



**MAYFIELD GRAMMAR SCHOOL
GRAVESEND**

**CENTRE POLICY
FOR A/AS LEVEL AND GCSE
FOR SUMMER 2021**

Approved on 26th April 2021

Next review will be conducted once further guidance has been received from JCQ confirming the Appeals process.

Mayfield Grammar School, Gravesend

CENTRE POLICY FOR DETERMINING TEACHER ASSESSED GRADES (TAGS) SUMMER 2021

1. STATEMENT OF INTENT

This section outlines the purpose of this document in relation to our school. 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 process clearly understand their roles and responsibilities.
- To support staff to make 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 school in meeting its obligations in relation to equality legislation.
- To ensure our school 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 any additional assessment material collected has a clear purpose in broadening the evidence within a subject.
- To ensure the process for communicating to candidates and their parents/carers how they will be assessed is clear, in order to provide maximum confidence in the TAG awarding process.

2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES (TRANSPARENCY)

To achieve the intent for the grading process in Summer 2021, we operate on the highest level of transparency with all stakeholders. We believe that staff, students and parents/carers are reassured by the following arrangements:

- An effective, thorough and robust Centre Policy for Determining Teacher Assessed Grades which is adhered to by all MGS Staff involved in the determination of TAGs, and which has been reviewed by awarding organisations.
- A high standard of internal quality assurance both in determining TAGs based solely on student evidence and ensuring that there are no administrative or procedural errors.
- Effective provision of access arrangements for all eligible students.
- Effective arrangements for students that may have been disadvantaged during an assessment that contributes to their grade either by taking the circumstances into account in

determining grades or by using alternative evidence that was unaffected by the adverse circumstances.

- Effective communication with students and parents/guardians so that they understand our approach to determining their grades before grades are submitted to the awarding organisations, including the evidence used.
- The transparency in the evidence used will allow students to raise any errors or circumstances relating to particular pieces of evidence to be considered in advance of the grade submission on 18 June 2021.
- Accurate recording and effective checking of information on the assessment record for the student to avoid errors in submitting TAGs.
- Effective oversight and clear professional accountability from the Head of Centre through the Head of Centre Declaration.

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

This section of our Centre Policy outlines the personnel in our school who have specific roles and responsibilities in the process of determining TAGs this year.

Head of Centre

Our Head of Centre, Mrs E Wilson (Headteacher), will:

- Be responsible for approving our policy for determining teacher assessed grades.
- Have overall responsibility for Mayfield Grammar School, Gravesend as an examinations centre and will ensure that clear roles and responsibilities of all staff are defined.
- Confirm that TAG decisions represent the professional judgement based upon academic evidence made by teachers.
- Ensure the quality assurance process in place ensures TAGs align with the guidance on standards provided by awarding organisations, JCQ and Ofqual.
- Ensure a robust internal quality assurance process has been produced and signed-off in advance of results being submitted.

Senior Leadership Team and Curriculum Leaders

Our Senior Leadership Team and Curriculum Leaders will:

- Provide training and support to all relevant 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 validating the preliminary outcome from single teacher subjects (i.e., Drama, Music and Media Studies).
- 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.
- Ensure that a Curriculum Leader Checklist is completed for each qualification that they are submitting.
- 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 (Item 1A) 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 TAGs. Any necessary variations for individual students will also be recorded.
- Securely store and be able to retrieve sufficient evidence, where possible, to justify their decisions.

Examinations Officer

Our Examinations Officer, Ms J Everden, will be responsible for:

- The administration of our final TAGs.
- Managing the post-results services with support of SLT.

Class Teachers and AEN Coordinator (Mrs T Lee)

Our class teachers and AEN Coordinator will:

- Ensure they conduct assessments under our school'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 TAG they assign to each student is a fair, valid and reliable reflection of the assessed evidence available for each student.

4. TRAINING, SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE

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

Teachers involved in determining grades in our centre will attend school-based training to help achieve consistency and fairness for all students.

Teachers will be provided with training and support materials that have been supplied by the Joint Council for Qualifications, Ofqual, the awarding organisations and the school.

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 teachers less familiar with assessment if appropriate and document these accordingly within Assessment Records (Item 1A).

5. 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.

All candidate evidence used to determine teacher assessed grades, and associated documentation, produced after Monday 8th March will be retained, where possible, and made available for the purposes of external quality assurance and appeals.

All candidate evidence used to determine teacher assessed grades, and associated documentation, produced prior to Monday 8th March will be recalled and retained, where possible, and made available for the purposes of external quality assurance and appeals.

Overall, our school will ensure the appropriateness of evidence and balance of evidence in arriving at grades in the following ways:

- We will consider the level of control under which an assessment was completed, for example, whether the evidence was produced under high control and under supervision or at home.
- We will ensure that we are able to authenticate the work as the student's own, especially where that work was not completed within the school or college.
- We will consider the 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.

A variety of student work will be used to determine the TAGs in response to assessment materials provided by our awarding organisation(s), including groups of questions, past papers or similar materials such as practice or sample papers.

We may use non-exam assessment work (often referred to as coursework), even if this has not been fully completed.

We may use student work produced in centre-devised tasks that reflect the specification, that follow the same format as awarding organisation materials, and have been marked in a way that reflects awarding organisation mark schemes.

We may use substantial class or homework (including work that took place during remote learning).

We may use internal tests sat by students and may use formal school examinations (September 2020 and April 2021) taken over the course of study.

We may use records of a student's capability and performance over the course of study in performance-based subjects such as music, drama and PE.

6. ADDITIONAL ASSESSMENT MATERIALS

We may use additional assessment materials to give students the opportunity to show what they know, understand or can do in an area of content that has been taught but not yet assessed.

We may use additional assessment materials to give students an opportunity to show improvement, for example, to validate or replace an existing piece of evidence.

We may use additional assessment materials to support consistency of judgement between teachers or classes by giving everyone the same task to complete.

We may 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.

7. DETERMINING TEACHER ASSESSED GRADES (TAGS)

This section of our Centre Policy outlines the approach our school will take to awarding teacher assessed grades based upon evidence.

We give details here of our school'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 Curriculum Leaders will record how the evidence was used to arrive at a fair and objective grade within each subject and record this process in their Assessment Record (Item 1A). They will also detail how the process was free from bias.
- Our teachers will produce an Assessment Record (Item 1A) for each subject cohort and will share this with their Curriculum Leader. Any necessary variations for individual students will also be shared on via the Variation for Individual Students (Item 1B) document.
- Our students are expected to support the process outlined in this document and we are confident that they will do so. However, if a student fails to respond to any requests for evidence in a timely manner this may have a negative impact on their final TAG.
- Where the school has no evidence to determine a TAG, a teacher assessed grade cannot be submitted to the awarding body. Under these circumstances a Grade U will be awarded.

8. INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE

This section of our Centre Policy outlines the approach our school will take to ensure internal standardisation of TAGs, to ensure consistency, fairness and objectivity of decisions. The following points confirm our approach:

- We will ensure that all teachers involved in deriving teacher assessed grades have read and understood and signed a declaration confirming their adherence to this Centre Policy document.
- In subjects where there is more than one teacher and/or class in the department, we will ensure that an internal standardisation process takes place.
- 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 descriptors and worked examples issued by JCQ and any other appropriate documentation (e.g., from awarding bodies).
- We will conduct internal standardisation across all grades.
- We will ensure that the Assessment Record (Item 1A) will form the basis of internal standardisation and discussions within departments to agree the awarding of teacher assessed grades.
- 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).
- Where there is only one teacher involved in marking assessments and determining grades, the output of this activity will be reviewed by an appropriate member of staff within the school. This may be the appropriate SLT line manager or an appropriately qualified external partner.
- In respect of equality legislation, we will consider the range of evidence for students of different protected characteristics that are included in our internal standardisation. In addition, we will consider Pupil Premium, SEND and EAL, as well as any other appropriate groups identified by the school.
- We will consider any factors submitted by parents/carers at the request of the school via completion of a proforma issued by Mrs C Kemp (Deputy Headteacher) e.g., the impact of prolonged absence.
- We will consider any religious observance that may have impacted student performance in any of the assessments identified by subjects in the awarding of TAGs.

9. COMPARISON OF TAGS TO RESULTS FOR PREVIOUS COHORTS

This section of our Centre Policy 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 undertake a process based upon the grades awarded to our students in past examination series in which public examinations took place in 2017 - 2019. Specifically, we will:

- Consider the variation in size of our cohort from year to year.
- Consider the stability of our school's overall grade outcomes from year to year.
- Consider both subject and school level variation in our outcomes during the internal quality assurance process.
- Prepare a succinct narrative on the outcomes of the review against historic data which, in the event of significant divergence from the qualifications-levels profiles attained in previous examined years, which address the reasons for this divergence. This commentary will be available to Ofqual for subsequent review during the external quality assurance process.
- 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 may bring together other data sources that will help to quality assure the grades we intend to award in 2021.

10. OMISSION AND AMENDMENTS TO PREVIOUS COHORTS

This section gives details of changes in our cohorts that need to be reflected in our comparisons.

We will omit subjects that we no longer offer from the historical data.

We will review grades in all subjects which have changed exam boards since 2019 (such as A Level History).

11. ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS AND SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

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

Where students have agreed access arrangements or reasonable adjustments (for example a reader or scribe) we will review the impact of this adjustment on any assessments used to determine TAGs.

Where an identified assessment has taken place without an agreed reasonable adjustment or access arrangement, we will consider the assessment outcome and determine whether alternative evidence may be used, or additional assessment tasks are required.

Where illness or other personal circumstances might have affected performance in assessments used in determining a student's standard of performance, we will take account of this when making judgements.

We will record, as part of the Assessment Record (Item 1A), 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 document: JCQ – A guide to the special consideration process, with effect from 1 September 2020 and have signed the appropriate declaration.

12. 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.

Where there is insufficient evidence throughout the entire course, other available evidence will be considered on content that was accessed by the student.

All TAGs will pass through a rigorous moderation process to ensure they have been awarded fairly and without bias.

13. OBJECTIVITY

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

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

Senior Leaders, Curriculum Leaders and the relevant teaching staff 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.

14. RECORDING DECISIONS AND RETENTION OF EVIDENCE AND DATA

This section of our Centre Policy outlines our arrangements to recording decisions and to retaining evidence and data.

We will ensure that teachers and Curriculum Leaders 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 clear TAG 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 evidence is retained electronically or on paper in a secure centre-based system that can be readily shared with our awarding organisation(s).

15. 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 of authentication include:

- Consideration of the range of evidence selected and the level of control.
- TAG decisions determined through an evidenced based process.
- Review of prior attainment data across each subject.
- Our Internal Quality Assurance Process.
- Professional judgement of highly qualified teaching staff.

All students will be required to sign a declaration which will confirm all evidence is their own work and that no inappropriate levels of support have been given, either within the school or from external agents.

Any incidences where a concern is raised regarding the authenticity of a piece of evidence will be investigated by the school in consultation with the student. Following the investigation, if the piece of evidence is deemed to be authentic it will be used to support the awarding of the TAG.

If a piece of evidence cannot be authenticated, any or all of the following may occur:

- The piece of evidence may be withdrawn from the Assessment Record (Item 1A), which may affect the overall TAG.

- The school may ask the student to complete additional assessment(s) in school.
- The school may allow the student to submit additional evidence to be considered.

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.

16. CONFIDENTIALITY, MALPRACTICE AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

16.1 Confidentiality

This section of our Centre Policy outlines the measures in place to ensure the confidentiality of the grades our centre determines, and to make students aware of the range of evidence on which those 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.

16.2 Malpractice

This section details the measures in place in our school 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.

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; and
- Failure to keep appropriate records of decisions made and teacher assessed grades.

The consequences of malpractice or maladministration as published in the JCQ guidance: JCQ Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures and including the risk of a delay to students receiving their grades, up to, and including, removal of centre status has been outlined to all relevant staff.

16.3 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.

Our Head of Centre will take appropriate action to manage any conflicts of interest arising with school 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 the TAG process, reviews and appeals.

17. PRIVATE CANDIDATES

This section of our Centre Policy outlines our approach to working with Private Candidates to arrive at appropriate grades.

Our arrangements for assessing Private Candidates to arrive at appropriate grades are identical to the approaches utilised for internal candidates wherever possible.

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.

Relevant staff will be required to sign a declaration if this circumstance applies.

Where a private candidate is entered for a subject not taught as part of the published curriculum offer, the school will liaise with the relevant external agent to determine the evidence and authenticity of the TAG. A copy of JCQ's guidance on private candidates will be issued to the relevant agent and they will be required to sign a declaration as well as the student concerned. In addition, the relevant agent will need to complete an Assessment Record (Item 1A) for their subject and submit the assessment evidence to the school to validate the TAG.

Where the school has no evidence to determine a TAG, a teacher assessed grade cannot be submitted to the awarding body. Under these circumstances a Grade U will be awarded.

In undertaking the review of cohort grades in conjunction with our centre results profiles from previous examined years, the grades determined by our school for Private Candidates have been excluded from our analysis.

18. 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.

All student evidence on which decisions regarding the determination of grades has been retained, where possible, 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.

19. RESULTS

This section of our Centre Policy outlines our approach to the receipt and issue of results to students and the provision of necessary 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/AS and GCSE results in the same week.

Arrangements will be made to ensure the efficient 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 to any requests for information from awarding organisations, for example, regarding missing or incomplete results to enable such issues to be swiftly resolved.

Arrangements for results days will be communicated to parents/carers in a timely manner.

20. APPEALS

(An update to this section may be required once additional guidance is received from JCQ)

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

We believe the need for appeals should be limited as the process for awarding each TAG will have been communicated with students and parents/carers. Section 2 of this document indicates our aims and objectives for transparency.

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 will be briefed on the process for, and timing of, such reviews, and will be available in line with the proposed JCQ timescale.

Students will be appropriately informed of the necessary stages of the appeal process.

Arrangements will be in place for the timely submission of appeals to awarding organisations, including any priority appeals, for example, those on which university places depend.

Arrangements will be in place to obtain the written consent of students to the initiation of appeals, and to record their awareness that grades may go down as well as up on appeal.

Appropriate information on the appeals process will be provided to parents/carers.

All appeals will be submitted to the school within the timeframe specified by the JCQ Appeals Timeline (Item 1C).

This policy has been produced to adhere to all JCQ, Ofqual and exam board guidance for awarding TAGs in June 2021. Mayfield Grammar School, Gravesend will submit this policy to JCQ via its admin portal by 30th April 2021 to comply with the requirements outlined in the JCQ guidance for schools and colleges to support the delivery of TAGs dated 26th March 2021.