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| Carrickfergus Grammar School | Policy for Centre Determined Grades – Summer 2021 |
| Date ratified | March 2021 |
| Date implemented | March 2021 |
| Date to be reviewed | April-June 2021 |
| Consulted | Governors, Staff |

NB: 'the centre' as mentioned in this policy refers to Carrickfergus Grammar School

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 (Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment), WJEC (Welsh Joint Education Committee), Edexcel and AQA (formerly the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance);
- ⊙ to ensure that Centre Determined Grades are produced in line with the process as published by CCEA / WJEC / AQA / Edexcel or other relevant awarding bodies, using the professional judgement of teachers, with internal moderation, ensuring quality and accuracy of the grades submitted to the 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 is in line with **CCEA Alternative Arrangements – Process for Heads of Centre / WJEC Guide to Centre Policy / relevant AQA and Edexcel documentation**, subject-specific guidance and other CCEA / WJEC / Edexcel guidance and information issued in relation to Summer 2021. All staff involved in Centre Determined Grades will facilitate the implementation of alternative arrangements as set out by the awarding bodies, including the CCEA / WJEC / AQA / Edexcel review stage. Staff will familiarise themselves with all relevant guidance provided by awarding bodies, the JCQ requirements and the relevant centre policies.

Please note that Carrickfergus Grammar School uses specifications provided by four examination boards:

- ⊙ CCEA
- ⊙ WJEC
- ⊙ AQA
- ⊙ Edexcel

This policy covers information relating to all four examination boards with specific references to CCEA.

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**. Internal deadlines relating to the steps of the CCEA process are provided in Appendix 1.



Roles and Responsibilities

Roles and responsibilities of Carrickfergus Grammar School staff are outlined below:

The **Board of Governors** is responsible for approving the policy for producing Centre Determined Grades and must notify awarding bodies 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 awarding bodies) uses the professional judgement of teachers, with internal moderation and participation in an external review process set out by CCEA for subjects using CCEA qualifications.

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

The **Head of Centre and Vice Principal** will provide support to staff involved in producing Centre Determined Grades. The **Senior Leadership Team** 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. He should ensure that all information is shared promptly with all relevant staff. The Examinations Officer will ensure that they know, understand and can use the CCEA Centre Manager Applications, in particular. He 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 dates 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 and recording information to show how the evidence was used to arrive at a fair and objective grade. They will ensure all evidence used for the Centre Determined Grade is stored securely in an organised manner for each qualification and can be quickly accessed when required.

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 in accordance with PHA regulations and guidance at the time, 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 Departmental Assessment Evidence and 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. Where alternative evidence has been employed or if a student has Access Arrangements / Special Consideration or anything else which deviates from the norm, a Candidate Assessment Record must record arrangements put in place for that candidate.

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 **Carrickfergus Grammar School** is central to determining Centre Determined Grades.

Training, Support and Guidance

Teachers involved in determining grades must attend any centre-based training provided. Carrickfergus Grammar School will engage fully with all training and support that CCEA / AQA / WJEC / Edexcel has provided, including web-based support and training. Further general and subject-specific support and guidance can be found at:

CCEA: www.ccea.org.uk

WJEC: www.wjec.co.uk

AQA: www.aqa.org.uk

Edexcel : <https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/home.html>

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. The Vice-Principal should be notified if no one from a department has been able to attend support meetings and she will consider how this is addressed.

Appropriate Evidence

Carrickfergus Grammar School will avail of the following candidate evidence in arriving at Centre Determined Grades. The list indicates the key evidence that will be considered.

- ⊗ CCEA / WJEC / AQA / Edexcel assessment resources for 2021 or adaptations of these resources;
- ⊗ Internal assessment (based on past paper questions from the awarding body)
- ⊗ Other support materials available from awarding bodies at a subject-specific level;
- ⊗ coursework or controlled assessments, even where not completed – if applicable to the subject;
- ⊗ class tests;
- ⊗ tracking tests;
- ⊗ practical assessments;
- ⊗ homework

Carrickfergus Grammar School will base all evidence on the relevant awarding body qualification specifications, with reference also to the CCEA Alternative Arrangements – Process for Heads of Centre.

Carrickfergus Grammar School has taken into account the information provided by awarding bodies about unit omissions before the cancellation of examinations. These are detailed on the Summer 2021 Information Pre-Examination Cancellation section of the CCEA website.

At the discretion of departments, Carrickfergus Grammar School may take account of disruption that candidates have faced to their learning a result of COVID-19 by adapting assessments accordingly. These adaptations will be outlined, alongside a rationale, in the departmental checklist and for CCEA qualifications will reference the CCEA Alternative Arrangements – Process for Heads of Centre. The same process applies to subjects using AQA and WJEC awarding bodies.

Carrickfergus Grammar School 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 student's own, especially where that work was not completed within the school;
- ⊙ 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.

CLC

Carrickfergus Grammar School is a member of the Carrickfergus Learning Community. Carrickfergus Grammar School students taking post-16 courses at other member schools will be subject to the policy of the school in question, and will follow their procedures in relation to the allocation of centre determined grades and consequent policies.

Centre Determined Grades

Carrickfergus Grammar 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 awarding body specification, specimen assessment materials, past papers, controlled assessment/coursework assessment tasks, and Chief Examiner and Principal Moderator reports.

Carrickfergus Grammar School will share with candidates the sources of evidence being used to generate Centre Determined Grades. Please note that due to exceptional circumstance or due to expediency it may be necessary to use alternative sources of evidence in which case any changes will be identified in the Department's Assessment Evidence grid or the Candidate Assessment Record.

Carrickfergus Grammar School will endeavour to share the marks used to support the generation of Centre Determined Grades before the completion of the process.

Where required, teachers will complete the Candidate Assessment Record and will forward to their Head of Department/Subject Leader. Heads of Department are responsible for ensuring that all evidence has been stored safely and is accessible to support the 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 and Moderation

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 moderation should include cross-checking of marking across the full range of marks and include candidates from each class.

The evidence should form the basis of discussions around decisions made.

As a result of the internal standardisation / moderation 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 / moderation, 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

Carrickfergus Grammar School undertakes to have a consistent approach across departments/subjects. The Head of Centre and Vice-Principal 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. The 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), Carrickfergus Grammar 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, **Carrickfergus Grammar School** will take account of this when making judgements. Departments 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. **Carrickfergus Grammar 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

Carrickfergus Grammar School will fulfil its duties and responsibilities concerning relevant equality and disability requirements.

The 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 / moderated, 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 in hard copy or 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 any Review of Evidence and Award process and potential appeals.

When requested, evidence will be uploaded via the awarding bodies' application used to submit the Centre Determined Grades.

For CCEA qualifications, 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

Carrickfergus Grammar 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 exam board requirements.

Malpractice/Maladministration

Carrickfergus Grammar School will act ethically, to uphold the integrity of the qualifications system and to report potential cases of malpractice or maladministration to the awarding body 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 the awarding body, 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 the awarding body 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 relevant documentation, including CCEA's Alternative Arrangements – Process for Heads of Centre document issued in March 2021.

Carrickfergus Grammar 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. **Carrickfergus Grammar School's** internal appeals procedure will be available for staff, candidates and parents on the centre website at www.carrickfergusgrammar.com once the school has received the relevant information (including timescales) from the awarding bodies. 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 awarding body requirements. Candidates will be updated at each stage and will be informed in writing of the outcomes and recourse procedures.

Complaints Procedure

Carrickfergus Grammar 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 www.carrickfergusgrammar.com.

Requirements as a JCQ Registered Centre

Carrickfergus Grammar School 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.

APPENDIX 1: FIVE STEP AWARDING PROCESS

| Step and Indicative Timeframe | Activity | Personnel | Internal Deadlines | |
|-------------------------------|---|--|--|----------------|
| 1 | Guidance, Information and Readiness (March, April) | 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. | Centre Leadership Team, Heads of Department (HoD) and teaching staff | End March 2021 |
| | | Centres agree their quality assurance process to ensure consistency across teachers, subjects and departments. | Centre Leadership Team, HoD and teaching staff | End March 2021 |
| | | 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. | Centre Leadership Team | End March 2021 |
| | | Preliminary consideration of value of available evidence | Centre Leadership Team and HoD | Mid-March 2021 |
| 2 | Evidence Gathering and Provision of Assessment Resource (March, April and May) | 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. | Centre Leadership Team, HoD and teaching staff | Early May 2021 |
| | | All other available evidence collated and documented | Centre Leadership Team, HoD and teaching staff | Early May 2021 |
| 3 | Centre Professional Judgement and Moderation (April and May) | All available evidence moderated online with centre policy | Centre Leadership Team, HoD and teaching staff | May 2021 |
| | | Any potential bias in Centre Determined Grades and outcomes considered | HoD and teaching staff | May 2021 |
| | | Centre Determined Grade outcomes reviewed by senior leadership team | Centre Leadership Team | May 2021 |

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| | Head of Centre sign-off and submission of Centre Determined Grades | Head of Centre | May / June 2021 |
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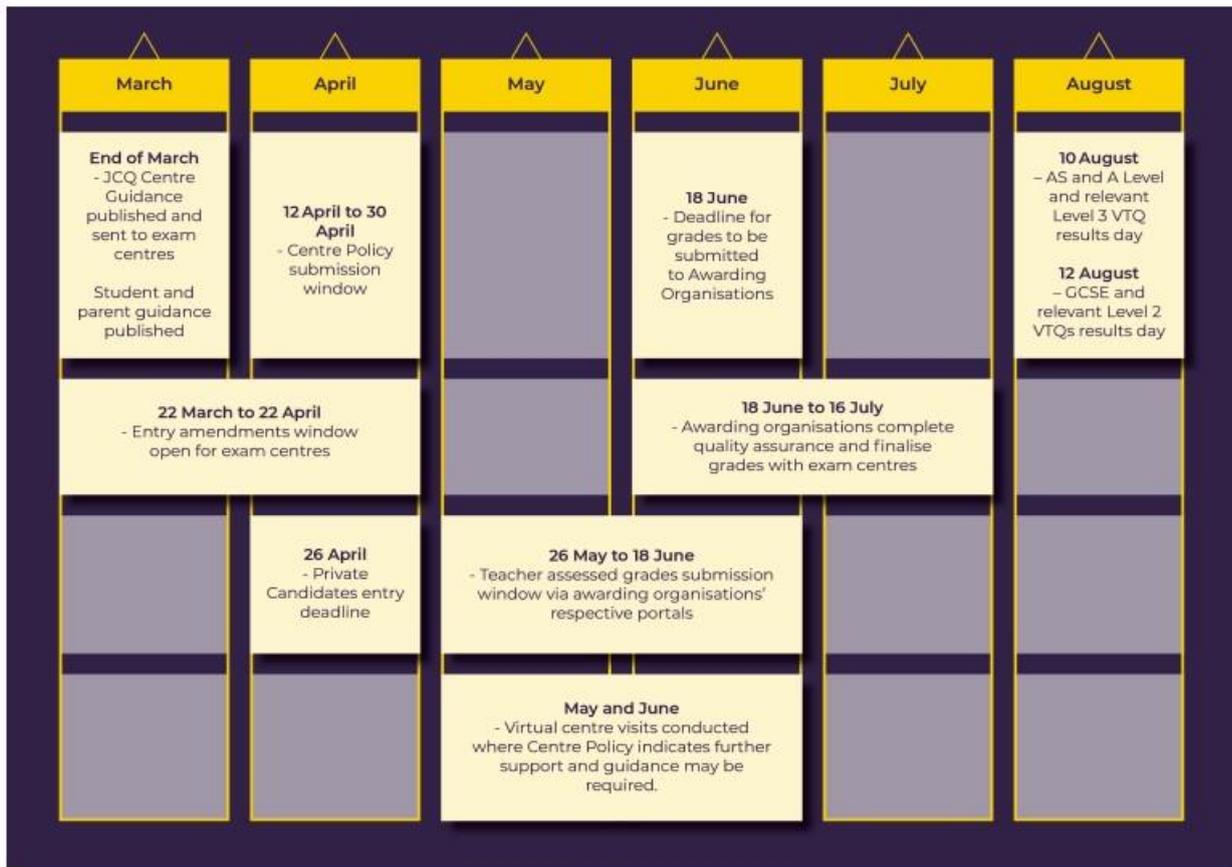
| Step and Indicative Timeframe | | Activity | Personnel | Internal Deadlines |
|-------------------------------|---|--|-----------------------------------|--------------------|
| 4 | Review of Evidence and Award (June and July) | Centre evidence and grade outcomes reviewed | CCEA personnel | |
| | | If evidence submitted is considered reasonable, centre grades proceed to award. If necessary, additional evidence requested and reviewed. | CCEA personnel | |
| | | 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. | Head of Centre and CCEA personnel | June 2021 |
| 5 | Post-Award Review Service (August and September) | After the issue of results, students will have the right to appeal to their centres and to CCEA. | Head of Centre and CCEA personnel | August 2021 |

JCQ Timelines and key dates

The overall process for awarding in 2021 is illustrated on the next page. The key dates are:

- **22 March to 22 April: Entry amendments window open for centres**
- **31 March: Additional Assessment Materials (sets of questions, mark schemes and mapping)**
- **12 April: Additional support materials (marking exemplification)**
- **12 April to 30 April: Window for Centre Policy submission via proforma on CAP (CentreAdmin Portal)**
- **19 April: Additional support materials (grading exemplification) and additional sets of questions publicly available**
- **19 April to 11 June: Awarding organisations review Centre Policies and conduct virtual visits where needed**
- **26 April: Entry deadline for Private Candidates**
- **26 May to 18 June: Window for Teacher Assessed Grades submission opens via awarding organisations' respective portals**
- **18 June to 16 July: Awarding organisations conduct sample checks of evidence (* inexceptional circumstances, sample checks may take place until 23rd July)**
- **10 August: A/AS Levels and relevant other Level 3 results day**
- **12 August: GCSE and relevant other Level 2 results day**
- **10 August to 7 September: priority appeals window**
 - » **10 August to 16 August: student requests centre review**
- » **10 August to 20 August: centre conducts centre review**
 - » **11 August to 23 August: centre submits appeal to awarding organisation**
- **10 August to end October: majority of non-priority appeals take place**
 - » **10 August to 3 September: student requests centre review**
- » **10 August to 10 September: centre conducts centre review**
 - » **11 August to 17 September: centre submits appeal to awarding organisation**

Appendix: JCQ Awarding Process



Appendix JCQ document: **Notice to Centres - release of general qualification results, June 2021 examinations**

Restricted release of results to centres only

Electronic copies of results will be released to centres, either through secure means on awarding body extranet sites or via A2C, as follows:

| Date | Qualifications |
|--|--|
| 0001 hours on Monday 9 August 2021 | GCE, FSMQ Extended Project Level 3 Vocational and Technical qualifications |
| 0001 hours on Wednesday 11 August 2021 | GCSE, ELC Foundation and Higher Projects Level 1 and Level 2 Vocational and Technical qualifications |

Results are released to centres on the strict understanding that the results files and their contents remain entirely confidential to the head of centre, examinations office staff and senior members of teaching staff within the centre, the consortium or Multi Academy Trust.

The awarding bodies reserve the right to withdraw the special concession of providing early information about results electronically to any centre which is found to be in breach of these requirements.

Centres **must** abide by the additional restrictions detailed in this document.

Release of results to candidates

Results may be released to candidates as follows:

| Date | Qualifications |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| 0800 hours on Tuesday 10 August 2021 | GCE, FSMQ Extended Project Level 3 Vocational and Technical qualifications |
| 0800 hours on Thursday 12 August 2021 | GCSE, ELC Foundation and Higher Projects Level 1 and Level 2 Vocational and Technical qualifications |

The results **must not** be despatched until after 0800 hours on the appropriate date for the publication of results. **Candidates must not receive results by e-mail, post or otherwise prior to 0800 hours.**

Any breach of these requirements will be considered as malpractice by an awarding body.

Additional restrictions on the release of results

Results, or information derived from results, **must not** be divulged to or discussed with:

- other teachers;
- candidates or parents;
- educational institutions and Local Authorities;
- the media; • any other persons.

Additionally, the results, or information derived from results, **must not** be divulged or discussed on social media such as Facebook or Twitter.

Centres **must not** release results data to Local Authorities until after 9.30am on the appropriate date for the publication of results.

Similarly, centres **must not** issue press releases or statements to the media under any circumstances until after 9.30am on the appropriate date for the publication of results.

Results data **must not** be shared more widely until after the candidates have received their results.

Any breach of these requirements will be considered as malpractice by an awarding body.

Centres should note that results are issued on a provisional basis and may be subject to amendment through the published post-results services.

Candidate statements of provisional results are not certificates. An awarding body reserves the right to amend examination results prior to the issue of certificates.

Use of electronic result files

Awarding bodies do not provide paper copies of candidates' provisional results. Centres will need to use the electronic result files to prepare the information that is released to candidates.

Where candidates need to provide their provisional results to third parties, such as Sixth Form or FE colleges, we strongly recommend that the candidate statements of provisional results are printed on school letter headed paper and/or stamped with the school name and logo.