



Tormead School Centre Policy

FOR A/AS LEVELS AND GCSES FOR SUMMER 2021

APPROVED BY THE HEAD OF CENTRE AND GOVERNORS'
ACADEMIC COMMITTEE 26/4/2021



Centre Policy for determining grades awarded in Summer 2021

Background

Every centre is required to create a Centre Policy that reflects its individual circumstances. Tornead, has chosen to adopt the template devised by JCQ, but adapted to suit our school's approach to the grades that will be awarded in summer 2021.

This policy takes account of the guidance provided in the following documents:

- JCQ Guidance on the determination of grades for A/AS Levels and GCSEs for summer 2021
- JCQ Guidance on maintaining objectivity
- CAIE Guidance for deciding school-assessed grades
- CAIE Guidance about avoiding bias in determining school-assessed grades in June 2021



Centre Policy for determining grades awarded in summer 2021:

Tormead School

Statement of intent

This section outlines the purpose of this document in relation to our centre.

Statement of Intent
<p>This section provides details of the purpose of this document, as appropriate to our centre:</p> <p>The purpose of this policy is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To ensure that the grades for Summer 2021 are determined fairly, consistently, effectively and free from bias 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 awarding grades.• To support a high standard of internal quality assurance in the allocation of 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 final grades this summer.

Roles and Responsibilities

This section gives details of the roles and responsibilities within our centre:

Head of Centre

- Our Head of Centre, David Boyd (Head), will be responsible for approving our policy for determining grades for Summer 21.
- Our Head of Centre will ensure that Governors have read and approved this policy.
- Our Head of Centre has overall responsibility for the school as an examinations centre and will ensure that clear roles and responsibilities of all staff are defined.
- Our Head of Centre will confirm that this summer's 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.
- Our Head of Centre will ensure a robust internal quality assurance process has been produced and signed-off in advance of results being submitted.

Senior Leadership Team

Our Senior Leadership Team will:

- provide training materials and support to our staff involved in grading.
- create guiding principles for the awarding of grades.
- support the Head of Centre in the quality assurance of the final determination of Summer 21 grades.
- ensure an effective approach 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.
- communicate clearly with students and parents about the principles and processes surrounding the awarding of Summer 21 grades.

Heads of Department

Our Heads of Department will:

- be responsible for the selection of appropriate evidence within their subjects, used to make judgements about students' grades this summer.
- 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 grades that are awarded. Any necessary variations for individual students will also be recorded.



- 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 judgements.
- ensure that assessments have appropriate processes of moderation and standardisation in place as part of the internal quality assurance process.
- ensure that a Head of Department Checklist is completed for each qualification that they are submitting.
- securely store and be able to retrieve sufficient evidence to justify their decisions.

Teachers, Examinations Officer and SENCo

Our teachers, Examination Officer 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 grades for each student they have entered for a qualification.
- ensure that during assessments, students who are entitled to access arrangements receive these in full.
- ensure that the final grade assigned to each student is a fair, valid and reliable reflection of the assessed evidence available for that 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.
- will engage positively with all training provided, including reading any support materials produced by HoDs, Senior Leaders and the JCQ in respect of the Summer 21 grading process.

Examinations Officer (in addition)

Our Examinations Officer will also:

- be responsible for the administration of our final Summer 21 grades and for managing the post-results services.
- Recording any instances or circumstances which might have an impact on a student's performance in assessments, as part of the overall judgement process in awarding final grades this summer.



Training, support and guidance

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

Training

This section provides details of the approach our centre will take to training, support and guidance in determining grades this summer.

- Teachers involved in determining grades in our centre will attend centre-based training to help achieve consistency and fairness to all students.
- This training includes whole-school INSET on how to avoid unconscious bias as well as subject-specific training in moderation best practice, for those marking assessments, and guidance on how to award a holistic grade this summer.
- Teachers will engage fully with all training and support that has been provided by the Joint Council for Qualifications and the awarding organisations.
- Teachers involved with summer 21 grading will all read this policy as well as any other support materials provided by senior leaders or HoDs.
- HoDs are responsible for ensuring teaching colleagues in their departments have been trained in how to apply mark schemes accurately and consistently across qualifications and assessments.
- Senior leaders will ensure that HoDs have sufficient time to train colleagues in their departments.

Support for Newly Qualified Teachers and teachers less familiar with assessment

This section provides details of our approach to training, support and guidance for newly qualified teachers and teachers less familiar with assessment

- HoDs are responsible for reviewing marking carried out by NQTs and other less experienced teachers as appropriate.
- HoDs will provide mentoring and support from experienced teachers for NQTs and teachers involved with marking who are less familiar with assessment.



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.

A. Use of evidence

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

- 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 final grades, along with associated documentation, will be retained and made available for the purposes of external quality assurance and appeals.
- We will be using student work produced in response to assessment materials provided by our awarding organisation(s), including groups of questions, past papers or similar materials such as practice or sample papers.
- We will use non-exam assessment work (often referred to as coursework), even if this has not been fully completed.
- We will use student work produced in centre-devised tasks that reflect the specification, that follow the same format as awarding organisation materials, and have been marked in a way that reflects awarding organisation mark schemes.
- We may use substantial class or homework (including work that took place during remote learning).
- We will use internal tests taken by pupils.
- We will use records of a student's capability and performance over the course of study in performance-based subjects such as music, drama and PE.

We provide further detail in the following areas:

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.



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 have put in place a series of three assessment points in the Spring and Summer terms that will be completed under controlled conditions in school, with work standardised and moderated appropriately.
- In line with JCQ guidance, the School will consider 'more recent evidence likely to be more representative of pupil performance, although there may be exceptions'.
- We will ask students to confirm work as their 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, ensuring that any aspect of the specification that has not been covered, is not assessed.
- We will consider the depth and breadth of knowledge, understanding and skills assessed, especially higher order skills within individual assessments.



Determining grades for Summer 21

This section of our Centre Policy outlines the approach our centre will take to awarding Summer 21 grades.

Awarding Summer 21 grades based on evidence

We give details here of our centre's approach to awarding Summer 21 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 Department, in conjunction with teachers within their departments, will produce an Assessment Record for each subject cohort. Any necessary variations for individual students will also be shared on the Assessment Record.



Internal quality assurance

This section of our Centre Policy outlines the approach our centre will take to ensure internal standardisation of the awarded grades for Summer 21, to ensure consistency, fairness and objectivity of decisions.

Head of Centre Internal Quality Assurance and Declaration

Internal quality assurance
<p>This section gives details of our approach to internal standardisation, within and across subject departments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• We will ensure that all teachers involved in deriving grades for Summer 21 read and understand this Centre Policy document and have attended centre-based training.• We will ensure that all teachers are provided with training and support to ensure they take a consistent approach to:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Arriving at their final grades○ Marking of evidence○ Reaching a holistic grading decision○ Applying the use of grading support and documentation○ Making objective judgements and are fully aware of the supporting guidance from OFQUAL, JCQ and the awarding bodies.• We will conduct internal standardisation across all grades. for example, by;<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Marking assessments blind○ Duplicate marking○ Random sampling moderation within departments• In subjects with only one teacher, grades will be reviewed by a member of the Senior Leadership Team.• We will ensure that the Assessment Record will form the basis of internal standardisation and discussions across teachers to agree the awarding of final 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).• 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.



Comparison of Summer 2021 grades to results for previous cohorts

This section of our Centre Policy outlines the approach we will take to compare our grades awarded in 2021 with results from previous cohorts.

Comparison of Summer 21 Grades to results for previous cohorts

This section gives details of our internal process to ensure a comparison of the Summer 21 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, which address the reasons for this divergence. This commentary will be available for subsequent review during the QA process.

This section gives details of the approach our centre will follow if the initial grades awarded in Summer 21 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 include grades from international GCSEs where we have previously offered these.
- We will bring together other data sources that will help to quality assure the grades we intend to award in 2021.

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 have regard to very small cohorts where individual results may heavily distort historical data.



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 take 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 remove that assessment from the basket of evidence and alternative evidence will be obtained. If this is not practical, or such evidence does not exist, we will assess whether this omission should merit special consideration.
- 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.
- In the case of illness or other personal circumstances that may have affected performance in a specific assessment it is expected that the student informs us at the time of the assessment. Retrospective reports will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Any circumstance that a student feels merits consideration must be communicated to the school before the final determination of grades .
- We will record, as part of the Assessment Record, that 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 review all special consideration cases in line with recommendations set out in: [JCQ – A guide to the special consideration process, with effect from 1 September 2020](#)



Addressing disruption/differential lost learning (DLL)

B. Addressing Disruption/Differentiated Lost Learning (DLL)

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

- Summer 21 grades will be determined based on evidence of the content and skills that have been taught and assessed for each student.
- We may not speculate on a student's possible performance had there been no pandemic or no disruption to teaching and learning.



Objectivity

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

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 Department and 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); and
- bias in the awarding of Summer 21 grades.

To ensure objectivity, all staff involved in determining Summer 21 grades will be made aware, through centre-based training and other materials provided, that:

- unconscious bias can skew judgements;
- the evidence presented should be valued for its own merit as an indication of performance and attainment;
- Summer 21 grades should not be influenced by candidates' positive or challenging personal circumstances, character, behaviour, appearance, socio-economic background, or protected characteristics;
- judgements should not be affected by the performance of their siblings,
- parental opinions or the knowledge of grades needed to meet a university; offer; 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 (see earlier section for details).



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.

C. 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 Departments maintain records that show how the Summer 21 grades process operated, which will include (per course):
 - A Rationale Form
 - An Assessment Record (including Individual Variations for students where appropriate)
 - Evidence Portfolios (CAIE only)
 - A Head of Department Checklist
- 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 evidence is retained electronically or on paper in a secure centre-based system that can be readily shared with our awarding organisation(s).
- We are conscious of the need to ensure that our IT systems are robust in response to a data breach or cyber-attack or, indeed, a routine data loss. All electronic records are backed up according to the protocol outlined below by the Network Manager:
 - on-site records are backed up to one disk-based and one tape-based archive location. A set of tapes with data no more than a week old will be stored in a location with no network access.
 - Cloud-based records relating to assessment grade data for public examinations in the current academic year are manually backed up once every two days. The backup media is stored in a locked filing cabinet while not in use.
 - Restoration of IT systems in the event of a successful cyber-attack rendering our data unreadable would take around 3 working days for critical system to become operational again. Full system restoration should be complete within 6 working days.



Authenticating evidence

D. 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, which will include the use of assessment data completed under controlled conditions in school, 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.
- 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 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.

A. 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 the grades awarded in Summer 21.
- All students have been briefed on the broad range of evidence on which their 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 of our Centre Policy outlines the measures in place to prevent malpractice and other breaches of exam regulations, and to deal with such cases if they occur.

B. 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.
- 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 the final grades awarded.
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- 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 of our Centre Policy outlines the measures in place to address potential conflicts of interest.

C. 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 centre staff in accordance with the JCQ documents - [General Regulations for Approved Centres, 1 September 2020 to 31 August 2021](#).
- We will also carefully consider the need if to separate duties and personnel to ensure fairness in later process reviews and appeals.



Private candidates

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

A. Private Candidates

This section details our approach to providing and quality assuring grades to Private Candidates.

- Our arrangements for assessing Private Candidates to arrive at appropriate grades are identical to the approaches utilised for internal candidates.
- 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.
- 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 of our Centre Policy outlines the procedures in place to comply with awarding organisation arrangements for External Quality Assurance of the grades awarded in Summer 21 in a timely and effective way.

A. 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 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 and can be made available for review as required.
- Instances where student evidence used to decide 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 of our Centre Policy outlines our approach to the receipt and issue of results to students and the provision of necessary advice and guidance.

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



Appeals

This section of our Centre Policy outlines our approach to Appeals, to ensure that they are handled swiftly and effectively, and in line with JCQ requirements.

A. 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 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 will be 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 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.