

# **Cantonian High School**

## **Ysgol Uwchradd Cantonian**



THE BEST FROM EACH  
SUCCESS FOR ALL

## **Assessment Approach for Qualifications in 2021**

March 2021

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## **1. Introduction**

This Assessment Approach is designed to outline how the school, as an examination centre, will apply the 'Guidance on Alternative Arrangements for Approved GCSEs, AS and A levels' provided by Qualifications Wales, the examination regulator, to help determine grades in 2021.

This plan only applies to those qualifications GCSE, AS and A level, which are regulated in Wales. For the very few qualifications outside of this remit, and regulated by Ofqual, the school will apply the relevant guidance once it is published.

In November 2020, the Education Minister announced that there would be no summer examination series for pupils taking GCSEs, AS levels or A levels in 2021. In January 2021, it was confirmed that these qualifications would be awarded using Centre Determined Grades. This means that individual examination centres, such as schools and colleges, would determine the actual grades awarded for each qualification.

## **2. Statement of Intent**

The purpose of this document is to:

- ensure that Centre Determined Grades (CDG) are conducted fairly, consistently, free from bias and effectively within and across departments and maintained throughout the process;
- ensure the operation of effective processes with clear guidelines and support for staff;
- ensure that all staff involved in the processes clearly understand their roles and responsibilities;
- support teachers to take evidence-based decisions in line with Qualification Wales requirements;
- achieve a high standard of internal quality assurance in the allocation of CDGs;
- ensure the centre meets its obligations in relation to equality and disability legislation; and
- ensure the Centre meets all requirements set out in the Special Regulatory Conditions, and the Joint Council for Qualifications and Awarding Organisation instructions for summer 2021 qualifications.

### **3. Centre Determined Grades**

A Centre Determined Grade is the grade awarded by the school, as an examination centre, on the basis of attainment which has been demonstrated in the areas of the qualification content that a pupil has covered.

For each qualification, teachers will make use of WJEC Assessment Frameworks which include descriptors for key grades to support the accurate distribution of awards. Each grade awarded by the school must be underpinned by robust evidence to demonstrate a pupil's attainment across key themes and skills. These will vary per qualification, as determined by the requirements of each WJEC Qualification Assessment Framework.

It will not be possible or permitted for teachers, or the school, to attempt to issue a Centre Determined Grade based on professional prediction or the potential of a pupil. Teachers will be required to apply their professional judgement and decide whether the knowledge and skills demonstrated meets the usual standard for a specified grade.

In determining grades, the school will be required to make 'best-fit' judgements. This means that pupils are not required to demonstrate all aspects of a grade descriptor to be awarded the grade; pupils should be awarded a grade which supports evidence of attainment across sufficient breadth of content, within the specified qualification, as determined by WJEC, and may achieve the same grades by demonstrating different combinations of knowledge, skills and understanding. This ensures that strengths in some areas counterbalance shortcomings in others. As a result, the 'best-fit' grade may be awarded.

Where there is insufficient evidence, or where evidence suggests attainment is below that required of the lowest grade for a qualification (i.e. G grade at GCSE; E grade at AS/A level) then a pupil will be awarded a Centre Determined Grade of U.

While the standard expected for any particular grade will not be lowered in 2021, the use of Centre Determined Grades acknowledges that the volume of work completed by a pupil will be less than in previous years, owing to the ongoing impact of the global health crisis. Therefore, the use of Centre Determined Grades seeks to ensure pupils are not unfairly disadvantaged by the process. At the same time, they are designed to enable all pupils to progress to their next stage of learning and/or employment.

## **4. How Centre Determined Grades will be made at the school**

For each qualification, WJEC will provide subject staff with a Qualification Assessment Framework, which will set out the requirements to support the evidence to inform a Centre Determined Grade. These frameworks provide a degree of flexibility to support the school's local context. However, they will ensure there is a degree of consistency to maintain public confidence in the qualification system and the approach taken in Wales in 2021.

In determining a grade, the following types of evidence will be used in each qualification:

### **Contributing evidence**

- a) Teachers may use evidence from previously completed WJEC past-paper questions, which:
  - have been externally quality assured, with a published mark scheme; and
  - where they have been completed under controlled conditions; and
- b) Pre-public exams that were sat in November 2020, as pupils were written to, to be made aware that the outcomes of these mock exams would contribute to their Centre Determined Grade in the event of examinations being cancelled in the summer 2021. Where these were complete WJEC examination papers, the outcomes may have a greater weighting when determining the Centre Determined Grade.

### **Adapted past-paper questions**

The school will make use of WJEC adapted past-papers when setting tasks to help determine a grade for each qualification. There are recognised benefits of using these materials. The adapted past-papers have already been externally quality assured, are fully supported by clear mark schemes and are familiar to both pupils and staff. Where necessary, due to time constraints, teachers will have the option of amending these papers to reduce the content, however, this will then be reflected in the weighting in relation to the Centre Determined Grade awarded. Where minor amendments have been made to adapted past papers, reference has been made to WJEC's Centre Assessment Creation Guide. Teachers will ensure these past-papers, which will form a key part of the evidence, will be incorporated within their delivery of teaching and learning, in replacement of other activities undertaken in lessons.

### **Non-Examination Assessment**

NEA exists in many qualifications. Teachers will use the performance of pupils in this element to help contribute towards the determination of a grade. However, teachers will need to consider the weighting of this element to ensure that the grade awarded accurately reflects the overall standard.

The evidence generated will not be completed in the form of an examination i.e. in the Hall with external invigilators.

The number of pieces of evidence required to determine a grade will vary per qualification. Teachers will ensure there is sufficient opportunity for pupils to provide clear evidence to demonstrate competency against the key themes and skills, as specified in each WJEC Qualification Assessment Framework. It may be that relatively few pieces of clear evidence would be sufficient to demonstrate attainment across overarching key themes for many qualifications. Teachers will ensure that the generation of evidence does not create unnecessary duplication of work.

The evidence generated will not be completed in the form of an examination. However, pupils will produce work within a specified timeframe, to reflect the volume of work.

Work will be completed independently by pupils, under similar 'control levels' to existing arrangements, which are supervised by teachers, for non-examination assessment. This is to ensure evidence produced is the pupil's own. Wherever possible, this work will be completed in class in place of standard work, which is then assessed. Where external factors prevent this from happening, such as national lockdowns etc., then work will need to be completed at home. However, where this is the case, the school will introduce mechanisms to support authenticity of a pupil's work by ensuring the pupil's camera is switched on during the live session and work is immediately submitted at the end of the set timeframe. In addition, the school will consider work produced against previously assessed work to verify authenticity, where the evidence submitted is atypical of the usual standard by the pupil.

Heads of Departments will develop individual assessment plans for the qualifications they are responsible for, which will be shared and approved by the Executive Headteacher, as Head of Centre. These plans will identify which specific pieces of evidence will be used, the quality assurance measures undertaken to authenticate the work of pupils, and measures to ensure any and all appropriate needs are met. To ensure pupils understand how grades are determined and which work will be used as evidence, the school will publish a schedule that indicates when the production of evidence will take place. This also ensures the production of work is evenly distributed over the set timescale.

Decisions relating to the awarded grade will not be communicated to pupils and/or parents by individual staff within the subject, until the release of provisional Centre Determined Grades by the school by 25<sup>th</sup> June at the latest.

## **5. Roles and Responsibilities**

The specific roles and responsibilities of staff, at a range of levels, in terms of qualifications remain largely unchanged from other examination series. However, for awards in 2021, the following roles and responsibilities apply in terms of the determination of grades:

### **Chair of Governors/Governing Body**

The Chair of Governors and Governing Body is responsible for agreeing the assessment arrangements that the school will undertake and ensure that these comply with the requirements as outlined in the 'Guidance on Alternative Arrangements for Approved GCSEs, AS and A levels'.

### **Executive Headteacher**

The Executive Headteacher, as Head of Centre, has overall responsibility for the qualifications offered at the school, as well as ensuring due care and regard is taken to account for the school's legislative and regulatory duties, as an examination centre. The Executive Headteacher is responsible for ensuring the planning and management of centre determined grades, in line with existing policies and practices, are conducted efficiently and in the best interest of all pupils. The Executive Headteacher, working closely with the Head of School, is responsible for ensuring that publicised processes are followed by all staff. This includes internal quality assurance processes at subject level and school level. The Executive Headteacher will ensure that appropriate training for all staff involved in the determination of grades is provided.

### **Head of School**

The Head of School, as Internal Lead Verifier, will ensure that quality assurance processes at school level are robustly followed. This includes ensuring that each qualification has successfully completed internal moderation of evidence, while all decisions are recorded in line with WJEC protocols. The Head of School will also be responsible for overseeing internal processes, where a concern is raised by staff, regarding the authenticity of pupils' work provided and/or where a pupil wishes to review a Centre Determined Grade.

### **Examinations Officer**

The Examinations Officer is responsible for managing the administration of qualifications. This includes coordinating the collation of entries of pupils to the appropriate qualifications, as well as assisting Heads of Departments and members of the leadership team, specifically those with responsibility for examinations, and the Executive Headteacher to ensure agreed processes are followed.

### **Head of Inclusion**

The Head of Inclusion (as Additional Learning Needs Coordinator - ALNCo) will ensure that all staff are aware of the necessary access arrangements in place for pupils, including reasonable adjustments for pupils who are entitled to these. In addition, the Head of Inclusion will coordinate the provision of additional support to help pupils achieve the course aims, as they would do in normal circumstances.

**Subject Area Leaders**

Subject Area Leaders will be responsible for ensuring processes within the faculty/department they lead meet the requirements of the publicised WJEC Qualification Assessment Framework. This includes setting tasks from WJEC past-paper materials, to enable all pupils within the cohort to demonstrate what they know and understand. This is designed to enable them to have the opportunity to achieve the highest possible grade. Subject Area Leaders will also ensure that internal moderation of work is undertaken to ensure standardisation across the team they are responsible for, which includes accurate records of internal processes. Subject Area Leaders will also be responsible for managing the accurate recording of outcomes and associated decision-making for each qualification. Subject Area Leaders will ensure that pupils entitled to access arrangements have these in place for the qualifications they are responsible for.

**Teachers**

Teaching staff will ensure that evidence is gathered within the published schedule and that activities set follow the expectations set by Subject Area Leaders and the relevant WJEC Qualification Assessment Framework. Teachers must make pupils aware of the nature and criteria of the task set and ensure pupils understand when an activity will contribute towards the determination of a grade. Teaching staff will collect and store submitted work securely. They will ensure that reasonable adjustments for identified pupils are met. Teachers will mark submitted work within the agreed timeframes, set by Subject Area Leaders. Teachers will not provide pupils with an opportunity to improve their work, once submitted. Teachers will work with relevant Subject Area Leaders to ensure that pupils entitled to access arrangements, within their designated classes, have these in place.



## 6. Quality Assurance Processes

In line with usual practices, WJEC will require internal processes to be undertaken to promote consistency. The school will undertake quality assurance processes, within subjects and across subjects, to ensure the grades determined are valid, reliable, equitable and fair, while seeking to avoid discrimination. The school will ensure training is provided to all staff to support this.

Internal moderation processes are designed to verify standards and seek to ensure fairness and equity for all pupils. The school will apply the following approach to the assessment of evidence:

- The teacher will assess the pupils' work in GREEN pen, using WJEC mark schemes to support the accurate award of grades. Moderation activities to establish standardised approaches to assessments will take place as soon as is reasonable and practicable, once the evidence has been submitted;
- Subject Area Leaders will ensure that the sample of work to be moderated covers the full spectrum of grades and all teachers who have assessed work;
- Moderation activities may involve a number of teachers. Therefore, where a piece of evidence is moderated, additional comments by a separate member of staff will be made in RED pen;
- Subject Area Leaders will review any discrepancies, with comments made in PURPLE pen; and
- At all stages, appropriate forms (either provided by WJEC or school developed) will be retained as evidence to support the final determined grade.

No one member of staff will be able to both assess and verify the evidence of a pupil. In departments where teachers work in isolation, the school will provide an opportunity for evidence to be moderated, with our partner, Cwmbran High School. Similarly, any staff who have a conflict of interest (e.g. Teacher who is relative or known to a pupil), will need to be declared, and suitable mitigation in place to ensure the process is not compromised (e.g. Teacher not involved in either assessment or verification of work).

The school will ensure that the work of all staff who assess evidence is moderated, as part of internal quality assurance. Where an examination cohort size is lower than 20, the whole cohort will be moderated. For larger samples, the school will ensure that evidence is considered from a range of pupil profiles, from more able pupils to those with additional learning needs, and those pupils with protected characteristics. All work sampled will be marked anonymously to mitigate the risk of conscious and/or unconscious bias.

A further quality assurance process will be undertaken by the Senior Leadership Team to ensure that the grades awarded are in line with those from previous external examination series. The school will also share and review its processes of determining grades with other examination centres, such as our partner, Cwmbran High School to ensure standardisation.

There will be no external moderation of Centre Determined Grades. However, grades submitted to WJEC may be reviewed and investigated where performance profiles are atypical.

## **7. Recording Decisions**

The school will keep a record to document clearly the rationale for grade decisions. This will include clarity of explanation which pupils and their parents/carers will understand. Decision records will detail:

- who assessed the evidence and when;
- the decision taken;
- identification of any reasonable adjustments or special considerations applied; and
- where the evidence is safely stored;

Records will also be kept from internal moderation to standardise work and verify performance.

The school will record the reviews requested by pupils and the outcome of these, along with reasons for the decision.

On submission of a Centre Determined Grade, the school will be required to make an overall declaration in relation to the processes carried out.

## **8. Pupils and Parent/Carer Communication**

The involvement of pupils and parents and the utilisation of a clear and transparent communications plan will be a priority to instil confidence in the approach used by the school.

Prior to Easter, pupils will be provided with:

- an overview of the CDG process;
- when assessments will be completed;
- what information will be considered by subject teachers when determining their CDGs; and
- the proportionate weighting of each evidence set per subject.

Parents and pupils will be provided with a copy of the school's Centre Assessment Plan. In addition to the points above, this will also set out:

- how specific and relevant access arrangements and special consideration have been met;
- the recording of evidence contributing to the determination of their final qualification grade;
- the internal moderation processes that will be undertaken by the school; and
- the recording of reviews requested by the pupils and the outcome of such reviews.

After Easter and by Subject Area Leaders, pupils will be informed of:

- their subject assessment dates;
- the topics that will be covered in each assessment. Please note that pupils will not be provided with the assessment to view in advance;
- the need to ensure that all work completed in assessment activities is their own and that if this is not the case then this would be considered malpractice; and
- their right to their usual 'access arrangements' if appropriate.

## **9. Public Sector Equality Duty and Data Protection**

In developing an approach to centre determined grades in 2021, the school has taken steps to ensure it meets its Public Sector Equality Duty. This is a legal requirement and forms part of the Equality Act (2010) which ensures due regard of the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act (2010);
- advance equality and opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not; and
- foster good relations between people who share relevant protected characteristics and those who do not.

The school will ensure it meets data protection and processing regulations. This may result in modifications to existing policies and practices. However, it is anticipated that joint examination regulators may coordinate this to provide assurances that data is handled appropriately and for the intended purpose.

## **10. Review of Centre Determined Grades and Appeals Processes**

Pupils will be notified of their provisional Centre Determined Grade by 25<sup>th</sup> June 2021. Where a pupil is satisfied with the grades determined by the school, there is no further action.

Between 25<sup>th</sup> June and 2<sup>nd</sup> July, there will be an opportunity for pupils to request a review of the centre's judgement of their grade and/or correct any factual errors. The process undertaken by the school will be similar to the internal moderation process as described previously. Where a review has been requested, it will be considered by a member of staff who was not the original assessor. The Head of School will also review that the school's processes have been followed, in terms of associated decision-making records etc. New or additional evidence will not be considered as part of the review process. Where a review has been upheld, the Centre Determined Grade will be amended.

Once final results have been issued on results days, pupils may appeal to WJEC through the school, if a judgement is felt to be unreasonable or erroneous. WJEC may lower or raise the grade following this process.

Qualifications Wales will also implement an Examination Procedures Review Service. At each stage of the review/appeal process, pupils will need to be aware that a Centre Determined Grade may be improved or be lowered.

## **11. Professional Learning**

Working with Welsh Government, Qualifications Wales and WJEC, the school will ensure that appropriate training is provided to staff at all levels in order to ensure that the assessment plan, and associated processes, are implemented fully.

In addition to providing training on the assessment plan and associated actions for staff at all levels, the school will revise its existing training programme to help manage staff workload. Specific training on avoiding unconscious bias when assessing work will be provided for all staff involved in the marking of evidence.

Identified staff will also attend specific training on equalities issues, including:

- public sector duties;
- managing conscious and unconscious bias; and
- data processing and data protection, with particular reference to fair processing notices.

## **12. Application of Special Consideration**

The school will apply the WJEC-published special considerations document to those pupils who meet the specified criteria.

As is standard, the school may require evidence to demonstrate that the pupil meets the criteria.

### Timeline: Key Dates

Date	Event
5 <sup>th</sup> March	WJEC provides information to centres on the assessment and Internal Quality Assurance requirements
19 <sup>th</sup> – 25 <sup>th</sup> March	Centres submit their assessment and Internal Quality Assurance policies to WJEC
12 <sup>th</sup> April	WJEC provides feedback to centres on their policies
2 <sup>nd</sup> July	Grading decisions made on centres and Internal Quality Assurance undertaken. Grades are shared with pupils and centre reviews undertaken. Centres internally review and sign off outcomes
14 <sup>th</sup> June – 2 <sup>nd</sup> July	Submission window for Centre Determined Grades
21 <sup>st</sup> June – 12 <sup>th</sup> July	WJEC Quality Assurance pupil decision making records and overall outcomes
13 <sup>th</sup> – 16 <sup>th</sup> July	WJEC discusses atypical results with centres and issues arising from review of evidence records
10 <sup>th</sup> August	AS and A level results
10 <sup>th</sup> August – 7 <sup>th</sup> September	AS and A level appeals window (to WJEC)
12 <sup>th</sup> August	GCSE results
24 <sup>th</sup> August – 21 <sup>st</sup> September	GCSE appeals window

## WJEC Timeline: Publication of Guidance and Training Events

Date	Event
5 <sup>th</sup> March	Training: Foundations and creation of assessment
5 <sup>th</sup> March	Guidance on Centre policy on assessment and QA
W/C 8 <sup>th</sup> March	Training: Centre approach to assessment and QA of grading decisions
12 <sup>th</sup> March	Training: Live Q&A
15 <sup>th</sup> March	High-level appeals process
W/C 15 <sup>th</sup> March	Final Qualification Assessment Frameworks including grade descriptors
W/C 15 <sup>th</sup> March	Grading Guide for centres
W/C 15 <sup>th</sup> March	Assessment materials for centres
19 <sup>th</sup> March	Entries deadline
W/C 22 <sup>nd</sup> March	Subject specific training materials
19 <sup>th</sup> – 25 <sup>th</sup> March	Centres submit Assessment and Internal QA policies to WJEC
22 <sup>nd</sup> March	Training: Unconscious bias and objectivity
25 <sup>th</sup> March	Training: Live Q&A
12 <sup>th</sup> April	WJEC provides feedback to centres on their policies
19 <sup>th</sup> April	Online Training: Making final judgements
22 <sup>nd</sup> April	Entries amendment window deadline
W/C 26 <sup>th</sup> April	Final appeals process
26 <sup>th</sup> April	Training: Good practice in making final grading decisions and QA
5 <sup>th</sup> May	Training: Live Q&A sessions
17 <sup>th</sup> May	Training: Submitting CDGs
14 <sup>th</sup> June – 2 <sup>nd</sup> July	Submission window for CDGs
21 <sup>st</sup> June – 12 <sup>th</sup> July	WJEC quality assure pupil decision records and overall outcomes

## Timeline – Key Dates for Pupils

Date	Event
By Easter	Your school or college will tell you how you will be assessed and graded for your qualification
12 <sup>th</sup> April – 28 <sup>th</sup> May	You should have face to face teaching and some additional assessments
By 25 <sup>th</sup> June	You will receive your provisional Centre Determined Grades and you will have the opportunity to ask for your grades to be reviewed
14 <sup>th</sup> June – 2 <sup>nd</sup> July	Your school or college will submit the <b>provisional</b> Centre Determined Grades to WJEC
10 <sup>th</sup> August	AS and A level Results Day
10 <sup>th</sup> August – 7 <sup>th</sup> September	You will have the opportunity to appeal your AS or/and A level result to WJEC
12 <sup>th</sup> August	GCSE Results Day
24 <sup>th</sup> August – 21 <sup>st</sup> September (provisional) Post results day	You will have the opportunity to appeal your GCSE result to WJEC You will have the opportunity to appeal to Qualifications Wales for an Exam Procedures Review Service (EPRS)