

Ysgol Bryn Castell



Centre policy on assessment and quality assurance processes for the summer 2021 alternative arrangements

Centre Name: Ysgol Bryn Castell	Centre Number: 68522
Policy adopted by Board of Governors on (insert date): March 2021	Policy issued to staff on (insert date): March 2021
Member of staff responsible for the policy: Sarah Peel	

Statement of Intent

The purpose of this Centre Policy 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
- to ensure the operation of effective processes with clear guidelines and support for staff
- to ensure that all staff involved in the processes clearly understand their roles and responsibilities
- to support teachers to take evidence-based decisions in line with Qualification Wales requirements
- to achieve a high standard of internal quality assurance in the allocation of CDGs
- to ensure the centre meets its obligations in relation to equality and disability legislation
- to ensure we meet all requirements set out in the Special Regulatory Conditions, Joint Council for Qualifications and Awarding Organisation instructions for Summer 2021 qualifications.

It will be the responsibility of everyone involved in the generation of Centre Determined Grades to read, understand, and implement the policy.

1. Roles and responsibilities

See '**GCSE Controlled Assessment Policy - Outlining Staff Responsibilities**' policy.

Chair of Governors: approval of policy

Head of Centre: overall responsibility for the school as an examinations centre; ensuring clear and separate roles and responsibilities; ensuring internal quality assurance process has been completed effectively: signing the Head of Centre declaration

Examinations officer: ensuring accurate and timely entries; ensuring information is shared promptly with all relevant staff; other key duties undertaken such as making applications for appeals; accountable for the safe and secure conduct of controlled assessments; ensure assessments comply with QW guidelines and subject-specific Qualification Assessment Frameworks for Summer 2021; accurate submission of CDGs to WJEC

Senior Management Team: involved in quality assurance of assessment plans and final decisions; providing training and support for staff; supporting the Head of Centre in the internal quality assurance of final CDGs; providing a clear centre policy on how records and evidence are stored securely; achieving a consistent approach across departments; ensure that all staff involved have a timeline of events; create, publish and update internal appeals policy

Curriculum leaders: making decisions on assessment plans; ensuring consistency in decisions within their curriculum area; managing teachers storage of evidence and learners decision records

Teaching staff: ensuring assessments are completed under the centre's appropriate level of control; have sufficient evidence in line with the centre policy to provide CDGs for each learner which are a fair, valid and reliable reflection of the assessment evidence available for each learner; completing learner decision records; ensuring that each learners work is stored securely and can be retrieved to support internal reviews and/or appeals

Basic Skills Special Support Officer: specialist role in respect of access arrangements

2. Subject assessment plans

Subject leaders will use the subject-specific **Qualification Assessment Framework for Summer 2021** for their subject to consider the following:

1. Adaptations for 2021

2. Key requirements to ensure progression
3. Past papers to be provided
4. Examples of learner evidence
5. Making judgements
6. Grade descriptions

Subject leaders will provide a sound rationale and evidence base for the award of all CDGs which will be awarded on the basis of demonstrated attainment in areas of the qualification content that a learner has covered. Decisions will be underpinned by sufficient evidence of demonstrated attainments across key themes and skills, taking into consideration any special considerations.

The standard expected for any particular grade is no lower than previous years but the volume of work completed in the specification will inevitably be lower for many learners. This means that learners will be awarded the same grades having covered different proportions of the specification.

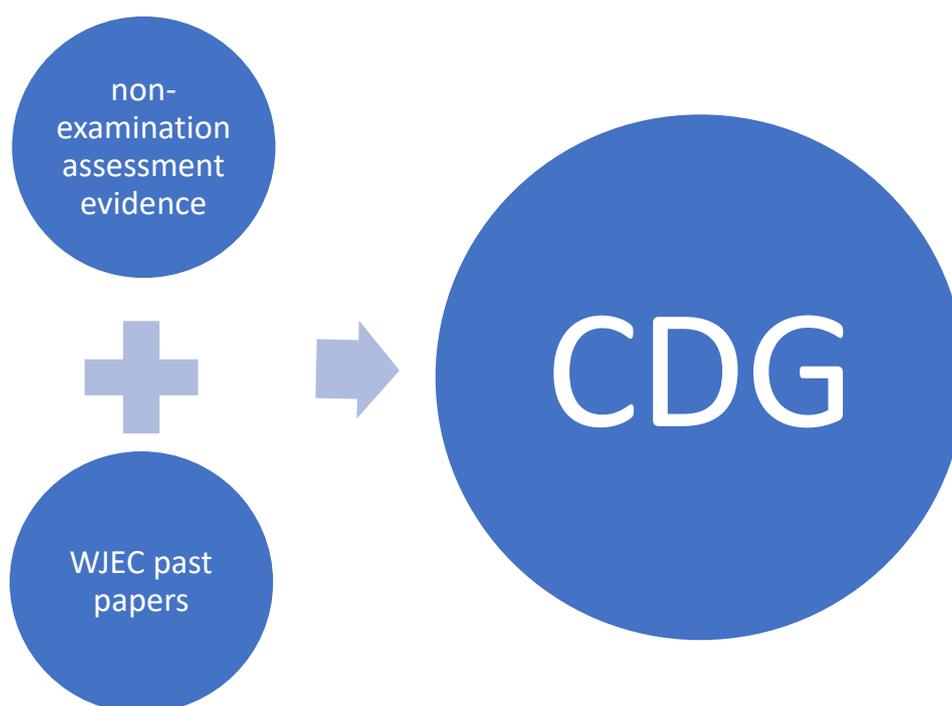
CDGs will not attempt to indicate potential in a subject since, after such loss of learning, this would be entirely subjective and difficult to evidence.

Each CDG must be an objective decision based on evidence of a candidate's knowledge, understanding, skills and abilities in relation to the subject. For learners with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), schools should make their judgement assuming learners had continued to receive any usual additional learning support.

Evidence should be gathered from relevant professionals to enable teachers to make secure judgements about CDGs. This might include, for example, seeking information from teachers in another school, college, or alternative provision. It could also include peripatetic or advisory teachers who may work across a number of centres.

YBC will use the Qualification Assessment Framework documents to create **subject assessment plans** which they will produce through collaboration with other subject leaders in Mainstream and Special Schools. These subject assessment plans will then be considered by a steering group consisting of SMT, other subject leaders and other relevant staff prior to implementation.

Subject assessment plans at YBC will consist of two elements:



Non-Examination Assessment (NEA) evidence

Subject leaders will instruct teachers to undertake an audit of existing assessment evidence which the school has for each learner, considering work produced at school or at home but only those which the school are confident/assured is the learner's own work. This assessment evidence could also come from a range of activities which could include mock exams, other past papers provided by WJEC, NEA and other assessed work.

Each piece of evidence will be considered to identify the key themes and skills which are demonstrated: one piece of evidence may provide sufficient attainment across more than one theme or skill.

Additional non-examination assessment evidence will be collected as outlined in Qualification Assessment Frameworks.

All NEAs will be collated for each learner and will be subject to internal quality assurance processes.

WJEC past papers

NEAs will be supplemented by the use of WJEC provided past papers as these are quality assured, accessible, equitable assessments with tried and tested mark schemes. The use and timelines for use of these past papers will be directed by the subject leader for each department within subject assessment plans and delivered by individual teachers.

These WJEC past papers will be marked by impartial teachers from other departments and will be subject to internal quality assurance processes.

Significant differences in evidence between learners

It is recognised that due to the individual additional learning needs of learners at YBC that the number of pieces and type of evidence **will** vary for each individual learner dependent upon their specific engagement at the time these activities were undertaken.

Contingency planning

See also '**Examination System Contingency Plan**' policy.

Monitoring implementation of subject assessment plans

The delivery of the subject assessment plans will be monitored by Assistant Headteachers in-line with timelines directed by subject leaders. This will be overseen by the Exams Officer and monitored by the SMT and Headteacher.

3. Centre devised assessments

As a centre we will be delivering WJEC devised assessments.

4. Assessment delivery

Assessment delivery will be clearly communicated to learners, Parents and Carers (**see '6. Learner and parents/carers communication'**).

All assessment will be in-line with the following policies:

- **Examination System Contingency Plan**
- **Malpractice in Examinations and Assessment Policy**
- **Recognition of Prior Learning Policy**
- **Use of a Word Processor in Exams Policy**
- **GCSE Controlled Assessment Policy**
- **GCSE Controlled Assessment Policy - Outlining Staff Responsibilities**
- **Equal Opportunities, Disability and Diversity Policy**

- **Identifying need and applying for Access Arrangements policy**

In order to minimise the risk of candidate and centre staff malpractice:

- JCQ guidance will be followed when pupils sit past papers
- plagiarism will be minimised by ensuring that all pupils validate their own candidate work with their name
- secure storage of learner evidence within the safe
- secure storage of records of learner evidence, access arrangements, final decision making records and other information
- moderation and quality assurance documentation will be retained securely within the centre
- 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). This will include all aspects of assessment and Quality Assurance and will notification to the WJEC as required
- the Head of Centre will retain records of a potential conflict of interest, and the steps to mitigate it
- training will be provided for staff who are supporting and overseeing the CDG process

Face-to-face classroom sessions

Where possible, all assessments at YBC will take place within face-to-face classroom sessions.

This work will be supervised by Class Teachers and Special Support Officers and will take account of individual access arrangements and pupil preferences/needs in order to create the optimal environment for completion of assessments.

Where pupils complete NEA and WJEC devised assessments, the duration of each task will align directly with the Qualification Assessment Framework for each specification including consideration of adaptations. Where this is spread over more than one teaching session, examination papers will be handed out/collected in at the start/end of each session and stored securely in-line with JCQ guidance.

Remote learning sessions

As a Special School for learners with Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties including Autism and other associated Additional Learning Needs, any work completed via remote learning will only be considered where it has not been possible to complete assessments within face-to-face sessions and there is no alternative available.

Where this is necessary, the school will risk assess each assessment activity including the location for this assessment and the ability of the alternative location to provide supervision and support including accurate timing, emotional support and submission of the assessment material. This risk assessment will identify the individual Additional Learning Needs of each learner and whether it is appropriate for assessment to be completed outside of a formal learning environment. These risk assessments will then be considered by a steering group consisting of SMT, other subject leaders and other relevant staff prior to implementation.

Where remote activities take place, the authenticity of pupil's work will be compared against work completed in supervised conditions, and/or via brief question and answer sessions with the learner. This will be clearly noted in each risk assessment.

Access arrangements

YBC will continue to test for, submit applications to WJEC (by 31 March 2021) and apply relevant access arrangements (and paper modifications), as if standard examinations were going ahead. .

5. Quality assurance of assessment and grading decisions

See **GCSE Controlled Assessment Policy** and **GCSE Controlled Assessment Policy - Outlining Staff Responsibilities** policies.

At YBC we have internal quality assurance processes of assessment decisions: Subject leaders moderate all non-examination assessments.

Centres will be required by WJEC to implement internal quality assurance processes to promote consistency in grade decisions across the centre (within subjects and across subjects). WJEC will provide guidance on what these processes must include, guidance from WJEC on internal quality assurance has not been issued as yet

Quality Assurance Processes

- In line with usual practices, WJEC will require internal processes to be undertaken to promote consistency across the qualifications/subjects offered. The school will undertake a programme of 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.

Moderation and/or Assessment - Approaches

The school will apply the following approaches to the assessment / moderation of grade evidence:

- The teacher will gather evidence as per the subject assessment plan and assess the pupils' work.
- WJEC past papers will be marked by impartial teachers from other departments, using WJEC mark schemes to support the accurate awarding of grades and will be subject to internal quality assurance processes.
- Moderation activities, to establish standardised approaches to assessments will take place as soon as is reasonable and practicable, once the evidence has been completed submitted.
- A programme of moderation meetings will take place in May / June. A record of these meetings will be kept.
- Moderation activities may involve a number of subject leaders, teachers and senior managers within and/or across departments.
- When a piece of evidence has been moderated, additional comments by those teachers involved in the moderation processes will be made.
- A steering group consisting of SMT, subject leaders and other relevant staff will review any discrepancies, and add additional comments as required.
- At all stages, appropriate forms (either provided by WJEC or school developed) will be retained as evidence to support the final determined grade.

Key considerations

- No one member of staff will be able to both assess and moderate the evidence gathered for a pupil. In the few departments where teachers work in isolation, the school will provide an opportunity for evidence to be moderated with another centre.
- 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.
- As the qualification cohort size is small within YBC the whole cohort will be moderated.
- All work will be marked anonymously to mitigate the risk of conscious and/or unconscious bias.
- The school will share and review its processes of determining grades with other examination centres to ensure standardisation. This may also involve the school's regional consortia improvement partner to provide a further degree of objectivity. This layer of quality assurance does not form part of WJEC or Qualifications Wales' regulatory framework. However, it is designed to ensure the process applied is valid, reliable and fair.

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

Recording Decisions

Decision making records will record the processes followed to produce each learner's grade for each qualification with a rationale to explain how evidence was used to support the judgement. This will include clarity of explanation which pupils and their parents/carers will understand.

The school will securely store and retain decision making records for each pupil, alongside records of meetings discussing internal moderation and verification of performance and reviews requested by learners.

YBC will use the decision making record template provided by WJEC and will include access arrangements and special considerations for all pupils. The decision making record will confirm that the school has complied with Public Sector Equality Duty (PESD).

Historical Data

YBC will prepare information about the historical data profile of the school which will be considered as part of the decision-making process.

The school recognises that the profile is variable year-on-year due to the significant variation in pupil population and cohorts over time, which is significantly impacted by the individual needs of pupils on roll within this Special School environment. It is also recognised that low cohort sizes (only one pupil in some instances) can create significant statistical variances which make the profile less comparable over time.

The school has taken steps to ensure this data is thoroughly considered:

- Five year performance across all entries has been considered
- WJEC grading guidance will be used within quality assurance stages

Consideration of this historical data will be confirmed by the signing of the Head of Centre declaration and an explanation of the overall pattern will be submitted alongside the submission of the CDGs to WJEC.

Public Sector Equality Duty and Data Protection

See also **Equal Opportunities, Disability and Diversity Policy**.

In developing an approach to CDGs 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 to 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 evidence gathered by the school to support the determination of grades will make use of a range of evidence including standardised materials produced by WJEC. This includes the use of past-papers which have been adjusted to take account of the adaptations already in place. These assessment materials are quality assured, accessible and equitable providing valid, reliable and fair assessments for all learners. These materials have already been through a robust process of equality impact assessment, as part of their own process of quality assurance, to ensure they meet the needs of the general equality duty.

Application of access arrangements and special consideration

The school will consider and apply WJEC access arrangements and reasonable adjustments and WJEC 'Guidance on special consideration for Summer 2021' for each learner within each Decision Making Record.

Staff Training

- 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 subject assessment plan, and associated processes, are implemented fully.
- The school will use training materials available from the WJEC secure website.
- The school will provide time for all staff involved in the CDG process to complete appropriate training materials.
- SMT will share and disseminate key information to all staff involved in the process.
- In addition to providing training on the subject assessment plan and associated actions for staff at all levels, the school will provide additional time to help manage staff workload.
- Specific training on avoiding unconscious bias when assessing work will be provided for all staff involved in the marking/assessing of evidence.
- Identified staff will also attend specific training on equalities issues, including public sector duties; managing conscious and unconscious bias; data processing and data protection, with particular reference to fair processing notices.
- The school will share and review its processes of determining grades with other examination centres which may also involve the school's regional consortia improvement partner.

Data protection

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.

6. Learner and parents/carers communication

Communication with learners

Prior to Easter all pupils will be informed during lessons about the overall approach to CDGs at YBC. This will be reinforced through written communication for pupils in pupil-friendly and accessible language. Pupils will have an opportunity to ask questions and have clear timelines about how they will be assessed and graded.

Communication with Parents/Carers

Prior to Easter the school's overall approach to CDGs will be communicated by e-mail/letter and will be accessible via the school website in order to promote transparency and confidence.

This will include specific information about which evidence will contribute to the determination of their child's final qualification grade, timelines and key dates and details of the appeals process.

YBC Timeline

- Evidence gathering will take place during the Summer term between 12th April and 28th May 2021
- Final moderation meetings of CDGs will take place during 7th June and 17th June 2021
- Publication of provisional CDG on 18th June 2021
- Opportunity for review of CDGs to be requested w/c 21st June 2021
- Provisional CDGs shared with WJEC w/c 28th June 2021
- GCSE results day on 12th August 2021

- Right to appeal GCSE result to WJEC 24th August to 21st September 2021

7. Internal reviews and complaints

Stage 1 - a centre review of the provisional Centre Determined Grade on the grounds of judgement and/or a procedural error has been made

The centre review stage will allow learners to request a review of the centre's judgement of their grade and/or correct any errors. This will be completed before the submission of Centre Determined Grades to WJEC. Centres will need to provide an effective mechanism for learners to request a centre review of their provisional grade. This process will be similar to the process required in a normal year when a learner can appeal any centre NEA marks at a centre level before marks are submitted to WJEC.

The Centre Determined Grade is provisional until qualification grades are issued by WJEC on results days.

WJEC will provide guidance (w/c 26th April 2021) on the centre review process including documentation to support consistency and manageability across centres. Heads of centres will need to ensure processes are in place to facilitate the internal review of grades which could include:

- Identification of a suitable person/persons to lead reviews, who is/are not involved in the original determination of the grade.
- How it will inform learners about the grade decisions made and the evidence on which the decision was based, for example, the decision making record.
- Effective arrangements to support learners should they wish to submit a stage 2 appeal to WJEC.

Pupils will also be able to escalate their concerns as below:

- Stage 2 – appeals to WJEC will allow learners to appeal on the grounds that the academic judgement that the centre has made is unreasonable and/or a procedural error has been made. This process will be carried out once results have formally been released on the relevant results days.
- Stage 3 – Qualifications Wales will implement an Exam Procedures Review Service (EPRS) to allow learners to request a review on the grounds that WJEC has not followed its stated process.

Complaints

The school will manage internal complaints in line with its complaints policy, in-line with JCQ guidance.

See also **Complaints Policy**.

Internal complaints will be managed by the centre (YBC)