

Friends' School Lisburn



Centre Determined Grades Policy

Adopted by Board of Governors on:	19.04.2021
Issued to staff on:	20.04.2021
Responsible:	Stephen Moore (Head of Centre)

1. Aims and objectives

The purpose of this policy is:

- to ensure that the Centre Determined Grades (CDG) process produces fair, objective, consistent and timely outcomes within and across departments;
- to ensure that all staff involved in producing CDGs know, understand and can complete their roles in the process as published by CCEA;
- to ensure that CDGs are produced in line with the process as published by CCEA, using the professional judgement of teachers, with internal moderation to ensure the 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 CDGs 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 CDGs will support the implementation of alternative arrangements as set out by CCEA, including at the CCEA review stage. Staff will familiarise themselves with all relevant guidance provided by Friends' School, CCEA, and JCQ.

2. Process Overview

There is a five step process for the Summer 2021 awarding arrangements as outlined in the CCEA guidance. Internal deadlines relating to the steps of the CCEA process are provided in Appendix 1.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

The **Board of Governors of Friends' School** will approve the policy and the procedures outlined for alternative arrangements for the awarding of qualifications in 2021. The Board will notify CCEA of arrangements should the Head of Centre (HoC) be unavailable to confirm CDGs.

The **Head of Centre** (Principal) has overall responsibility for the centre and will formulate the school's policy, ensuring that the roles and responsibilities of all staff are defined and understood. The HoC will confirm that CDG judgements are accurate and represent the professional judgement made by staff. The HoC will ensure that the method of determining grades by the centre is in line with processes published by CCEA, based on the professional judgement of teachers, with internal moderation and participation in an external review process set out by CCEA. The HoC will work collaboratively with CCEA and provide evidence as requested.

The **Senior Leadership Team** (the Principal, Vice-Principal and Senior Teachers) will oversee the implementation of the policy, providing advice, guidance and support for Heads of Department and supporting the HoC in the quality assurance of the final CDGs, and helping to ensure a consistent approach across departments. The Vice-Principal and Senior Teacher who attended the CCEA Chartered Institute of Educational Assessors (CIEA) training will act as Lead Assessors and will disseminate relevant information to all teachers involved in producing CDGs.

The **Examinations Officer** will be responsible for ensuring accurate and timely entries are submitted to CCEA, and will ensure that all information from CCEA is shared promptly with relevant staff. The Examinations Officer will ensure that she is competent in the use of the CCEA Centre Manager Applications; that the centre's systems for data capture are enabled; and that CDGs are submitted for each candidate entry by the published date(s) for Summer 2021 (see Appendix 1). The Examinations Officer is responsible for the administration of the final Centre Determined Grades and for managing the post-results services in the centre.

Heads of Department are responsible for supporting teachers in their departments, ensuring that assessments are conducted under the appropriate levels of control and that they have the information required to make accurate and fair judgements. They will engage with subject-specific training as required; oversee the standardisation of marking in departments; sign the Head of Department Checklist; complete the Departmental Assessment Evidence Grid with details of how grades have been determined for each candidate; compile samples of evidence for the internal review; and complete Candidate Assessment Records (CARs) for the CCEA review and, if required, for appeals.

Class Teachers will work under the direction of Heads of Department and are responsible for ensuring that they conduct assessments under the centre's appropriate levels of control. They must ensure that the CDG they assign to each candidate is a fair, valid and reliable reflection of the assessed evidence available. Teachers have the responsibility for participating in internal standardisation, under the direction of the HoD. They must be able to retrieve evidence to support their decisions, if required, and assist HoDs in the completion of CARs.

4. Training, Support and Guidance

Friends' School has engaged fully with all training and support provided by CCEA. The centre policy is supported through training provided to Senior Leaders through the CIEA. Heads of Department have engaged in web-based training and subject-specific support, and will disseminate information to others in their departments.

5. Evidence

All evidence used by Friends' School will be based on the relevant CCEA qualification specifications, taking into account the information provided by CCEA about unit omissions before the cancellation of examinations. Subject departments will use the most reliable evidence available, including work that covers greater specification content and is conducted under high control, and will draw on some or all of the following in arriving at CDGs:

- CCEA assessment resources for 2021;
- CCEA past papers;
- coursework or controlled assessments;
- performance assessments;
- class tests or assignments.

Friends' School will not consider the following:

- Work that cannot reliably be authenticated as the pupil's own;
- Work completed with private tutors;
- Work not aligned with the requirements of the CCEA specification;
- Results of other external exams or qualifications, such as graded music exams.

Each subject department will provide to the Leadership Team an overview of the evidence that will be used to determine the grade. Candidates will be made aware of this by their class teacher before the grades are submitted to CCEA. As far as possible, the same evidence will be used for all pupils taking a particular subject. The school cannot consider alternative evidence except in exceptional circumstances.

Marks of assessments completed in the Summer Term will not be shared with pupils; however, they will be made available to them on request in the event of an appeal (see point 15 below).

5. Centre Determined Grades

Friends' School will determine grades based on evidence that reflects the standard at which candidates are performing. Teachers will take into account the range of skills, knowledge and understanding in the areas of the specification assessed; the relevant assessment objectives and published grade descriptors; the level of demand of individual assessments; and the level of control under which assessments were taken. Reference will be made, as required, to Chief Examiner and Principal Moderator reports on the [CCEA website](#).

Teachers are responsible for storing evidence securely and making sure it accessible to support internal moderation, the CCEA Review of Evidence, and appeals.

6. Internal Standardisation

It is important that decisions are justified and that departments are able to demonstrate how evidence was used to arrive at a fair and objective grade. In subjects where there is more than one class in the department, internal standardisation will be carried out, to ensure fairness and objectivity, as well as consistency in the application of assessment criteria and standards. It will also allow for differences of opinion to be resolved.

Internal standardisation should include cross-checking of marking across a range of marks, and include candidates from each class. 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, so that it matches agreed standards and so that judgements are brought into line with those of other teachers in the department. Final decisions will be made by the Head of Department, who will retain records of standardisation and any relevant notes.

7. Head of Centre Moderation and Declaration

Friends' School undertakes to have a consistent approach across subject departments. Senior Leaders will carry out moderation with link departments. This will include professional discussions with Heads of Department, and Senior Leaders will consider both subject and centre outcomes based on the evidence available. In the event of unusual or unexpected grade profiles, departments will be asked to review the evidence used or revisit the marking of assessments. Departments may also be asked to provide samples of evidence from the top, middle and bottom of their cohorts. A record of decisions will be retained.

The Head of Centre will submit a declaration on behalf of the centre. This will include a confirmation that the CDGs for candidates are a true representation of their performance.

8. Access Arrangements and Special Consideration

Where candidates have agreed [access arrangements](#) or reasonable adjustments, Friends' School will make every effort to ensure that these arrangements are in place when assessments are being taken. The SENCo will provide details of any such arrangements to all staff.

As public examinations have been cancelled, the normal application process to the awarding organisation for special consideration will not apply. However, where illness or other personal circumstances, covered by the [JCQ guidelines](#), might have affected the candidate's standard of performance at the time of an assessment, Friends' School will take account of this when making judgements.

Except in exceptional circumstances, a candidate who misses an assessment will **not** be offered the opportunity to do the same assessment at a later date, or under different conditions, as this would be unfair to other candidates. However, if required, it may be

possible to offer an alternative assessment opportunity at a later date, using a similar resource. Clear records must be kept by the teacher of any missed assessments.

9. Bias and Discrimination

Friends' School will fulfil its duties and responsibilities concerning relevant equality and disability requirements. The Vice-Principal will disseminate guidance on potential bias in judgements, including how to minimise bias in marking and standardisation.

To avoid bias and discrimination, all staff involved in Centre Determined Grades will ensure that the evidence is considered on its own merit as an indication of performance and attainment and that CDGs are not influenced by positive or challenging personal circumstances, character, behaviour, appearance, socio-economic background, or the performance of candidates' siblings.

Internal standardisation processes (see above) will help to ensure that bias-free judgements of pupil work are made.

10. Recording Decisions and Retention of Evidence and Data

Teachers and Heads of Department will maintain records that show how CDGs have been produced and to verify that they have been internally standardised. Spreadsheets detailing the evidence used to support the grade determined for each candidate in each subject will be retained electronically, in compliance with GDPR legislation, in a secure folder on the school's C2k network. This will be required for centre moderation, the CCEA Review of Evidence, and for potential appeals.

When requested, evidence will be uploaded via the CCEA application used to submit the CDGs. This will include CCEA CARs, where required; Head of Department Checklists and Departmental Assessment Evidence Grids; and the Head of Centre Declaration.

11. Confidentiality

In keeping with the centre's GDPR policy and CCEA requirements, Friends' School will not disclose any candidates' CDGs in advance of the official issue of results.

12. Malpractice/Maladministration

Friends' School will act ethically to uphold the integrity of the qualifications system and will report potential cases of malpractice or maladministration to CCEA for investigation. The school is aware of the consequences of malpractice or maladministration, up to and including removal of centre status, as published in the [JCQ guidance](#).

Every attempt will be made to authenticate any work completed by candidates. If a teacher is not satisfied that a candidate's work is his or her own, it will not be used as evidence in determining a CDG. No candidate will be given improper assistance, or be over-directed in their preparation for assessment.

In the event that the centre or individual teachers are put under pressure from a candidate or their parent/guardian in an attempt to influence the determination of a grade, this will be reported to CCEA, who may investigate this as potential malpractice or maladministration.

Friends' School will retain appropriate records of decisions made in relation to CDGs and will engage as requested with CCEA during the review stage of the process.

Candidates at Friends' School have been entered only for those qualifications for which they were intending to cash in a grade prior to the cancellation of examinations.

13. Private Candidates

Friends' School will ensure that there is sufficient evidence to submit an objective CDG for private candidates, and that decisions are made fairly with respect to other candidates. Where appropriate, they will be offered the opportunity to complete the CCEA assessment resource.

14. Conflicts of Interest

To protect the integrity of assessments, staff must declare any potential conflicts of interest to the HoC. Instances when there may be a conflict include teaching and preparing family members 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 to ensure fairness at the awarding stage, and also in the review process and appeals.

15. Internal Appeals Procedure Relating to Centre Determined Grades

Friends' School will provide a written internal appeals procedure to permit candidates recourse in relation to the production of a CDG, in line with CCEA requirements, and this will be made available on the [school website](#). The various steps of the internal appeals procedure will be time bound; candidates will be updated at each stage and will be informed in writing of the outcomes.

16. Requirements as a JCQ Registered Centre

Friends' School has reviewed and amended, where necessary, all assessment and examination-related policies and procedures in line with [JCQ Regulations](#) to ensure that they are appropriate 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	20.04.21
	Centres agree their quality assurance process to ensure consistency across teachers, subjects and departments.	Centre Leadership Team, HoD and teaching staff	20.04.21
	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	20.04.21
	Preliminary consideration of value of available evidence	Centre Leadership Team and HoD	14.04.21
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	18.05.21
	All other available evidence collated and documented	Centre Leadership Team, HoD and teaching staff	18.05.21
3 Centre Professional Judgement and Moderation	All available evidence moderated in line with centre policy	Centre Leadership Team, HoD and teaching staff	18.05.21

Step and Indicative Timeframe	Activity	Personnel	Internal Deadlines
(April, May and June)	Any potential bias in Centre Determined Grades and outcomes considered	HoD and teaching staff	18.05.21
	Centre Determined Grade outcomes reviewed by senior leadership teams	Centre Leadership Team	21.05.21/ 04.06.21
	Head of Centre sign-off and submission of Centre Determined Grades	Head of Centre	21.05.21/ 04.06.21
4 Review of Evidence and Award (June and July)	Centre evidence and grade outcomes reviewed	CCEA personnel	N/A
	If evidence submitted is considered reasonable, centre grades proceed to award. If necessary, additional evidence requested and reviewed.	CCEA personnel	N/A
	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	30.06.21
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	10.09.21