

# DCC Centre Policy for GCSE TAGs

SUMMER 2021



# JCQ Policy for determining teacher assessed grades in the summer of 2021:

## Denton Community College

The school will follow a rigorous, robust process, underpinned by professional standards, to determine fair and consistent Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGs) for our 2021 cohort of students.

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

### Statement of Intent

The purpose of this policy is:

- To ensure teacher assessed grades (TAGs) are determined effectively, fairly, consistently & free from bias within and across all subjects, departments & faculties.
- To ensure effective processes operate within clear guidelines that provide appropriate support for staff.
- To ensure all staff involved in the processes clearly understand their roles and responsibilities.
- To support teachers in taking evidence-based decisions in line with Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) guidance.
- To ensure historical centre data is ensured in the process and decision making in respect of teacher assessed grades (TAGs).
- To support a high standard of internal quality assurance in the allocation of teacher assessed grades (TAGs).
- 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 for Education, Ofqual, JCQ 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 provide confidence.

### Roles and Responsibilities

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

### Roles and Responsibilities

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

#### Head of Centre (Mr Greg Rule)

Our Head of Centre:

- Will be responsible for approving our policy for determining teacher assessed grades (TAGs).

- Has overall responsibility for Denton Community College as an examinations centre and will ensure that clear roles and responsibilities are defined for all staff.
- Will confirm that allocated teacher assessed grades (TAGs) represent the academic judgement made by teachers and that the checks in place ensure these align with the guidance on standards provided by awarding organisations.
- Will ensure a robust internal quality assurance process has taken place and signed-off in advance of results being submitted.

### **Senior Leadership Team, Heads of Department & Heads of Subject**

Our Senior Leadership Team, Heads of Department & Heads of Subject will:

- Provide training and support for the staff they line manage.
- Support the Head of Centre in the quality assurance of final teacher assessed grades (TAGs) to be allocated.
- Ensure effective approaches within and across faculties, authenticate the preliminary outcome from single teacher subjects.
- Be responsible for ensuring staff have a clear understanding of the internal and external quality assurance processes, as well as their role within it.
- Ensure that all teachers within their department or subject make consistent judgements about pupil evidence in deriving a grade.
- Ensure all staff conduct assessments under the appropriate levels of control with reference to guidance provided by JCQ.
- Ensure teachers have the information required to make accurate and fair judgments.
- Ensure that moderation is undertaken and completed collectively by subject teachers, Heads of Subject, Heads of Department and their SLT line managers for each qualification being submitted.
- Ensure that final TAGs are signed off as completed by at least two people linked to the department or subject. This must include the relevant Head of Department or Head of Subject and the associated SLT line manager.

### **Subject Teachers and SENCO**

Our Subject Teachers and SENCO will:

- Ensure assessments are conducted under an appropriate level of control in accordance with the Centre Policy and Guidance from JCQ.
- Ensure assessments provide sufficient evidence to support TAGs for each pupil they have entered for a qualification.
- Ensure that all TAGs they assign are a fair, valid and reliable reflection of the assessed evidence available for each pupil.
- Make judgements based on what each pupil has been taught and what they have been assessed on, as outlined in the relevant guidance on grading from JCQ.
- Produce an Assessment Record for each subject cohort that includes the nature of the assessment; the evidence being used; the level of control as well as any other evidence

---

that explains how the final TAG is to be determined. In addition to this any necessary variations for individual pupils will also be recorded.

- Securely store and be able to retrieve sufficient evidence to justify their decisions.
- Will declare any conflict of interest to their line manager.

### **Examinations Officer**

Our Examinations Officer will:

- Be responsible for the administration of our final TAGs and for managing the post-results services.

## Training, support and guidance

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

### **Training**

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

- Teachers involved in determining grades in our centre will attend centre-based training to help achieve consistency and fairness to all pupils.
- Teachers will engage fully with all training and support that has been provided by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) and the awarding organisations.

### **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.

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

## Use of appropriate evidence

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

### 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.
- Teachers will consider how high and low testing controls may affect outcomes and use professional judgement in order to ensure that these differences are accounted for.
- As far as is possible, all candidate evidence used to determine TAGs, and associated documentation will be retained and made available for the purposes of external quality assurance and appeals.
- We will be using pupil 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.
- Where appropriate, we will use non-exam assessment work (often referred to as coursework), even if this has not been fully completed.
- We will use pupil 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 will use class or homework (including work that took place during remote learning).
- We will use internal tests taken by pupils.
- We will use mock examinations taken over the course of study.
- We will use records of a pupil's capability and performance over the course of study in performance-based subjects such as music, drama and PE.
- We will ask all students to authenticate that the evidence we intend to submit in relation to their TAG is their own. We will do this before submission of the TAG to the awarding organisations.

We provide further detail in the following areas:

#### Additional Assessment Materials

- We will use additional assessment materials to give pupils 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 will use additional assessment materials to give pupils an opportunity to show improvement, for example, to validate or replace an existing piece of evidence.
- We will use additional assessment materials to support consistency of judgement between teachers or classes, where possible we will attempt to give students the same task to complete.
- We will use additional assessment materials from a range of sources; these assessment materials will reflect the specifications of the awarding organisations. The assessment

materials will attempt to mitigate the effects of school closure, enforced self-isolation due to Covid-19, and other effects of the pandemic. The assessment materials will be from a diverse range of areas that highlight what the student has achieved in terms of knowledge and skills from the specification they have studied.

- We will 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 has not been taught.

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

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

## Determining teacher assessed grades (TAGs)

This section of our Centre Policy outlines the approach our centre will take to awarding teacher assessed grades (TAGs).

### **Awarding teacher assessed grades based on evidence**

We give details here of our centre's approach to awarding TAGs.

- Our teachers will determine grades based on evidence which is commensurate with the standard at which a pupil 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 teachers will produce an Assessment Record for each subject cohort and will share this with their Head of Department or Head of Subject. Any necessary variations for individual pupils will also be shared.

## Internal quality assurance

This section of our Centre Policy outlines the approach our centre will take to ensure internal standardisation of teacher assessed grades (TAGs), to ensure consistency, fairness and objectivity of decisions.

### Head of Centre Internal Quality Assurance and Declaration

#### Internal Quality Assurance

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

- We will ensure that all teachers involved in deriving TAGs read and understand this Centre Policy document.
- In subjects where there is more than one teacher and/or class in the department, we will ensure that our centre carries out an internal standardisation process.
- We will ensure that all teachers are provided with training and support to ensure they take a consistent approach to:
  - Arriving at TAGs
  - Marking of evidence
  - Reaching a holistic grading decision
  - Applying the use of grading support and documentation
- We will conduct internal standardisation across all grades.
- We will ensure that the Assessment Record will form the basis of internal standardisation and discussions across teachers to agree the awarding of TAGs.
- 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, then the output of this activity will be reviewed by an appropriate member of staff within the centre (This will be either Lead Teachers, Heads of Subject, Heads of Depart or SLT line managers).
- 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 teacher assessed grades to results for previous cohorts

This section of our Centre Policy outlines the approach we will take to compare our teacher assessed grades (TAGs) in 2021 with results from previous cohorts.

### Comparison of Teacher Assessed Grades to results for previous cohorts

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

- We will compile and analyse grades awarded to students from Denton Community College in previous May/June examination series (e.g. 2017 - 2019).
- 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 in the event of significant divergence from the qualifications/levels shown in profiles attained in previous examined years. This narrative will address the reasons for this divergence. This commentary will be available for subsequent review during the quality assurance process.

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

- We will compile historical data giving appropriate regard to potential mixtures of A\*-G and 9-1 grades in GCSEs. Where required, we will use the Ofqual guidance to convert legacy grades into the new 9 to 1 scale.
- We will bring together other data sources that will help to quality assure the grades we intend to award in 2021.
- We will ensure that where faculties are showing differences from Historical Performance, they will provide a summary of why the results may be higher to support the TAGs submitted.

## 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 pupils 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 a piece of evidence is deemed to have required a reasonable adjustment and this has taken place without an agreed reasonable adjustment or access arrangement, we will remove that assessment from the basket of evidence and alternative evidence obtained.
- Where illness or other personal circumstances might have affected performance in assessments used in determining a pupil's standard of performance, we will take account of this when making judgements. If necessary, we will apply for special consideration.
- We will record, as part of the Assessment Record, how we have incorporated any necessary variations to take account of the impact of illness or personal circumstances on the performance of individual pupils 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](#)

## Addressing disruption/differential lost learning

This section of our Centre Policy outlines the approach our centre will take to addressing disruption or differentiated lost learning.

### **B. Addressing Disruption/Differentiated Lost Learning**

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

- TAGs will be determined based on evidence of the content that has been taught and assessed for each pupil.
- We will use a range of evidence and assessment materials to give pupils an opportunity to show improvement, for example, to validate or replace an existing piece of evidence.
- We will use assessment materials from a range of sources; these assessment materials will reflect the specifications of the awarding organisations. The assessment materials will attempt to mitigate the effects of school closure, enforced self-isolation due to Covid-19 and / or other effects of the pandemic. The assessment materials will be from a diverse range of areas that highlight what the student has achieved in terms of knowledge and skills from the specification they have studied.
- We will 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 has not been taught.

## 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.

The Head of Centre, Senior Leaders, Heads of Subject and Heads of Department 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 (TAGs).

To ensure objectivity, all staff involved in determining TAGs 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;
- TAGs 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 and our internal standardisation process will help to ensure that there are different perspectives to the quality assurance process.

## Recording decisions as well as the retention of evidence and data

This section of our Centre Policy outlines our arrangements to recording decisions, as well as 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, Heads of Department & Heads of Subject maintain records that show how the TAGs 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 pupil'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 will ensure that should the centre be subject to a data breach, or we suspect that a third party has attempted to access our secure centre-based system, we will inform Rachel Marsland (School Business Manager / Data Protection Officer) in line with school data protection policy. Any suspected data protection incident must be brought to the attention of the Schools Information Governance Team who will investigate and decide if the incident constitutes a data protection breach. If a reportable data protection breach occurs, the school is required to notify the ICO, JCQ, OFQUAL and awarding Organisations as soon as possible, and no later than 72 hours after becoming aware of it. Any member of the school who encounters something they believe may be a data protection incident must report it immediately. More information can be found on the college website.

## 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 whole subject or departmental moderation of assessments, recording of the calendar dates and times or assessment windows, will be in place to ensure that teachers are confident that work used as evidence is the pupils' own, and that no inappropriate levels of support have been given to pupils 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 [[AQA](#), [EDEXCEL](#), [OCR](#), [Pearson](#), [WJEC](#) ] 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 TAGs.
- All teaching staff have been briefed on the requirement to share details of the range of evidence on which pupils' 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 pupils
  - Failure to appropriately authenticate a pupil's work
  - Over direction of pupils in preparation for common assessments
  - Allegations that centres submit grades not supported by evidence that they know to be inaccurate.

- Centres who enter pupils who were not originally intending to certificate a grade in the Summer 2021 series
- Failure to engage as requested with awarding organisations during the External Quality Assurance and appeal stages
- Failure to keep appropriate records of decisions made and TAGs

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 pupils 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 pupils 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 required to separate duties and personnel to ensure fairness in later process reviews and appeals.

## External Quality Assurance

This section of our Centre Policy outlines the arrangements in place to comply with awarding organisation arrangements for External Quality Assurance of teacher assessed grades 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 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 pupil evidence on which decisions regarding the determination of grades has been retained and can be made available for review as required.
- Instances where pupil evidence used to decide teacher assessed grades is not available, for example where the material has previously been returned to pupils 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 pupils.

- 
- Arrangements will be in place for the provision of all necessary advice, guidance and support, including pastoral support, to pupils 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 the **JCQ Guidance**.
- Internal arrangements will be in place for the swift and effective handling of Centre Reviews in compliance with the requirements.
- All necessary staff have been briefed on the process for, and timing of, such reviews, and will be available to ensure their prompt and efficient handling.
- Learners have been appropriately guided as to the necessary stages of appeal.
- Arrangements will be in place for the timely submission of appeals to awarding organisations, including any priority appeals, for example those on which university places depend.
- Arrangements will be in place to obtain the written consent of students 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.