

 Farnborough College of Technology	Teacher Assessed Grades Policy for A/AS Levels and GCSEs, Summer 2021
Owner	Director of Quality
Approval by Corporation	n/a
Date	April 2021
Date of next review	April 2022

1. Scope

This document outlines the policy and procedures Farnborough College of Technology will adopt and follow in determining the teacher assessed grades for summer 2021. It is an addendum to the College's Total Quality Assurance Framework and the well-established Internal Verification policy and work of the Assessment Verification and Monitoring Group.

This policy is written in line with guidance provided by the Department for Education, Ofqual's *Information for heads of centre, heads of department and teachers on the submission of teachers assessed grades: summer 2021*, and the Joint Council for Qualifications in the *JCQ Guidance on the determination of grades for A/AS Levels and GCSEs for summer 2021*.

This policy relates to all General Qualifications which require teachers to submit a Teacher Assessed Grade (TAG):

- A/AS Level
- GCSE
- EPA

This policy will also guide the allocation and internal quality assurance of TAGs in qualifications where Awarding Organisations (AOs) require the submission of TAGs. For example:

- City & Guilds Level 1 courses as including 14-16 provision
- T Level
- Higher National
- BTEC

2. Statement of Intent

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 the College in meeting its obligations in relation to equality legislation.

- To ensure the College 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.

It is the responsibility of all staff involved in the determination of teacher assessed grades to read, understand and implement this policy.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

This section outlines the specific roles and responsibilities in the process of determining teacher assessed grades.

3.1 Head of Centre

- The Head of Centre, Virginia Barrett, as Principal CEO, 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 through the Head of Centre Declaration Form in advance of results being submitted.

3.2 Department of Quality

The Directors of Quality with the support of the Associate Director of Safeguarding and Quality will:

- support the Head of Centre in the quality assurance of the final teacher assessed grades.
- be responsible for ensuring Programme Managers have a clear understanding of the internal and external quality assurance processes and their role within it.
- ensure an effective approach is taken by Programme Managers within and across departments in authenticating the preliminary outcome from single teacher subjects through the Assessment Verification Monitoring Group (AVMG)
- provide training and support to curriculum staff.

3.3 Vice and Assistant Principals

The Vice and Assistant Principals will:

- support the Department of Quality in ensuring Programme Managers have a clear understanding of the internal external quality assurance processes and their role within it
- support the Programme Managers in ensuring that all teachers within each of their programme areas make consistent judgements about student evidence in deriving a grade.

3.4 Programme Managers

Programme Managers (with the support of their Vice or Assistant Principal) will:

- be responsible for ensuring teachers within each of their Programme Areas have a clear understanding of the internal and external quality assurance processes and their role within it.
- ensure that all teachers within each programme area make consistent judgements about student evidence in deriving a grade.
- ensure teachers conduct assessments under the appropriate levels of control with reference to guidance provided by the Joint Council for Qualifications.
- ensure teachers have the information required to make accurate and fair judgments.
- ensure that a Programme Manager Checklist (Appendix A) is completed for each qualification that they are submitting.
- ensure that Assessment Records for each subject cohort (as outlined below) are completed fully and accurately.

3.5 Teachers

Teachers (where appropriate with the support of the ALS Coordinator and the Academic Registry) will:

- ensure they conduct assessments under the College'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 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 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 sufficient evidence to justify their decisions.

3.6 Academic Registry/Exams Department

The Academic Registry Supervisor and Administrators will:

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

4. Training, support and guidance

This section provides details of the approach the College will take to *training, support and guidance in determining teacher assessed grades this year*

- Teachers involved in determining grades in the College will attend any centre-based training to help achieve consistency and fairness to all students.
- Teachers will engage fully with all training and support that has been provided by the Joint Council for Qualifications and the awarding organisations.
- Teachers undergoing teacher training and those less familiar with assessment will, in addition, be mentored by an experienced subject specialist. Where this is the Programme Manager, the Vice or Assistant Principal will support the verification of grading.
- Programme Managers will ensure the Quality team is aware of the additional measures put in place to verify grading by new and less experienced teachers.

5. Use of appropriate evidence

This section of the Policy indicates how the College will give due regard to the section in the JCQ guidance entitled: *Guidance on grading for teachers*.

5.1 Use of 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.
- The College will use student work produced in response to assessment materials provided by its awarding organisation(s), including groups of questions, past papers or similar materials such as practice or sample papers.
- The College will use non-exam assessment work (often referred to as coursework), even if this has not been fully completed.
- The College will use student work produced in 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.
- The College will use substantial class or homework (including work that took place during remote learning).
- The College will use internal tests taken by students.
- The College will use mock exams taken over the course of study.
- The College will use records of a student's capability and performance over the course of study in performance-based subjects such as music, drama and PE.

5.2 The College will use Awarding Organisation 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.
- give students an opportunity to show improvement, for example, to validate or replace an existing piece of evidence.
- support consistency of judgement between teachers or classes by giving everyone the same task to complete.

Where appropriate, the College 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.

5.3 The College will ensure the appropriateness of evidence and balance of evidence in arriving at grades in the following ways:

- *We will consider the level of control under which an assessment was completed, for example, whether the evidence was produced under high control and under supervision or at home.*
- *We will ensure that we are able to authenticate the work as the student's own, especially where that work was not completed within the school or 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.*

6. Determining teacher assessed grades

The College will take the following approach to awarding teacher assessed grades:

- *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 for each subject cohort and will share this with their Programme Manager. Any necessary variations for individual students will also be shared.*

7. Internal quality assurance

This section of the Policy outlines the approach the College will take to ensure internal standardisation of teacher assessed grades, to ensure consistency, fairness and objectivity of decisions.

This section gives details of our approach to internal standardisation, within and across subject departments.

- *We will ensure that all teachers involved in deriving teacher assessed grades read and understand this Centre Policy document.*
- *In subjects where there is more than one teacher and/or class in the department, we will ensure that internal standardisation takes place.*
- *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*
- *We will conduct internal standardisation across all grades.*
- *We will ensure that the Assessment Record 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 relevant Programme Manager and/or Assistant Principal.*
- *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.*

8. Comparison of teacher assessed grades to results for previous cohorts

The College's internal quality process will ensure that the comparison of teacher assessed grades at qualification level to results for previous cohorts in taking the same qualification. In order to do this, the College will:

- *compile information on the grades awarded to students in past June series in which exams took place (e.g. 2017 - 2019).*
- *consider the size of the cohort from year to year.*
- *We will consider the stability of the College'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.*
- *We will omit subjects that we no longer offer from the historical data.*

If the initial teacher assessed grades for a qualification are viewed as overly lenient or harsh compared to results in previous years, the College 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.*

9. Access Arrangements and Special Considerations

This section of the Policy outlines the approach the College will take to provide students with appropriate access arrangements and take into account mitigating circumstances (special consideration) in particular instances.

- *Where students have agreed access arrangements or reasonable adjustments (for example a reader, a scribe or extra time) 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 will be 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.*
- *To ensure consistency in the application of Special Consideration, we will ensure all teachers have read and understood the document: [JCQ – A guide to the special consideration process, with effect from 1 September 2020](#)*

10. Addressing disruption/differential lost learning (DLL)

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

11. Objectivity

This section gives a summary of the arrangements in place within the College in relation to objectivity.

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

The Department of Quality, Vice and Assistant Principals and Programme Managers through the various levels of IQA 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 will help to ensure that there are different perspectives to the quality assurance process.

12. Recording decisions and retention of evidence and data

With regard to recording decisions and to retaining evidence and data, the College will:

- *ensure that teachers and Programme Managers maintain records that show how the teacher assessed grades process operated, including the rationale for decisions in relation to individual marks/grades.*
- *ensure that evidence is maintained across a variety of tasks to develop a holistic view of each student's demonstrated knowledge, understanding and skills in the areas of content taught.*
- *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.*
- *comply with its obligations regarding data protection legislation.*
- *ensure that the grades accurately reflect the evidence submitted.*
- *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).*

13. Authenticating evidence

This section of the Policy details the mechanisms in place to ensure that teachers are confident in the authenticity of evidence, and the process for dealing with cases where evidence is not thought to be authentic.

- *Robust mechanisms 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 (for example, Turnitin or remote video invigilation will be used where work is not completed in-class with the teacher).*
- *The range of evidence will span the academic year.*
- *A balance of face to face and remote assessment evidence will be used.*
- *Work completed remotely will be assessed for consistency in line with other evidence of the student's performance.*
- *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.*

14. Confidentiality, malpractice and conflicts of interest

This section details the measures in place to maintain the confidentiality of grades, while sharing information regarding the range of evidence on which the grades will be based.

14.1 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, will be available to parents/guardians via the College website.*

14.2 Malpractice

This section details the measures in place in the College to prevent malpractice and other breaches of exam regulations and to deal with such cases if they occur. In such a case as that proves impossible, the College will handle cases in accordance with awarding organisation requirements.

- *The College's policies regarding malpractice, maladministration, conflicts of interest and appeals provide robust guidance to support 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;*
 - *failure to appropriately authenticate a student's work;*
 - *over 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: [JCQ Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures](#) 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.*

14.3 Conflicts of Interest

This section details the College's approach to addressing conflicts of interest, and how we will respond to such allegations.

- *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, friends or family, 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 - [General Regulations for Approved Centres, 1 September 2020 to 31 August 2021](#).*
- *The Head of Centre will also carefully consider whether there is the need to separate duties and personnel to ensure fairness in later process reviews and appeals.*

15. External Quality Assurance

This section outlines the arrangements the College has in place to ensure the relevant documentation and assessment evidence can be provided in a timely manner for the purposes of External Quality Assurance sampling, and that staff can be made available to respond to enquiries.

- *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 will be 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.*

16. Results

This section details the College's approach to the issue of results to students and the provision of advice and guidance.

- *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/guardians have been made aware of arrangements for results days.*

17. Appeals

This section details the College's approach to managing appeals, including Centre Reviews, and subsequent appeals to awarding organisations.

- *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.*
- *Leaders 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 students and parents/carers.*

Appendix A:

Farnborough College of Technology
Programme Manager Checklist / Declaration

Programme Area:	Programme Manager:
Awarding Body:	Subject Code/ Learning Aim:
Subject Title:	Subject Teachers:

Declaration	Y/N/NA
Students' grades have been determined using only the evidence detailed in the subject's Assessment Record, including any variations for individual students.	
Where applicable, the students were given their approved access arrangements whilst producing the evidence contributing to the final grade and the access arrangements have been documented in the Assessment Record.	
Where applicable, mitigating circumstances (special consideration) that affected candidates in producing evidence that contributed to their grade was taken into account in determining candidates' grades according to the document <i>JCQ Guidance on the determination of grades for A/AS Levels and GCSEs for summer 2021</i> , and this has been documented in the Assessment Record.	
The evidence has been authenticated as the candidates' own work.	
Where applicable, evidence from other centres has been taken into account (e.g. when a student has moved schools or is dual registered).	
The grades for this year's cohort have been compared to cohorts from previous years when exams have taken place. Significant deviations are explained below.	
At departmental level, we have determined which evidence will be considered and the relative merits of each to be consistently applied across all candidate, where appropriate, by all teachers.	
At departmental level, the teaching team have considered the various sources of potential evidence against the criteria (including consistency of marking for historic assessments).	
A review has been completed in line with the College Total Quality Assurance Framework and Teacher Assessed Grades Centre Quality policies. Records have been retained detailing all staff involved in the process, work reviewed, judgements and any adjustments made at a Department level. These records are readily available.	
Consideration has been given to ensure decisions made are free from bias and aligned to appropriate equality and discrimination legislation.	
The teacher assessed grades for this subject have been signed off as being accurate by the Programme Manager and one other teacher within the department.	

[Note: the Head of Centre/ Assistant Principal may provide the second signature where there is only one subject specialist teacher.]

Provide detail and justification where you have indicated N to any of the above:

Head of Department Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Second Teacher Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____