



DERBY COLLEGE GROUP POLICY

Determining Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGs)

Policy Number:	EX 001
Executive Owner:	Heather Simcox
Owning Strategy / Department:	Corporate strategy / Quality
Approval Board / Committee / Group:	Executive, Corporation
User Group:	All employees responsible for the generation, scrutinisation and submission of Teacher assessed grades (TAGs)
Relevant To:	All employees, students and parents/carers involved in Teacher assessed grades Summer 2021
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Originator:	V Cornwell-Lyon/T McIlroy
Area:	Exams/Quality

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Policy Accountability and Implementation

Policy Title: Determining Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGs)
Policy Author & Policy Reviewers: MIS & Exams Manager & Director of quality and compliance (Head Of Centre) / Assistant Principles
Policy Implementation: Director of Quality and Compliance (Head of Centre)
Policy Monitoring and Compliance: Director of Quality and Compliance (Head of Centre)
Policy Review Timeline: This is a single purpose policy to cover Teacher assessed grades for Summer 2021
Synopsis:

Policy Classification and Publication

Classification

Note: Author to delete options as appropriate

- Essential Authority (EA)

Publication

Note: Author to delete options as appropriate

- Intranet – Policy portal
- Student VLE (Moodle)
- Website

Empowering/related legislative and/or authoritative references:

Impact Assessment reference:

Periodic Policy Review / Change History

Note: Please make it clear if change/review relates to procedures, guidelines and associated documents only or it is a rationale for a new or substantive policy review

Version	Reviewed / Modified by:	Change History	Advisory committee / groups or specialists	Review / Meeting Date/s

1. Policy Statement

The purpose of this policy is:

- *To ensure that teacher assessed grades are determined fairly, consistently, free from bias and effectively within and across departments.*
- *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 Joint Council for Qualifications guidance.*
- *To ensure the consideration of historical centre data in the process, and the appropriate decision making in respect of, teacher assessed grades.*
- *To support a high standard of internal quality assurance in the allocation of teacher assessed grades.*
- *To support our centre in meeting its obligations in relation to equality legislation.*
- *To ensure our centre meets all requirements set out by the Department of Education, Ofqual, the Joint Council for Qualifications and awarding organisations for Summer 2021 qualifications.*
- *To ensure the process for communicating to candidates and their parents/carers how they will be assessed is clear, in order to give confidence.*

2. Definitions

College means Derby College Group, governed by the Instruments and Articles of Government under the powers of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992. References to “us” “we” and “our” shall mean references to the College.

Policy means this data protection policy, as amended or updated from time to time.

Awarding organisations this encompasses, ‘exam boards’ and ‘awarding bodies’. • Additional assessment materials: qualification-specific sets of questions covering key knowledge, understanding and skills, provided with mark schemes and mapping grids.

Centres these are exam centres approved in the National Centre Number register (NCNR).

Centre Policy the policy sets out the processes centres will follow for determining grades, in an appropriate, consistent and fair way – only one will needed to be submitted for all awarding organisations 7

Head of centre the person with overall delegated responsibility for oversight of all external qualifications delivered within the centre ensuring conformity to regulatory and awarding body rules and regulations

SENCOs (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators) this encompasses SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability) leads in colleges and other relevant experts and assessors.

Students this means students entered for qualifications in 2021 within the scope of this guidance as outlined above and encompasses ‘candidates’ and ‘students’.

Support materials to assist in the determination and submission of grades, for example guidance, training, exemplar responses, performance data and grade descriptors

Teacher assessed grades (TAGs) are qualification grades determined by teaching staff to be awarded to students in the Summer 2021 examination season

3. Principles

On 4 January 2021, the Government announced that it was no longer fair for the Summer 2021 examination series for GCSE, A/AS Level, Project Qualifications and Advanced Extension Award in maths to go ahead due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The Government set out its policy that centres will be submitting students' grades in a letter dated 25 February 2021 [Direction issued to Ofqual - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/direction-issued-to-ofqual)

Following consultation OFQUAL published detailed guidance on how Teacher assessed grades (TAGs) should be determined for Summer 2021 to ensure grades awarded to students in this session are realistic, fair, broadly in line with historical achievement rates and free from any unconscious bias [Information for heads of centre, heads of department and teachers on the submission of teacher assessed grades: summer 2021 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/92421/information-for-heads-of-centre-heads-of-department-and-teachers-on-the-submission-of-teacher-assessed-grades-summer-2021)

This policy broadly illustrates DCGs' approach to the generation, quality assurance and submission of teacher assessed grades covering the following areas as required by the joint council for qualifications (JCQ).

3.1 Training, support and guidance for all staff

The head of centre will ensure training is developed and delivered to assistant principals, team managers and programme co-ordinators referencing the guidance within this document and specific guidance received by awarding bodies

Assistant Principals, managers and programme co-ordinators will cascade training to delivery staff adapting the training to the needs of the department where required (keeping the overall principles intact).

Teachers will be expected to engage fully with all training provided.

Newly qualified/inexperienced teachers will be assigned mentors to support them through the teacher assessed grade process.

Assistant Principals, team managers and programme co-ordinators will ensure grade decisions by newly qualified/inexperienced teachers undergo a more detailed internal quality assurance process. Where appropriate second marking will be in place.

3.2 Use of appropriate evidence

Teachers making judgements will have regard to the Ofqual Head of Centre guidance on recommended evidence, and further guidance provided by awarding organisations.

All candidate evidence used to determine teacher assessed grades, and associated documentation, will be retained and made available for the purposes of external quality assurance and appeals.

We will be using a wide range of student work produced in response to assessment materials provided by our awarding organisation(s). Some or all of the following sources of evidence will be used to reach holistic and reasonable TAG judgements:

- Groups of questions, past papers or similar materials such as practice or sample papers, published by the Awarding Organisations.
- Non-exam assessment work (often referred to as coursework), even if this has not been fully completed, including formative and summative assessments as well
- Synoptic exams and unit work
- Centre-devised tasks that reflect the specification, that follow the same format as awarding organisation materials, and have been marked in a way that reflects awarding organisation mark schemes.
- Class or homework (including work that took place during remote learning) as well as assignments and internal tests and mock exams taken by students.

- Actual summative unit assessments and synoptic assignments

In addition, we will use a range of additional assessment materials to give students the opportunity to show what they know, understand or can do in an area of content that has been taught but not yet assessed; as well as to validate or replace an existing piece of evidence.

These materials will also be used to support consistency of judgements between teachers or classes by giving everyone the same task to complete.

We will combine and/or remove elements of questions where, for example, a multi-part question includes a part which focuses on an element of the specification that hasn't been taught.

3.3 Appropriateness of evidence used

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 college.

We will consider the limitations of assessing a student's performance when using assessments that have been completed more than once, or drafted and redrafted, where this is not a skill being assessed.

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.

3.4 Determining teacher assessed grades

Students are fully informed of the assessment process for their respective programme of study; are made aware of how the TAG process works; are informed of current progress relative to target grade; and understand the basket of evidence used to derive their TAG. All TAGs will be evidenced-based, holistic and based upon the selection of a reasonable basket of evidence.

Teachers will determine grades based on evidence which is commensurate with the standard at which a student is performing, i.e. their demonstrated knowledge, understanding and skills across the content of the course they have been taught.

Teachers will record how the evidence was used to arrive at a fair and objective grade, which is free from bias.

Teachers will produce an Assessment Record (e.g. Markbook) for each subject cohort and any variations for individual students will be analysed.

3.5 Internal quality assurance

We will ensure that all teachers involved in deriving teacher assessed grades read and understand this Centre Policy document; and participate in a range of peer-led activities to quality assure each others' judgements.

In subjects where there is more than one teacher and/or class in the department, we will ensure that our centre carries out an internal standardisation process.

We will ensure that all teachers are provided with training and support to ensure they take a consistent approach to:

- Arriving at teacher assessed grades
- Marking of evidence
- Reaching a holistic grading decision
- Applying the use of grading support and documentation
- Eradicate conscious or unconscious Bias.

We will conduct internal standardisation across all grades.

We will ensure that the Assessment Record, as well as actual pieces of marked work, will form the basis of internal standardisation and discussions across teachers to agree the awarding of teacher assessed grades.

Where necessary, we will review and reflect on individual grading decisions to ensure alignment with the standards as outlined by our awarding organisation(s).

Where appropriate, we will amend individual grade decisions to ensure alignment with the standards as outlined by our awarding organisation(s).

Where there is only one teacher involved in marking assessments and determining grades, then the output of this activity will be reviewed by the manager/programme co-ordinator.

In respect of equality legislation, we will consider the range of evidence for students of different protected characteristics that are included in our internal standardisation.

All teacher assessed grades, including decision making processes both across each Academy and, where appropriate, at student level will be overseen and checked by the relevant Assistant Principal prior to the final quality assurance check, which will be the mini exam boards, chaired by the head of centre and involve other relevant senior managers and leaders.

3.6 Comparison of teacher assessed grades to previous cohorts

We will compile information on the grades awarded to our students in past June series in which exams took place (e.g. 2017 - 2019).

We will consider the size of our cohort from year to year.

We will consider the stability of our centre's overall grade outcomes from year to year.

We will consider both subject and centre level variation in our outcomes during the internal quality assurance process.

We will prepare a succinct narrative on the outcomes of the review against historic data which, in the event of significant divergence from the qualifications-levels profiles attained in previous examined years, which address the reasons for this divergence. This commentary will be available for subsequent review during the QA process.

Where teacher assessed grades are viewed to be overly lenient or harsh we will;

- compile historical data giving appropriate regard to potential mixtures of A*-G and 9-1 grades in GCSEs. Where required, we will use the Ofqual guidance to convert legacy grades into the new 9 to 1 scale.

- bring together other data sources that will help to quality assure the grades we intend to award in 2021.
- ensure that predicted grades are based on individual starting points of students.

3.7 Access arrangements and special consideration

Where students have agreed access arrangements or reasonable adjustments (for example a reader or scribe) we will make every effort to ensure that these arrangements are in place when assessments are being taken.

Where an assessment has taken place without an agreed reasonable adjustment or access arrangement, we will remove that assessment from the basket of evidence and alternative evidence obtained.

Where illness or other personal circumstances might have affected performance in assessments used in determining a student's standard of performance, we will take account of this when making judgements.

We will record, as part of the Assessment Record, how we have incorporated any necessary variations to take account of the impact of illness or personal circumstances on the performance of individual students in assessments.

Where required we will apply for special consideration through the awarding body systems.

To ensure consistency in the application of Special Consideration, we will ensure all teachers have read and understood the document: [A-guide-to-the-spec-con-process-202021-Website-version.pdf \(jcq.org.uk\)](#)

Where a student chooses to decline access arrangements or special consideration, the details of this will be recorded; and at a later stage will not be permitted to be used by students to appeal against a TAG.

3.8 Addressing disruption/differential lost learning (DLL)

Teacher assessed grades will be based on evidence of the content that has been taught and assessed for each student.

3.9 Objectivity

Staff will fulfil their duties and responsibilities in relation to relevant equality and disability legislation.

Senior Leaders and managers will consider:

- sources of unfairness and bias (situations/contexts, difficulty, presentation and format, language, conditions for assessment, marker preconceptions)
- how to minimise bias in questions and marking and hidden forms of bias); and
- bias in teacher assessed grades.

To ensure objectivity, all staff involved in determining teacher assessed grades will be made aware that:

- unconscious bias can skew judgements
- the evidence presented should be valued for its own merit as an indication of performance and attainment
- teacher assessed grades should not be influenced by candidates' positive or challenging personal circumstances, character, behaviour, appearance, socio-economic background, or protected characteristics
- unconscious bias is more likely to occur when quick opinions are formed

- our internal standardisation process and internal quality assurance checks will ensure that final grades awarded are in line with assessment criteria and previous evidence of individual student performance

3.10 Recording decisions and retention of evidence and data

We will ensure that teachers and managers maintain records that show how the teacher assessed grades process operated, including the rationale for decisions in relation to individual marks/grades.

We will ensure that evidence is maintained across a variety of tasks to develop a holistic and reasonable view of each student's demonstrated knowledge, understanding and skills in the areas of content taught.

We will put in place recording requirements for the various stages of the process to ensure the accurate and secure retention of the evidence used to make decisions.

We will comply with our obligations regarding data protection legislation.

We will ensure that the grades accurately reflect the evidence submitted.

We will ensure that evidence is retained electronically or on paper in a secure centre-based system that can be readily shared with our awarding organisation(s).

3.11 Authenticating evidence

Robust mechanisms, which will include, comparisons of quality of work completed remotely in relation to that completed in centre, standard plagiarism checks, comparisons of work between students and student declarations (where appropriate) will be in place to ensure that teachers are confident that work used as evidence is the students' own and that no inappropriate levels of support have been given to students to complete it, either within the centre or with external tutors.

It is understood that awarding organisations will investigate instances where it appears evidence is not authentic. We will follow all guidance provided by awarding organisations to support these determinations of authenticity.

3.12 Confidentiality, malpractice and conflicts of interest

Confidentiality

All staff involved have been made aware of the need to maintain the confidentiality of teacher assessed grades.

All teaching staff have been briefed on the requirement to share details of the range of evidence on which students' grades will be based, while ensuring that details of the final grades remain confidential.

Relevant details from this Policy, including requirements around sharing details of evidence and the confidentiality requirements, have been shared with parents/carers.

Malpractice

Our general centre policies regarding malpractice, maladministration and conflicts of interest have been reviewed to ensure they address the specific challenges of delivery in Summer 2021.

All staff involved have been made aware of these policies and have received training in them as necessary.

All staff involved have been made aware of the specific types of malpractice which may affect the Summer 2021 series including:

- breaches of internal security;
- deception;
- improper assistance to students;
- plagiarism;
- failure to appropriately authenticate a student's work;
- over / under direction of students in preparation for common assessments; ○
- allegations that centres submit grades not supported by evidence that they know to be inaccurate;
- centres enter students who were not originally intending to certificate a grade in the Summer 2021 series;
- failure to engage as requested with awarding organisations during the External Quality Assurance and appeal stages; and
- failure to keep appropriate records of decisions made and teacher assessed grades.

The consequences of malpractice or maladministration as published in the JCQ guidance; [Malpractice 20-21 v2-1.pdf \(jqc.org.uk\)](#) and including the risk of a delay to students receiving their grades, up to, and including, removal of centre status have been outlined to all relevant staff.

Conflicts of interest

To protect the integrity of assessments, all staff involved in the determination of grades must declare any conflict of interest such as relationships with students to our Head of Centre for further consideration.

The Head of Centre will take appropriate action to manage any conflicts of interest arising with centre staff in accordance with the JCQ documents - [Gen reqs approved centres 20-21 FINAL.pdf \(jqc.org.uk\)](#)

We will also carefully consider the need if to separate duties and personnel to ensure fairness in later process reviews and appeals.

3.13 External quality assurance

All staff involved have been made aware of the awarding organisation requirements for External Quality Assurance as set out in the **JCQ Guidance**.

All necessary records of decision-making in relation to determining grades have been properly kept and can be made available for review as required.

All student evidence on which decisions regarding the determination of grades has been retained and can be made available for review as required.

Instances where student evidence used to decide teacher assessed grades is not available, for example where the material has previously been returned to students and cannot now be retrieved, will be clearly recorded on the appropriate documentation.

All staff involved have been briefed on the possibility of interaction with awarding organisations during the different stages of the External Quality Assurance process and can respond promptly and fully to enquiries, including attendance at Virtual Visits should this prove necessary.

Arrangements are in place to respond fully and promptly to any additional requirements/reviews that may be identified as a result of the External Quality Assurance process.

Staff have been made aware that a failure to respond fully and effectively to such additional requirements may result in further action by the awarding organisations, including the withholding of results.

3.14 Results

All staff involved have been made aware of the specific arrangements for the issue of results in Summer 2021, including the issuing of A/AS and GCSE results in the same week.

Arrangements will be made to ensure the necessary staffing, including exams office and support staff, to enable the efficient receipt and release of results to our students.

Arrangements will be in place for the provision of all necessary advice, guidance and support, including pastoral support, to students on receipt of their results.

Such guidance will include advice on the appeals process in place in 2021 (see below).

Appropriate staff will be available to respond promptly to any requests for information from awarding organisations, for example regarding missing or incomplete results, to enable such issues to be swiftly resolved.

Parents/carers have been made aware of arrangements for results days.

3.15 Appeals

All staff involved have been made aware of the arrangements for, and the requirements of, appeals in Summer 2021, as set out in the **JCQ Guidance**.

Internal arrangements will be in place for the swift and effective handling of Centre Reviews in compliance with the requirements.

All necessary staff have been briefed on the process for, and timing of, such reviews, and will be available to ensure their prompt and efficient handling.

Students have been appropriately guided as to the necessary stages of appeal.

Arrangements will be in place for the timely submission of appeals to awarding organisations, including any priority appeals, for example those on which university places depend.

Arrangements will be in place to obtain the written consent of students to the initiation of appeals, and to record their awareness that grades may go down as well as up on appeal.

Appropriate information on the appeals process will be provided to parents/carers.

4. Scope and Limitations

The college is required by OFQUAL, joint council for qualifications (JCQ) and awarding bodies to follow a robust process for determining teacher assessed grades. All schools and colleges are subject to external quality assurance and any discrepancy in process discovered potentially leading to amendment of grades and sanctions.

5. Responsibilities

Head of Centre

- *The Head of Centre, Director of quality and compliance will be responsible for approving our policy for determining teacher assessed grades.*

- *The Head of Centre has overall responsibility for the college as an examinations centre and will ensure that clear roles and responsibilities of all staff are defined.*
- *The Head of Centre will confirm that teacher assessed grade decisions represent the academic judgement made by teachers and that the checks in place ensure these align with the guidance on standards provided by awarding organisations.*
- *The Head of Centre will ensure a robust internal quality assurance process has been produced and signed-off in advance of results being submitted.*

Assistant Principals, managers and programme co-ordinators

The Assistant Principals, Team Managers and Programme co-ordinators will:

- *provide training and support to our other staff*
- *support the Head of Centre in the quality assurance of the final teacher assessed grades*
- *ensure an effective approach within and across departments and authenticating the preliminary outcome from single teacher subjects.*
- *be responsible for ensuring staff have a clear understanding of the internal and external quality assurance processes and their role within it*
- *ensure that all teachers within their Academies make consistent judgements about student evidence in deriving a grade; and that all grades are subject to effective standardisation / IQA processes, both within teams by teachers themselves, and also by their Quality Business Partners*
- *ensure all staff conduct assessments under the appropriate levels of control with reference to guidance provided by the Joint Council for Qualifications and relevant awarding bodies.*
- *ensure teachers have the information required to make accurate, holistic and reasonable judgments, based upon an appropriate basket of evidence*
- *ensure that sufficient pieces of student work across a range of grades are stored safely in order to ensure that all future EQA requests are able to be met*
- *ensure that an Assistant Principal and Team Manager Checklist is completed for each qualification that they are submitting.*

Teachers/ Specialist Teachers / Inclusion managers

Our teachers, specialist teachers and inclusion managers will:

- *ensure they conduct assessments under our centre's appropriate levels of control and have sufficient evidence, in line with this Centre Policy and guidance from the Joint Council for Qualifications, to provide teacher assessed grades for each student they have entered for a qualification*
- *ensure that students are continuously made aware of current overall performance grades; where appropriate are given appropriate opportunities to complete additional work; and that they understand how those judgements have been derived, and the relevant basket of evidence used to make such judgements*
- *ensure that the teacher assessed grade they assign to each student is a fair, valid and reliable reflection of the assessed evidence available for each student*
- *make judgements based on what each student has been taught and what they have been assessed on, as outlined in the section on grading in the main JCQ and/or awarding body guidance*
- *produce an Assessment Record for each subject cohort, that includes the nature of the assessment evidence being used, the level of control for assessments considered, and any other evidence that explains the determination of the final teacher assessed grades. Any necessary variations for individual students will also be recorded*
- *securely store and be able to retrieve necessary and sufficient evidence to justify their decisions; and have student work available for to future external quality assurance processes.*

Quality Manager

Our Quality Manger will:

- *be responsible for ensuring that all quality business partners conduct robust internal quality assurance and standardisation checks across each Academy prior to the mini-exam boards*
- *be responsible for ensuring that the quality business partner for subcontracting provision ensures that all subcontracting providers understand and comply with the contents of this policy.*

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MIS and Exams manager

Our MIS and Exams manager will:

- *be responsible for the administration of our final teacher assessed grades and for managing the post-results services.*

6. Implementation Arrangements

The policy will be implemented by executive and senior leadership members, via the designated head of centre.

The policy will be communicated to all relevant employees. The roles and responsibilities of employees are clearly identified within the policy and detailed procedure and guidelines.

7. Monitoring and Review

This is a single use policy designed to cover the Summer 2021 teacher assessed grade process. Therefore, no reviews are necessary.

8. Guidelines

OFQUAL guidelines

JCQ guidelines

Awarding body guideline

9. Procedures

Access arrangements and special consideration procedure

Appeals procedure

Examination contingency plan

Mini-exam board procedure

Determining teacher assessed grade guidance

Academic misconduct and malpractice policy

Malpractice procedure

10. Templates / Forms

All templates and forms relating to the Policy will be contained within the relevant Procedure documents

11. Related Documents

[Direction issued to Ofqual - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

[Information for heads of centre, heads of department and teachers on the submission of teacher assessed grades: summer 2021 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](http://publishing.service.gov.uk)

[JCQ-Guidance-on-the-Determination-of-Grades-for-A-AS-Levels-and-GCSEs-Summer-2021.pdf](#)

[A-guide-to-the-spec-con-process-202021-Website-version.pdf \(jcq.org.uk\)](#)

[Malpractice_20-21_v2-1.pdf \(jcq.org.uk\)](#)

[Gen regs approved centres 20-21 FINAL.pdf \(jcq.org.uk\)](#)