

# Centre Determined Grades Policy for Summer 2021



## Statement

This policy takes into consideration all relevant information from CCEA.

## Summary:

This policy outlines the procedures to be undertaken when awarding Centre Determined GCSE grades in Blackwater Integrated College.

**Mr Stephen Taylor**

**Principal**

**April 2021**

## History

Reviewed April 2021

## **Statement of Intent**

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

In 2021, centres are asked to use a range of evidence to arrive at a professional and academic judgement of the standard at which each student is performing in the context of the specification for which they are entered and from this provide a grade to CCEA and other awarding bodies. This is different from 2020, when centres were asked to supply a centre assessment grade based on their judgement of the grade a student would likely have achieved if they had been able to complete examinations.

The purpose of this policy is:

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

It is the responsibility of everyone involved in the generation of Centre Determined Grades to read, understand, and implement this policy.

The Centre Determined Grades policy will be in line with CCEA Alternative Arrangements – Process for Heads of Centre, and JCQ guidance for Heads of Centre, subject specific guidance and other CCEA and JCQ guidance and information issued in relation to Summer 2021.

All staff involved in centre determined grades will support the implementation of alternative arrangements as set out by CCEA and any other awarding body including the CCEA review stage. Staff will familiarise themselves with all relevant guidance provided by CCEA, the JCQ requirements and the relevant centre policies.

## **Process Overview**

There is a five-step process for the Summer 2021 awarding arrangements as outlined in the CCEA Alternative Arrangements – Process for Heads of Centre Appendix 4a.

### **1. Guidance, Information and Readiness (March, April) (Centre Leadership Team, Subject Coordinators and teaching staff)**

CIEA training has been undertaken by designated senior staff and disseminated to teaching staff.

CCEA guidance documentation shared and understood by all involved staff. Centre fully participates in support offered by CCEA and other partner bodies, such as EA and CCMS.

Centres agree their quality assurance process to ensure consistency across teachers, subjects, and departments.

Centre policy for awarding Centre Determined Grades developed, documented, and shared with all staff. Policies to be sent to CCEA by 23 April so they are available for review at grade submission stage.

Preliminary consideration of value of available evidence

### **2. Evidence Gathering and Provision of Assessment Resource (March, April, and May) (Centre Leadership Team, Subject Coordinators and teaching staff)**

Completion and marking of defined assessments in line with centre policy; for example, this could comprise CCEA assessment resources which will be available from April 2021.

All other available evidence collated and documented

### **3. Centre Professional Judgement and Moderation (April and May) (Head of Centre, Centre Leadership Team, Subject Coordinators and teaching staff)**

All available evidence moderated in line with centre policy

Any potential bias in Centre Determined Grades and outcomes considered

Centre Determined Grade outcomes reviewed by senior leadership teams

Head of Centre sign-off and submission of Centre Determined Grades

**4. Review of Evidence and Award (June and July)**  
***(Head of Centre and CCEA personnel)***

Centre evidence and grade outcomes reviewed

If evidence submitted is considered reasonable, centre grades proceed to award. If necessary, additional evidence requested and reviewed.

Where CCEA still has concerns, there will be engagement with the centre and, in some cases, this may require the centre to re-run their grading process.

**5. Post-Award Review Service (August and September)**  
***(Head of Centre and CCEA personnel)***

After the issue of results, students will have the right to appeal to their centres and CCEA.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

*Board of Governors.*

*Head of Centre.*

*Centre Leadership Team / Lead Assessors.*

*Examinations Officer.*

*Subject Coordinators.*

*Class Teachers.*

*Parents.*

*Students.*

### **Roles and responsibilities of Blackwater Integrated College staff are outlined below:**

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

The **Head of Centre** has overall responsibility for the centre as an examinations centre and will develop a policy for centre determined grades and ensure the roles and responsibilities of all staff are defined. The Head of Centre will confirm that Centre Determined Grade judgements are accurate and represent the professional judgement made by staff. The Head of Centre will ensure that the method of determining grades by the centre (in line with processes published by CCEA or any other awarding body) uses the professional judgement of teachers, with internal moderation and participation in an external review process set out by CCEA or any other awarding body. The Head of Centre will work collaboratively with CCEA or any other awarding body in terms of engaging with professional dialogue and the provision of evidence as requested.

The **Centre Leadership Team / Lead Assessors** will provide support to staff involved in producing Centre Determined Grades. They will support the Head of Centre in the quality assurance of the final Centre Determined Grades. They have a role in achieving a consistent approach across departments and authenticating the preliminary outcomes in subjects where there is only one teacher. This will be agreed on a case-by-case basis but may include, for example, Senior Leaders or the Head of Centre validating the outcomes after comparing them with outcomes in associated subject areas where applicable. Those who attended the CCEA Chartered Institute of Educational Assessors (CIEA) training will act as Lead Assessors in their centre and disseminate the content of the programme to all teachers involved in producing Centre Determined Grades.

The **Examinations Officer** is responsible for ensuring accurate and timely entries are submitted to CCEA or any other awarding body. They must ensure that all information from CCEA or any other awarding body is shared promptly with all relevant staff. The examinations Officer will ensure that they know, understand, and can use the CCEA Centre Manager Applications or any other exam body portal. They will ensure that the centre's systems for data capture are enabled and that the Centre Determined Grades are submitted for each candidate entry by the published date(s) for Summer 2021. The Examinations Officer is responsible for the administration of the final Centre Determined Grades and for managing the post-results services within the centre.

**Subject Coordinators** are responsible for supporting departmental staff and ensuring all staff conduct assessments under the appropriate levels of control and have the information required to make accurate and fair judgements. They will ensure that a Head of Department Checklist is completed for each qualification that they are submitting. Additional support and, where appropriate, quality assurance measures will be provided for newly qualified teachers.

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

**Students** will be expected to have attendance which is deemed to be acceptable by school as outlined in the school's attendance policy, to submit work, which is the best of their ability, to adhere to school policy and meet internal deadlines for submission of work. Where the centre or individual teachers are put under improper pressure from a candidate to influence the decision-making on a grade this will be reported to CCEA or any other awarding body, who may investigate this as potential malpractice or maladministration.

**Parents** should support learners by ensuring good attendance, having awareness of school policy, and ensuring their children adhere to internal deadlines for submission of work. Where the centre or individual teachers are put under improper pressure from a candidate or their parent/guardian to influence the decision-making on a grade this will be reported to CCEA or any other awarding body, who may investigate this as potential malpractice or maladministration.

### **Training, Support and Guidance**

Teachers involved in determining grades must attend any centre-based training provided. Blackwater Integrated College will engage fully with all training and support that CCEA has provided, including web-based support and training.

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

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

## **Appropriate Evidence**

### **Alternative Arrangements – Process for Heads of Centre**

Blackwater Integrated College will use the following candidate evidence in arriving at Centre Determined Grades. The first part of the list indicates the key evidence that will be considered, and the asterisked evidence will be used if key evidence is not available:

- CCEA or any other exam board assessment resources for 2021.
- CCEA or any other exam board past papers.
- mock examinations, which relate to the CCEA or any other exam board specification.
- coursework or controlled assessments, even where not completed – if applicable to the subject.
- class tests.
- practical assessments
- recordings of performances
- past module results from CCEA modular examinations
- compositions
- fieldwork and write up analysis
- homework\*
- Any other subject specific evidence\*

Evidence for CCEA must be submitted to the school no later than 7<sup>th</sup> May for AS and A2 and 21<sup>st</sup> May for GCSE.

Student's work must be authenticated. Evidence submitted should be signed by the pupil. All processes outlined in the school Assessment or Examination Policy should be adhered to.

Blackwater Integrated College will base all evidence on the relevant CCEA qualification specifications as set out in the **CCEA Alternative Arrangements – Process for Heads of Centre**. Likewise, all evidence for other awarding bodies will be based on their guidance for alternative arrangements.

Blackwater Integrated College is taking into account the information provided by CCEA about unit omissions before the cancellation of examinations. These are detailed on the Summer 2021 Information Pre-Examination Cancellation section of the CCEA website.

Blackwater Integrated College is taking into account of disruption that candidates have faced to their learning as a result of COVID-19 by **amending assessments where necessary to take into account reduced specification content due to disruptions in learning**. Any adaptations that have been made will be recorded in the checklists provided by CCEA and will be based on the **CCEA Alternative Arrangements – Process for Heads of Centre**.

**Candidates will be made aware of the evidence that will be used in determining their grades by their class teacher and is also listed in Appendix 1 for each GCSE Subject. When evidence is shared with candidates grade information will not be discussed.**



## **Centre Determined Grades**

Blackwater Integrated College will determine grades based on evidence that reflects the standard at which a candidate is performing, i.e., their demonstrated knowledge, understanding and skills in regard to the specification content they have covered.

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

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

### **Information on these aspects for each qualification will be drawn from:**

- the CCEA specification and other awarding body specifications
- specimen assessment materials, assessment/coursework assessment tasks, and Chief Examiner and Principal Moderator
- reports, which are available on the CCEA website at [www.ccea.org.uk](http://www.ccea.org.uk)
- reports, which are available from other awarding body specifications

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

### **Internal Standardisation**

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

Internal standardisation should include cross-checking of marking across the full range of marks and include candidates from each class. The Candidate Assessment Records should form the basis of discussions around decisions made. As a result of the internal standardisation process, it may be necessary for a teacher or the Subject Coordinator to adjust the original decision:

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

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

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

Blackwater Integrated College undertakes to have a consistent approach across departments/subjects.

Centre Leadership Team / Lead Assessors will carry out moderation, to include a review of marking and the internal standardisation arrangements and will investigate whether decisions have been justified. Unexplained grade profiles will be considered and may result in a review of the evidence used or remarking. A record of decisions should be retained. The moderation exercise will include professional discussions with Subject Coordinators.

Centre Leadership Team / Lead Assessors will consider both the subject and centre outcomes based on the evidence available. The Head of Centre will submit a declaration on behalf of the centre. This will include a confirmation that the Centre Determined Grades for candidates are a true representation of their performance.

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

Where candidates have agreed access arrangements or reasonable adjustments (for example a reader or scribe), Blackwater Integrated College will make every effort to ensure that these arrangements are in place when assessments are being taken. Details on access arrangements can be found in the JCQ document Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties, which is available on the JCQ website (see associated / related documents for the link).

As public examinations have been cancelled, the normal application process to the awarding organisation for special consideration will not apply this summer in the usual manner. However, where illness or other personal circumstances, covered by the JCQ guidelines, might have affected the candidate's standard of performance, Blackwater Integrated College will take account of this when making judgements. Class teachers will record how they have determined any impact of illness or personal circumstances and how this was incorporated into their judgements in the Candidate Assessment Record. Blackwater Integrated College will ensure consistency in the application of special consideration by following the guidance on pages 4–7 of the JCQ document 'A guide to the special consideration process', with effect from 1 September 2020.

## **Bias and Discrimination**

Blackwater Integrated College will fulfil its duties and responsibilities concerning relevant equality and disability requirements.

Senior Leaders, **Mrs Pamela Gilmore and Mrs Lisa McVeigh**, will disseminate guidance from the CIEA training on potential bias in judgements, including the challenges and solutions relevant to a holistic approach to assessing the validity of assessment judgements. This will include information on:

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

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

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

### **Recording Decisions and Retention of Evidence and Data**

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

For retention of electronic records, schools should consider the use of SIMS for GDPR purposes and acceptable use of data. For retention of hard copies of evidence schools should implement their usual secure exam storage procedures as per their assessment policy.

It is essential that there are robust, accurate and secure records of decisions and retention of evidence to comply with data protection legislation and in anticipation of centre moderation and the CCEA Review of Evidence and Award process and potential appeals. When requested, evidence will be uploaded via the CCEA application used to submit the Centre Determined Grades. The following CCEA documentation must be fully and accurately completed and retained securely:

- Candidate Assessment Records.
- Head of Department Checklists and Departmental Assessment Evidence Grid.
- Head of Centre Declaration.

### **Students Who Are Taught at a Different Centre (Consortium)**

Students who are being taught at a different centre from the one where the entry was made should be included in the grading of the centre that made the entry. The centre making the entry should consult with the teaching centre and compare evidence on student performance in both centres to determine an agreed grade.

The home centre, which is making the entry for the student, has final responsibility for submitting a Centre Determined Grade. The centre making the entry will need to ensure they have access to all available students' evidence, as this may be requested of them to support the CCEA sampling process.

### **Confidentiality**

Blackwater Integrated College will not disclose any candidates' Centre Determined Grades in advance of the official issue of results. This is in keeping with the centre's GDPR policy and CCEA and any other exam board requirements.

### **Malpractice/Maladministration**

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

Other examples of potential malpractice include:

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

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

### **Conflicts of Interest**

To protect the integrity of assessments, staff must declare any potential conflicts of interest to the Head of Centre. Instances when there may be a conflict include teaching and preparing members of their family or close friends for qualifications that include internally assessed components. The Head of Centre will take the appropriate actions to manage any potential conflicts of interest arising with centre staff, following the requirements set out in **CCEA's Alternative Arrangements – Process for Heads of Centre** document issued in March 2021.

Blackwater Integrated College will also carefully consider the requirements of their centre policies, particularly in relation to the separation of duties and personnel to ensure fairness in later process reviews and appeals.



## **Appeals Procedure Relating to Centre Determined Grades**

At the point of writing this policy we are awaiting CCEA requirements when the CCEA awarding organisation appeals process is confirmed. It will make clear the roles, responsibilities and steps involved in the internal appeals procedure. Blackwater IC will adhere to the guidelines set down by CCEA Appeals procedure when published.

A written internal appeals procedure will be available to permit candidates recourse in relation to the production of a Centre Determined Grade. Blackwater Integrated College's internal appeals procedure is available for staff, candidates and parents on the centre website at [www.blackwateric.org](http://www.blackwateric.org) It outlines the roles and responsibilities for centre staff and provides clarity on the various steps in the internal procedure. The various steps of the internal appeals procedure are timebound and in line with CCEA requirements. Candidates will be updated at each stage and will be informed in writing of the outcomes and recourse procedures.

### **Complaints Procedure**

Blackwater Integrated College's internal complaints procedure permits candidates to challenge the centre's delivery or administration of a qualification (including failure to follow their internal appeals procedure correctly) and is available on our website at [www.blackwateric.org](http://www.blackwateric.org)

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

Blackwater Integrated College has reviewed and amended, where necessary, all assessment and examination-related policies and procedures in line with the JCQ General Regulations for Approved Centres, 1 September 2020 to 31 August 2021 to ensure appropriateness for the unique context of Summer 2021 qualifications.

### **Associated/Related Centre Documents**

Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties - Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments

<https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/AA-regs-2020-2021-version-for-website.pdf>

CCEA Alternative Arrangements – Process for Head of Centre

<https://ccea.org.uk/downloads/docs/ccea-asset/General/GCSE%2C%20AS%20and%20A%20Level%20Awarding%20Summer%202021%20Alternative%20Arrangements%20-%20Process%20for%20Heads%20of%20Centre%20%28Revised%20Version%202.0%29.pdf>

**Appendix 1**

Evidence that will be used in each GCSE subject for Centre Determined Grades:

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Evidence</b>
<b>Art</b>	Sketch book Examination unit Final piece
<b>Contemporary Crafts</b>	Sketch book Learning files Practical final piece
<b>English</b>	Mock examinations Controlled Assessments CCEA Assessment Resources Class work
<b>English Literature</b>	Poetry tasks Drama tasks CCEA Assessment Resources Class work
<b>French</b>	Mock examination result CCEA Assessment Resources
<b>Geography</b>	CCEA Assessment Resources Field work data task
<b>Hospitality</b>	Controlled Assessment – Portfolio Task 2 Assessment Resource Controlled Assessment – Function task
<b>Mathematics</b>	Past papers CCEA Assessment Resources Mock examination result
<b>Music</b>	Composition task Performance CCEA Assessment Resources
<b>Occupational Studies</b>	Knowledge check Practical work

	<p>End of unit evaluations</p> <p>Assessment activities</p> <p>CCEA Assessment Resources</p> <p>Practical tasks</p> <p>Evaluations</p>
<b>Religious Education</b>	<p>Mock examination results</p> <p>CCEA Assessment Resource</p> <p>Past paper questions</p> <p>Controlled Assessments</p>
<b>Double Award Science</b>	<p>Unit result in Chemistry and Physics</p> <p>CCEA Assessment Resource</p> <p>Past paper tests</p>
<b>Single Award Science</b>	<p>Unit result in Biology</p> <p>Unit result in Chemistry</p> <p>Past paper tests</p>

\*Where CCEA Assessment resources are used there may be some adaptations to the resource depending on the subject and candidate in line with CCEA guidance.