

# Sir John Lawes School

<b>POLICY TITLE:</b>	<b>CENTRE POLICY FOR A LEVELS, PROJECT QUALIFICATIONS AND GCSES FOR SUMMER 2021</b>
<b>REVIEWED BY:</b>	<b>HEADTEACHER</b>
<b>DATE DUE:</b>	<b>SUMMER 2021</b>
<b>DATE OF APPROVAL:</b>	<b>APRIL 2021</b>
<b>AUTHOR:</b>	<b>HEADTEACHER</b>

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## **AIM**

This section provides details of the purpose of this document, as appropriate to our centre:

The purpose of this policy is:

- To ensure that teacher assessed grades are determined fairly, consistently, free from bias, and effectively within and across departments.
- To ensure the operation of effective processes with clear guidelines and support for staff.
- To ensure that all staff involved in the processes clearly understand their roles and responsibilities.
- To support teachers to take evidence-based decisions in line with Joint Council for Qualifications guidance.
- To ensure the consideration of historical centre data in the process and the appropriate decision making in respect of teacher assessed grades.
- To support a high standard of internal quality assurance in the allocation of teacher assessed grades.
- To support our centre in meeting its obligations in relation to equality legislation.
- To ensure our centre meets all requirements set out by the Department of Education, Ofqual, the Joint Council for Qualifications and awarding organisations for Summer 2021 qualifications.
- To ensure the process for communicating to candidates and their parents/carers how they will be assessed is clear, in order to give confidence.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

This section of our Centre Policy outlines the personnel in our centre who have specific roles and responsibilities in the process of determining teacher assessed grades this year.

### **Our Head of Centre (Phil Newbery), will:**

- be responsible for approving our policy for determining teacher assessed grades
- have overall responsibility for Sir John Lawes as an examinations centre and will ensure that clear roles and responsibilities of all staff are defined

- will confirm that teacher assessed grade decisions represent the academic judgement made by teachers and that the checks in place ensure these align with the guidance on standards provided by awarding organisations
- will ensure a robust internal quality assurance process has been produced and signed-off in advance of results being submitted

**Our Senior Leadership Team and Heads of Faculty will:**

- provide training and support to our other staff
- support the Head of Centre in the quality assurance of the final teacher assessed grades
- ensure an effective approach within and across departments and authenticating the preliminary outcome from single teacher subjects
- be responsible for ensuring staff have a clear understanding of the internal and external quality assurance processes and their role within it
- ensure that all teachers within their department make consistent judgements about student evidence in deriving a grade
- ensure all staff conduct assessments under the appropriate levels of control with reference to guidance provided by the Joint Council for Qualifications
- ensure teachers have the information required to make accurate and fair judgments
- liaise with colleagues in the Scholars' Education Trust to enable external moderation of judgments
- ensure that a Head of Faculty Checklist is completed for each qualification that they are submitting

**Our teachers, specialist teachers and SENCo will:**

- ensure they conduct assessments under our centre's appropriate levels of control and have sufficient evidence, in line with this Centre Policy and guidance from the Joint Council for Qualifications, to provide teacher assessed grades for each student they have entered for a qualification
- ensure that the teacher assessed grade they assign to each student is a fair, valid and reliable reflection of the assessed evidence available for each student
- make judgements based on what each student has been taught and what they have been assessed on, as outlined in the section on grading in the main JCQ guidance
- produce an Assessment Record for each subject cohort, that includes the nature of the assessment evidence being used, the level of control for assessments considered, and any other evidence that explains the determination of the final teacher assessed grades; any necessary variations for individual students will also be recorded
- securely store and be able to retrieve sufficient evidence to justify their decisions

**Our Examinations Officer will:**

- be responsible for the administration of our final teacher assessed grades and for managing the post-results services.

**TRAINING, SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE**

This section of our Centre Policy outlines the training, support and guidance that our centre will provide to those determining teacher assessed grades this year.

- Teachers involved in determining grades in our centre will attend centre-based training to help achieve consistency and fairness to all students. This training will include:
  - Training for Heads of Faculty during middle leader meetings
  - Training for TAs during SEND meetings
  - Training for teachers during faculty meetings
  - Training for all staff communicated through training documents, videos and INSET opportunities

- Opportunities to meet and moderate work within subject teams and with subject teams in other schools in the Scholars' Education Trust
- Teachers will engage fully with all training and support that has been provided by the Joint Council for Qualifications and the awarding organisations
- Teachers will engage with other training and support that might be offered, for example by subject advisors and groups

### **Support for Newly Qualified Teachers and teachers less familiar with assessment**

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

## **USE OF APPROPRIATE EVIDENCE**

This section of our Centre Policy indicates how our centre will give due regard to the section in the JCQ guidance entitled: *Guidance on grading for teachers*.

- Teachers making judgements will have regard to the Ofqual Head of Centre guidance on recommended evidence, and further guidance provided by awarding organisations.
- As far as possible, all candidate evidence used to determine teacher assessed grades, and associated documentation, will be retained and made available for the purposes of external quality assurance and appeals.
- We will be using a range of student work to determine teacher assessed grades. This may include some but not necessarily all of the following:
  - work produced in response to assessment materials provided by our awarding organisation(s), including groups of questions, past papers or similar materials such as practice or sample papers
  - non-exam assessment work (often referred to as coursework), even if this has not been fully completed
  - work produced in centre-devised tasks that reflect the specification, that follow the same format as awarding organisation materials, and have been marked in a way that reflects awarding organisation mark schemes
  - substantial class or homework (including work that took place during remote learning)
  - internal tests taken by pupils
  - mock exams taken over the course of study
  - records of a student's capability and performance over the course of study in performance-based subjects such as music, drama and PE
  - records of each student's progress and performance over the course of study

### **Additional Assessment Materials.**

- All teachers will consider the suitability of the additional assessment materials as evidence for students' teacher assessed grades, alongside other suitable assessment materials.
- Suitable assessment materials will be used for the following purposes:
  - to give students the opportunity to show what they know, understand or can do in an area of content that has been taught but not yet assessed
  - to give students an opportunity to show improvement – for example, to validate or replace an existing piece of evidence
  - to support consistency of judgement between teachers or classes by giving everyone the same task to complete

- to combine and/or remove elements of questions where, for example, a multi-part question includes a part which focuses on an element of the specification that hasn't been taught

Our centre will ensure the appropriateness of evidence and balance of evidence in arriving at grades in the following ways:

- We will consider the level of control under which an assessment was completed, for example, whether the evidence was produced under high control and under supervision or at home.
- We will ensure that we are able to authenticate the work as the student's own, especially where that work was not completed within the school.
- We will consider the limitations of assessing a student's performance when using assessments that have been completed more than once, or drafted and redrafted, where this is not a skill being assessed.
- We will consider the specification and assessment objective coverage of the assessment.
- We will consider the depth and breadth of knowledge, understanding and skills assessed, especially higher order skills within individual assessments.

## **DETERMINING TEACHER ASSESSED GRADES**

This section outlines our centre's approach to awarding teacher assessed grades.

- Our teachers will determine grades based on evidence which is commensurate with the standard at which a student is performing, i.e. their demonstrated knowledge, understanding and skills across the content of the course they have been taught.
- Our teachers will record how the evidence was used to arrive at a fair and objective grade, which is free from bias.
- Our Heads of Faculty will produce an Assessment Record for each subject cohort at each level. Any necessary variations for individual students will also be documented and shared.

## **INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE**

This section gives details of our approach to internal standardisation, within and across subject departments.

- We will ensure that all teachers involved in deriving teacher assessed grades read and understand this Centre Policy document.
- In subjects where there is more than one teacher and/or class in the department, we will ensure that our centre carries out an internal standardisation process.
- We will ensure that all teachers are provided with training and support to ensure they take a consistent approach to:
  - arriving at teacher assessed grades
  - marking of evidence
  - reaching a holistic grading decision
  - applying the use of grading support and documentation
- Where necessary, we will review and reflect on individual grading decisions to ensure alignment with the standards as outlined by our awarding organisation(s).
- Where appropriate, we will amend individual grade decisions to ensure alignment with the standards as outlined by our awarding organisation(s).
- In subjects where there is only one teacher involved in marking assessments and determining grades, then we will ensure that our internal standardisation process is carried

out using staff in other schools and/or across the Scholars' Education Trust. As appropriate, this will be reviewed by:

- A department assessing the same subject in another school within the Scholars' Education Trust
- A teacher within the centre or in another school who has experience in assessing this subject
- In respect of equality legislation, we will consider a range of evidence for students of different protected characteristics that are included in our internal standardisation.

## **COMPARISON OF TEACHER ASSESSED GRADES TO RESULTS FOR PREVIOUS COHORTS**

This section gives details of our internal process to ensure a comparison of teacher assessed grades at qualification level to results for previous cohorts in our centre taking the same qualification.

- We will compile information on the grades awarded to our students in past June series in which exams took place (e.g. 2017 - 2019).
- We will consider the size of our cohort from year to year.
- We will consider the stability of our centre's overall grade outcomes from year to year.
- We will consider both subject and centre level variation in our outcomes during the internal quality assurance process.
- We will prepare a succinct narrative on the outcomes of the review against historic data which, in the event of significant divergence from the qualifications-levels profiles attained in previous examined years, will address the reasons for this divergence.

*This section gives details of the approach our centre will follow if our initial teacher assessed grades for a qualification are viewed as overly lenient or harsh compared to results in previous years.*

- We will compile historical data giving appropriate regard to potential mixtures of A\*-G and 9-1 grades in GCSEs. Where required, we will use the Ofqual guidance to convert legacy grades into the new 9 to 1 scale.
- We will bring together other data sources that will help to quality assure the grades we intend to award in 2021.

## **ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS AND SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

This section of our Centre Policy outlines the approach our centre will take to provide students with appropriate access arrangements and takes into account mitigating circumstances in particular instances.

### **Reasonable adjustments and mitigating circumstances (special consideration)**

This section gives details of our approach to access arrangements and mitigating circumstances (special consideration).

- Where students have agreed access arrangements or reasonable adjustments (for example a reader or scribe) we will make every effort to ensure that these arrangements are in place when assessments are being taken.
- Where an assessment has taken place without an agreed reasonable adjustment or access arrangement, we will either remove that assessment from the basket of evidence and obtain alternative evidence or, where there are good reasons for doing so (e.g. the student has

declined to use their access arrangement), then we will take this into account when determining a student's performance and document on the Assessment Record.

- Where illness or other personal circumstances might have affected performance in assessments used in determining a student's standard of performance, we will take account of this when making assessment decisions. We may require further evidence (e.g. medical evidence) to support this process.
- We will record, as part of the Assessment Record, how we have incorporated any necessary variations to take account of the impact of illness or personal circumstances on the performance of individual students in assessments.
- To ensure consistency in the application of Special Consideration, we will ensure all teachers have read and understood the following document, and that it will be in a readily available shared area for easy access: : [JCQ – A guide to the special consideration process, with effect from 1 September 2020](#)

## **ADDRESSING DISRUPTION/DIFFERENTIAL LOST LEARNING (DLL)**

This section gives details of our approach to address disruption or differentiated lost teaching.

- Teacher assessed grades will be determined based on evidence of the content that has been taught and assessed for each student.
- Special consideration will not be applicable for differential learning loss or disruption.
- In the event of a further lockdown, assessments will be completed at home and monitored remotely.

## **OBJECTIVITY**

This section gives a summary of the arrangements in place within our centre in relation to objectivity.

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

Senior Leaders, Heads of Faculty and Head of Centre will consider:

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

To ensure objectivity, all staff involved in determining teacher assessed grades will be made aware that:

- unconscious bias can skew judgements
- the evidence presented should be valued for its own merit as an indication of performance and attainment
- teacher assessed grades should not be influenced by candidates' positive or challenging personal circumstances, character, behaviour, appearance, socio-economic background, or protected characteristics
- unconscious bias is more likely to occur when quick opinions are formed

Our internal standardisation process will help to ensure that there are different perspectives to the quality assurance process by using the following standardisation methods:

- blind marking or standardisation takes place, where possible
- random sampling takes place within departments

- a selection of work is standardised by teachers across the Scholar's Education Trust and/or with teachers from other schools, where possible

## **RECORDING DECISIONS AND RETENTION OF EVIDENCE AND DATA**

This section outlines our approach to recording decisions and retaining evidence and data.

- We will ensure that teachers and Heads of Faculty maintain records that show how the teacher assessed grades process operated, including the rationale for decisions in relation to individual marks/grades.
- We will ensure that evidence is maintained across a variety of tasks to develop a holistic view of each student's demonstrated knowledge, understanding and skills in the areas of content taught.
- We will put in place recording requirements for the various stages of the process to ensure the accurate and secure retention of the evidence used to make decisions.
- We will comply with our obligations regarding data protection legislation.
- We will ensure that the grades accurately reflect the evidence submitted.
- We will ensure that as far as possible evidence is retained electronically or on paper in a secure centre-based system that can be readily shared with our awarding organisation(s).
- We will manage risk against our IT security, including hacking. We have robust firewalls, password and file share policies in place to prevent inappropriate access from external sources, and there are regular backups on a daily, weekly and termly basis of all IT systems that are fully restorable.

## **AUTHENTICATING EVIDENCE**

This section of our Centre Policy details the mechanisms in place to ensure that teachers are confident in the authenticity of evidence, and the process for dealing with cases where evidence is not thought to be authentic.

- Robust mechanisms will be in place to ensure that teachers are confident that work used as evidence is the students' own and that no inappropriate levels of support have been given to students to complete it, either within the centre or with external tutors.
- Where possible, all assessment evidence will be work the student has completed under teacher supervision or in exam conditions. When it is necessary for a student's Assessment Record to contain work completed at home or during remote learning, there is a clear process for teachers and Heads of Faculty to follow to ensure that they can evaluate the authenticity of the work and make decisions about its appropriateness as a piece of assessment evidence.
- It is understood that awarding organisations will investigate instances where it appears evidence is not authentic. We will follow all guidance provided by awarding organisations to support these determinations of authenticity.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY, MALPRACTICE AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

### **Confidentiality**

This section details the measures in place in our centre to maintain the confidentiality of grades, while sharing information regarding the range of evidence on which the grades will be based.

- All staff involved have been made aware of the need to maintain the confidentiality of teacher assessed grades.
- All teaching staff have been briefed on the requirement to share details of the range of evidence on which students' grades will be based, while ensuring that details of the final grades remain confidential.
- Relevant details from this Policy, including requirements around sharing details of evidence and the confidentiality requirements, have been shared with parents/guardians.

## Malpractice

This section details the measures in place in our centre to prevent malpractice and, where that proves impossible, to handle cases in accordance with awarding organisation requirements.

- Our general centre policies regarding malpractice, maladministration and conflicts of interest have been reviewed to ensure they address the specific challenges of delivery in Summer 2021.
- All staff involved have been made aware of these policies, and have received training in them as necessary. These policies are readily available in the shared area for ease of reference.
- All staff involved have been made aware of the specific types of malpractice which may affect the Summer 2021 series including:
  - breaches of internal security
  - deception
  - improper assistance to students
  - failure to appropriately authenticate a student's work
  - over direction of students in preparation for common assessments
  - allegations that centres submit grades not supported by evidence that they know to be inaccurate
  - centres enter students who were not originally intending to certificate a grade in the Summer 2021 series
  - failure to engage as requested with awarding organisations during the External Quality Assurance and appeal stages
  - failure to keep appropriate records of decisions made and teacher assessed grades
- The consequences of malpractice or maladministration as published in the JCQ guidance (JCQ Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures) and including the risk of a delay to students receiving their grades, up to and including removal of centre status, have been outlined to all relevant staff.

## Conflicts of Interest

This section details our approach to addressing conflicts of interest, and how we will respond to such allegations.

- To protect the integrity of assessments, all staff involved in the determination of grades must declare any conflict of interest such as relationships with students to our Head of Centre for further consideration.
- A survey of all staff has taken place to determine whether there are any potential conflicts of interest and there are none. If any conflicts arise subsequently, they will be addressed with the Exams Officer and Senior Leadership Team.
- Our Head of Centre will take appropriate action to manage any conflicts of interest arising with centre staff in accordance with the JCQ documents - [General Regulations for Approved Centres, 1 September 2020 to 31 August 2021](#).



- We will also carefully consider the need to separate duties and personnel to ensure fairness in later process reviews and appeals.

## PRIVATE CANDIDATES

This section details our approach to providing and quality assuring grades to private candidates.

- Sir John Lawes School is not registered with JCQ as a centre that accepts external private candidates. However, our centre does have an internal private candidate, and in this instance we would follow this approach:
  - Where it has been necessary to utilise different approaches, the **JCQ Guidance on Private Candidates** has been followed and any divergences from our approach for internal candidates have been recorded on the appropriate class/student documentation.
  - Additional assessments have been undertaken to validate the student's performance as the evidence provided has been produced with a private tutor.
  - These assessments are similar to those used for internal candidates
  - The evidence provided by the student and the additional assessments will be subject to the same internal quality assurance checks as for internal students
  - In undertaking the review of cohort grades in conjunction with our centre results profiles from previous examined years, the grades determined by our centre for private candidates have been excluded from our analysis.

## External Quality Assurance

This section outlines the arrangements we have in place to ensure the relevant documentation and assessment evidence can be provided in a timely manner for the purposes of External Quality Assurance sampling, and that staff can be made available to respond to enquiries.

- All staff involved have been made aware of the awarding organisation requirements for External Quality Assurance as set out in the JCQ Guidance.
- All necessary records of decision-making in relation to determining grades have been properly kept and can be made available for review as required.
- As far as possible, all student evidence on which decisions regarding the determination of grades has been retained and can be made available for review as required.
- Instances where student evidence used to decide teacher assessed grades is not available, for example where the material has previously been returned to students and cannot now be retrieved, will be clearly recorded on the appropriate documentation.
- All staff involved have been briefed on the possibility of interaction with awarding organisations during the different stages of the External Quality Assurance process and can respond promptly and fully to enquiries, including attendance at virtual visits should this prove necessary.
- Arrangements are in place to respond fully and promptly to any additional requirements/reviews that may be identified as a result of the External Quality Assurance process.
- Staff have been made aware that a failure to respond fully and effectively to such additional requirements may result in further action by the awarding organisations, including the withholding of results.

## Results

This section details our approach to the issue of results to students and the provision of advice and guidance.

- All staff involved have been made aware of the specific arrangements for the issue of results in Summer 2021, including the issuing of A level and GCSE results in the same week.
- Arrangements will be made to ensure the necessary staffing, including exams office and support staff, to enable the efficient receipt and release of results to our students.
- Arrangements will be in place for the provision of all necessary advice, guidance and support, including pastoral support, to students on receipt of their results.
- Such guidance will include advice on the appeals process in place in 2021 (see below).
- Appropriate staff will be available to respond promptly to any requests for information from awarding organisations, for example regarding missing or incomplete results, to enable such issues to be swiftly resolved.
- Parents/guardians will be made aware of arrangements for results days.

## **Appeals**

This section details our approach to managing appeals, including Centre Reviews, and subsequent appeals to awarding organisations.

- All staff involved have been made aware of the arrangements for, and the requirements of, appeals in Summer 2021, as set out in the JCQ Guidance.
- Internal arrangements will be in place for the swift and effective handling of Centre Reviews in compliance with the requirements.
- All necessary staff have been briefed on the process for, and timing of, such reviews, and will be available to ensure their prompt and efficient handling.
- Learners have been appropriately guided as to the necessary stages of appeal.
- Arrangements will be in place for the timely submission of appeals to awarding organisations, including any priority appeals, for example those on which university places depend.
- Arrangements will be in place to obtain the written consent of students for the initiation of appeals, and to record their awareness that grades may go down as well as up on appeal.
- Appropriate information on the appeals process will be provided to parents/carers.