

Oathall Community College

Policy for awarding grades: summer 2021

Introduction

As a result of the disruption to the education of students caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, the government determined that exams cannot be held in summer 2021. Following a consultation seeking views on how grades should instead be awarded, Ofqual and the Department for Education published their decisions about how this will take place in schools.

This policy sets out how teacher assessed grades (TAGs) will be awarded at Oathall so that all students receive fair and reasonable grades based on objective judgements of their performance across a range of evidence, on the curriculum content that they have been taught.

The processes applied at Oathall to determine TAGs lie within the scope set out in the following documents published by Ofqual:

- [Decisions on how GCSE, AS and A level grades will be determined in summer 2021](#)
- [Information for heads of centre, heads of department and teachers on the submission of teacher assessed grades: summer 2021](#)
- [Information for centres about making objective judgements](#)

Generating teacher assessed grades

Teachers will consider the standard at which each student has performed over the course of study and make a holistic judgement based on a range of evidence relating to the qualification's specification content that has been taught (either in the classroom or via remote learning). Teachers can use evidence of a student's performance from any point during the course of study, provided they are confident that it reflects the student's own work. Particular consideration must be given to this last point if using assessments carried out during home learning.

What evidence can be included?

- Topic tests, mocks and similar materials provided they reflect the specification, follow the same format as exam board materials and have been marked using the same mark scheme by all teachers.
- Non-exam assessment (NEA) work, even if it is incomplete.
- Student work produced in response to assessment materials provided by the exam board, including past papers and materials provided in response to the current situation.
- Records of a student's performance in performance- based subjects.
- Records of a student's progress over the course of study.

The range of evidence used in different subjects will no doubt differ. Faculties should consider the following points when deciding how best to balance the different sources of evidence:

- More recent evidence is likely to be more representative of student performance although there may be exceptions.
- As much as possible, the same range of evidence should be used for all students within a subject. In tiered GCSEs students may have completed tier specific tasks. In all subjects lower attaining students may be given accessible questions and higher attaining students more demanding questions.
- Teachers need to be flexible where students have missed particular assessments, through no fault of their own.
- Teaching and learning can continue after students return to Oathall on 8 March. Assessments can also take place after their return.
- Whenever possible a particular assessment should be taken at the same time, or at least the same day, by all students.
- Students should, wherever possible, continue with their NEA.
- Exam boards may sample some of the evidence used.

Subject specific guidance provided by Ofqual

For GCSE English and GCSE modern foreign languages spoken language exam boards will also collect grades for the separate endorsements. There will be no requirement to collect evidence for these assessments.

There will be no requirement to submit statements of curriculum requirements being met in subjects such as GCSE geography field work.

In art and design, the student's grade must be based on the portfolio only, whether or not it has been completed.

Submitting TAGs

The Exams Officer will be responsible for submitting grades to the exam boards. This must be done by Friday 18 June. The internal deadline for each Head of Faculty to submit grades to the Exams Officer is **9am on Tuesday 8 June**. Grades must be submitted on the spreadsheets provided by the Exams Officer.

Internal Quality Assurance

Ultimately the Headteacher must be confident that the TAGs submitted to the exam boards are a true representation of student performance. There must therefore be a series of quality assurance processes in place before the Headteacher can sign the declaration. These will include the following:

- Each Head of Faculty will produce a plan that itemises the range of evidence that will be used to determine the TAGs in each subject, discuss the plan with their line manager and submit the plan to the deputy headteacher. See Annex A for a template.
- All teachers involved in generating TAGs will read the document [Information for centres about making objective judgements](#)
- Standardisation arrangements are in place within each subject to ensure that the marking of assessments is consistent across all teachers. In subjects with only one teacher the Head of Faculty will sample and check marking. A note will be kept that standardisation has taken place.
- All student work being used as evidence will be kept in school if it is available.
- Scores / marks from the evidence being used will be collated on a central record, ideally a spreadsheet, that shows how the final grade has been determined.
- Each Head of Faculty should be confident that the results for the whole cohort are a true representation of student performance. This should include comparisons to previous cohorts when exams have taken place to compare the overall distribution of grades.
- Two teachers, one being the HOF, will sign off the grades for each subject on the sign off sheet provided. See annex B..
- The deputy and headteacher will analyse the distribution of grades within each subject and across the school. Any potential adjustments will be discussed with the relevant HOF.
- The Headteacher will sign the declaration provided by Ofqual once satisfied that the TAGs are a true representation of student performance.

External Quality Assurance

The exam boards are responsible for external quality assurance. The external quality assurance arrangements will be focused on making sure that the process and evidence used by centres to determine a grade is reasonable; it will not involve second-guessing teachers' judgements. They are required by Ofqual to check the internal quality assurance approach in each centre. They will also carry out more detailed checks on a sample of centres. Some will be random and some based on risk, for example if the grade distribution is out of line with previous cohorts, if there is an unexpected entry pattern, or if the internal QA is not appropriate. Changes to grades will only be made if exam boards find that the grade is not a reasonable exercise of academic judgement, rather than as a result of marginal differences of opinion, and only following discussion between the exam board and the centre.

Results and appeals

Students will receive their results on 12 August and should not be told their TAG before this date. Students will be able to appeal their grade. In brief, they should first ask the school to check whether an administrative or procedural error has been made. If the school believes this is not the case, a student can ask the school to appeal to the exam board on their behalf. The school will submit the appeal and the evidence used to determine the TAG to the exam board. More details are included in the Ofqual documents linked in the introduction to this policy.

Annex B

Subject sign off sheet

Year 11 grades - 2021

Internal sign off

Subject: _____

I can confirm that the grades submitted for students taking this subject were generated in line with the guidance given by Ofqual and are a true representation of student performance.

_____ (sign)

_____ (print name)

_____ (date)

_____ (sign)

_____ (print name)

_____ (date)