

COOKSTOWN HIGH SCHOOL



Centre Determined Grades Policy

April 2021

Policy Title:	Centre Determined Grades Policy
Target Audience:	Governors, Staff, Parents
Policy Lead:	Principal and Vice Principal
Policy Developed by:	SLT
Those Consulted:	Education Authority and Department of Education
Ratified by Board of Governors on:	20 April 2021
Implementation Date:	With immediate effect
Review Date:	1 st September 2021
Principal:	Miss G Evans
Chair of Board of Governors:	Mrs L Dripps

Statement of Intent

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;
- to ensure that Centre Determined Grades are produced in line with the process as published by CCEA, using the professional judgement of teachers, with internal
- moderation, ensuring quality and accuracy of the grades submitted to CCEA; 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**, subject specific guidance and other CCEA guidance and information issued in relation to Summer 2021.

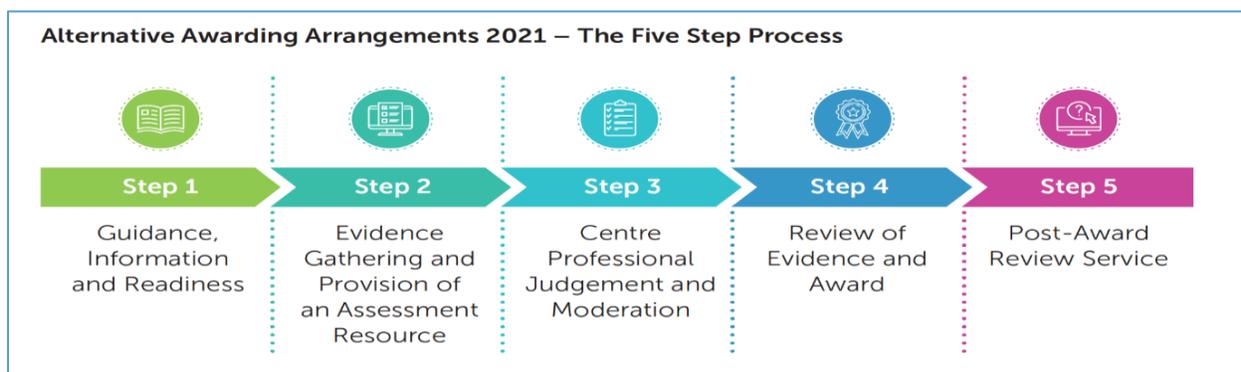
All staff involved in centre determined grades will support the implementation of alternative arrangements as set out by CCEA, including the CCEA review stage. Staff will familiarise themselves with all relevant guidance provided by CCEA, the JCQ requirements and the relevant centre policies.

References to centre and Head of Centre in this document are in line with JCQ examination centre terminology.

GCSE, AS and A Level Awarding Summer 2021: Alternative Arrangements – Process for Heads of Centre First published 5 March 2021.

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**. (See appendix)



Roles and Responsibilities

Roles and responsibilities of **Cookstown High School** staff are outlined below:

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

The **Head of Centre (Principal)** has overall responsibility for the centre as an examinations centre and will 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) uses the professional judgement of teachers, with internal moderation and participation in an external review process set out by CCEA.

The Head of Centre will work collaboratively with CCEA in terms of engaging with professional dialogue and the provision of evidence as requested.

The SENCo will ensure Access Arrangements are in place during assessments for pupils who are entitled to these arrangements.

The **Vice Principal** 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, GCSE, AS and A Level Awarding Summer 2021: Alternative Arrangements – Process for Heads of Centre First published 5 March 2021. The Principal and Vice Principal attended the CCEA Chartered Institute of Educational Assessors (CIEA) training and will disseminate the content of the programme to all teachers involved in producing Centre Determined grades for CCEA.

Vice Principal or the Head of Centre will validate the outcomes after comparing them with outcomes in associated subject areas where applicable.

The Vice Principal and Principal 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. They must ensure that all information from CCEA is shared promptly with all relevant staff. The Examinations Officer will ensure that they know, understand and can use the CCEA Centre Manager Applications. 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.

Heads of Department 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 Senior Leaders 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 **Cookstown High School** is central to determining Centre Determined Grades.

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 the Head of Centre, Board of Governors and CCEA 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. **Cookstown High School** will engage fully with all training and support that CCEA has provided, including web-based support and training. Further general and subject-specific support and guidance can be found on the CCEA website at www.ccea.org.uk The centre policy will be supported through training provided by CCEA to Senior Leaders through the CIEA. The Vice Principal 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. **The Vice Principal** should be notified if no one from a department has been able to attend support meetings and the Principal will consider how this is addressed.

Appropriate Evidence

Cookstown High School 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 assessment resources for 2021;
- CCEA past paper questions;
- mock examinations, which relate to the CCEA specification;
- coursework or controlled assessments, even where not completed – if applicable to the subject;
- class tests;
- homework*;

Cookstown High School will base all evidence on the relevant CCEA qualification specifications as set out in the **CCEA Alternative Arrangements – Process for Heads of Centre**.

Cookstown High School has taken 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.

Cookstown High School is taking account of disruption that candidates have faced to their learning a result of COVID-19 by **adapting assessments to ensure that only the content covered in each subject will be assessed, this is to ensure that all assessments are robust and fair.**

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.**

Cookstown High School must detail how and when evidence will be shared with candidates, for example, the Candidate Assessment Record minus grade information.

Centre Determined Grades

Cookstown High School 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, specimen assessment materials, past papers, controlled assessment/coursework assessment tasks, and Chief Examiner and Principal Moderator reports, which are available on the CCEA website at www.ccea.org.uk

All teachers will complete the Candidate Assessment Record and will forward to their Head of Department/Subject Leader. 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.

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 Head of Department to adjust the original decision:

- to match the standards as established and understood in the guidance provided; and
- 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 Head of Department. They should complete the relevant checklist, which will record any adjustments and relevant information.

Head of Centre Moderation and Declaration

Cookstown High School undertakes to have a consistent approach across departments/subjects. Senior Leaders: Principal and Vice-Principal (Miss G Evans and Mr A McGeown) 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 Heads of Department, Senior Leaders: Principal and Vice-Principal 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), **Cookstown High School** 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. 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, **Cookstown High School** 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. **Cookstown High School** 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

Cookstown High School fulfil its duties and responsibilities concerning relevant equality and disability requirements.

The Principal and Vice-Principal 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); and
- 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 Heads of Department 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. 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; and
- Head of Centre Declaration.

Confidentiality

Cookstown High School 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 requirements.

Malpractice/Maladministration

Cookstown High School will act ethically, to uphold the integrity of the qualifications system and to report potential cases of malpractice or maladministration to CCEA 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, 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.

Private Candidates

For subjects where entries have been made for private candidates, centres will ensure that they have sufficient evidence to confidently submit an objective Centre Determined Grade. If evidence is limited, it is essential that these candidates complete the CCEA assessment resource or an appropriate adaptation of the assessment resource. Thereafter, decisions for the private candidate should be made with the same approach as for all other candidates at **Cookstown High School**.

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.

Cookstown High School 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.

Internal Appeals Procedure Relating to Centre Determined Grades

A written internal appeals procedure is available to permit candidates recourse in relation to the production of a Centre Determined Grade. **Cookstown High School's** internal appeals procedure is available for staff, candidates and parents on the centre website [Cookstown High School](#). 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 time bound 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

Cookstown High School'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 the centre website at [Cookstown High School](#).

Requirements as a JCQ Registered Centre

Cookstown High School's 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.