student and the family. This will be communicated to parents through regular presentations and letters.

In the current cohort there is no conflict of interest caused by centre staff assessing and quality assuring grades for family members or close friends.

## **9. Record keeping**

All pupil assessment data will be recorded, assessed, stored and disposed of using the GDPR Policy and Retention of School Records Procedures.

The school will keep a record to document clearly the rationale for grade decisions. This will include clarity of explanation which students and their parents/carers will understand.

Decision records will detail who assessed the evidence and when; the decision taken; identification of any reasonable adjustments or special considerations applied; and where the evidence is safely stored.

Records will also be kept from internal moderation to standardise work, and verify performance.

The school will record the reviews requested by students and the outcome of these, along with reasons for the decision.

On submission of a Centre Determined Grade, the school will be required to make an overall declaration in relation to the processes carried out.

Every student will sign the Student Decision Making Record once work is completed to verify the work is their own; in line with current WJEC practice for NEAs submitted for moderation.

## **10. Quality Assurance of Assessment and grading decisions**

In line with usual practices, WJEC will require quality assurance processes to be undertaken to promote consistency. The processes will be applied within subjects and across subjects, to ensure the grades determined are valid, reliable, equitable and fair, while seeking to avoid discrimination. The WJEC training materials will be used to support staff in working towards and awarding final grades in each qualification.

Internal Moderation – regular time will be built in to the Summer Term to allow for subject, cross-curricular, and where appropriate, Centre to Centre moderation to take place.

Every subject will provide a sample for moderation in line with the normal WJEC moderation sample generated through IAMIS; all subjects will provide a minimum of 10 portfolios of work across the grade range, which equates to 10% of our current Year 11 cohort for the core subjects. Where a class size is below 10, all portfolios will be moderated.

The school will draw on evidence from the Autumn Quality Assurance on books and files.

The Line Management structure will ensure that every subject submits a range of students' work and best fit grades so that senior staff can sample the application of the assessment plans and evidence, including performance against the published WJEC grade descriptors.

At the final stage of Centre Determined Grades internal submission the SLT Lead will work with the Subject Lead to complete a final check of grades in line with previous discussions around the subject profile and historical data.

The Senior Leadership Team will meet to complete a read across of every student to identify any anomalies which will then be discussed with the Subject Lead and where appropriate individual teachers. This will ensure a robust and fair assessment system which leads to consistency within and across subjects.

A record of all meetings and grading decisions will be kept through Line Management minutes and the individual records in each subject area. The school's internal data and tracking sheets will also be used to record grades and any necessary amendments following moderation and quality assurance.

## **11. Learners and Parents/Carers Communication**

Information will be made available to students and their families in the following ways:

- Regular on-line meetings and Q&A sessions with families during lock down onwards. Two of these held with families in January and March and a further two will be held in April and May. Each meeting will be used to communicate guidance and to explain the school's approach, with the opportunity for questions and follow up support. This will ensure transparency;
- Presentations published on the school website;
- Letters home to support those who are unable to attend the online information sessions;
- Use of Parent Text to alert families of pending assessments, or any other important communications related to the qualifications 2021;
- A Summary of the assessments and time frame to be shared with students and parent/carers by March 26<sup>th</sup>;
- Assessments will be completed by Friday 11<sup>th</sup> June. The provisional Centre Determined Grades will be shared with students on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> June.
- Two data checks posted home to keep the student and family informed of progress against target grades, ensuring that every student is aware of their progress towards the Centre Determined Grade.
- Individual phone calls/one to one sessions on line to support relevant access arrangements and special consideration will continue, coordinated by the ALNCo and Curriculum Leads
- A record will be kept of any review of grades requested and the outcome of the review;
- Regular information updates to be held with Curriculum Leads from January onwards as well as additional SLT Line Management meetings to support the design and implementation of the new assessment arrangements;
- Training as appropriate will be provided for teachers/assessors and governors using regional support and WJEC training sessions as timetabled.

## **12. Internal Appeals and reviews**

The WJEC is due to publish internal review and appeals guidance in the week beginning April 26<sup>th</sup>. Ysgol Rhiwabon is committed to reading and taking account of this guidance to update the Centre's Complaints and Internal Appeals Procedures Policy.

At the time of writing the school knows that all students will receive their provisional Centre Determined Grades by 25<sup>th</sup> June 2021. Where a student is satisfied with the grades determined by the school, there is no further action and Centre Determined Grades will be submitted to the WJEC no later than 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2021.

A student who is not satisfied with their grade will be able to appeal the decision. The appeals process consists of three stages:

**Stage 1** - a Centre review of the provisional Centre Determined Grade on the grounds of judgement or where a procedural error has possibly been made;

**Stage 2** - an appeal to WJEC on the grounds that the judgement that the Centre has made is unreasonable and/or a procedural error has been made;

**Stage 3** - involves a request to Qualification Wales for an Exam Procedures Review Service (EPRS) to review whether WJEC has followed the required procedures.

### **13. Links with other Policies**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Malpractice Policy
- Non-Examination Assessment Policy
- JCQ Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments
- GDPR Policy

### **14. Supporting Documents**

The WJEC Guide to Centre Policy 2021

Assessment Creation Guide 2021

NEA Adaptation Information Book 2021

WJEC Example Subject Assessment Plans

WJEC Grade Descriptors to support the overall summative judgement

Individual Student Decision Making Record



## Appendix 1: Timeline of Key Dates for the Centre

| <u>Date</u>   | <u>Event</u>   |
|---|--|
| 5 <sup>th</sup> March                                 | WJEC provides information to centres on the assessment and Internal Quality Assurance requirements.  |
| 19 <sup>th</sup> – 25 <sup>th</sup> March             | Ysgol Rhiwabon submits the Assessment and Internal Quality Assurance policy to WJEC.   |
| 12 <sup>th</sup> April                                | WJEC provides feedback to the centre on the policy.  |
| by 25 <sup>th</sup> June                              | Centre Determined Grades are shared with students and centre reviews undertaken. From this date, Ysgol Rhiwabon completes any internal reviews and signs off student outcomes. |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> July                                  | Grading decisions completed in the centre and Internal Quality Assurance completed.  |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> July – 12 <sup>th</sup> July          | Submission window for Centre-Determined Grades.  |
| 13 <sup>th</sup> – 16 <sup>th</sup> July              | WJEC discusses atypical results with centres and issues arising from review of evidence records.   |
| 12 <sup>th</sup> August                               | GCSE Results Day.  |
| 24 <sup>th</sup> August – 21 <sup>st</sup> September* | GCSE appeals window.   |

## **Appendix 2: WJEC Timeline of Guidance and Training Events**

| <b><u>Date</u></b>                            | <b><u>Event</u></b>   |
|---|---|
| 5 <sup>th</sup> March                         | Pre-recorded training: 'Foundations and creation of assessment'                                   |
| 5 <sup>th</sup> March                         | Guidance on 'Centre policy on assessment and Quality Assurance'                                   |
| w/c 8 <sup>th</sup> March                     | Pre-recorded training: 'Centre approach to assessment and Quality Assurance of grading decisions' |
| 12 <sup>th</sup> March                        | Training: Live Question & Answer  |
| 15 <sup>th</sup> March                        | High-level appeals process  |
| w/c 15 <sup>th</sup> March                    | Final Qualification Assessment Frameworks including grade descriptors                             |
| w/c 15 <sup>th</sup> March                    | Grading Guide for centres   |
| w/c 15 <sup>th</sup> March                    | Assessment materials for centres  |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> March                         | Entries deadline  |
| w/c 22 <sup>nd</sup> March                    | Subject specific training materials   |
| 19 <sup>th</sup> – 25 <sup>th</sup> March     | Centres submit Assessment and Internal QA policies to WJEC  |
| 22 <sup>nd</sup> March                        | Pre-recorded training: 'Unconscious bias and objectivity'   |
| 25 <sup>th</sup> March                        | Training: Live Question & Answer  |
| 12 <sup>th</sup> April                        | WJEC provides feedback to centres on their policies   |
| 19 <sup>th</sup> April                        | Pre-recorded training: Making final judgements  |
| 22 <sup>nd</sup> April                        | Entries amendment window deadline   |
| w/c 26 <sup>th</sup> April                    | Final appeals process   |
| 26 <sup>th</sup> April                        | Pre-recorded training: 'Good practice in making final grading decisions and Quality Assurance'    |
| 5 <sup>th</sup> May                           | Training: Live Question & Answer  |
| 17 <sup>th</sup> May                          | Pre-recorded training: 'Submitting Centre-Determined Grades'                                      |
| 14 <sup>th</sup> June – 2 <sup>nd</sup> July  | Submission window for Centre-Determined Grades  |
| 21 <sup>st</sup> June – 12 <sup>th</sup> July | WJEC Quality Assurance 'Student decision records and overall outcomes'                            |