



Castell Alun High School – Centre Number 68135

Centre Assessment Policy

Assessment and Quality Assurance Processes for summer 2021 - alternative arrangements

The policy was adopted by the school Governing Body on 18th March 2021
It was issued to staff on 12th April 2021
From 12th April 2021, Mr Colin Ellis (Headteacher) has responsibility for this policy.

When devising this policy, as outlined in WJEC requirements and guidance booklet, Castell Alun has ensured that the seven key areas identified by the WJEC have been addressed as necessary. We have chosen to structure our policy using the given headings for ease of use for all parties.

Statement of Intent

The purpose of this Centre Policy is:

- to ensure that Centre Determined Grades (CDGs) are conducted fairly, consistently, free from bias and effectively within and across departments at Castell Alun 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 Castell Alun meets its obligations in relation to equality and disability legislation
- to ensure Castell Alun meets 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

- **Chair of Governors** – Mrs H. Williams – will seek approval of this policy from the full Governing Body, and incorporate it into the policy documentation of the school.
- **Headteacher** – Mr P Edwards (Acting) / Mr C Ellis (Head from Easter 2021) – will monitor the internal quality assurance processes. Mr Edwards will undertake this role until Easter 2021 and Mr Ellis thereafter. The Head of Centre declaration will be made therefore by Mr Ellis.
- **Senior Leadership Team (SLT)** will ensure the proper management of all Centre Determined Grade assessments and the associated processes. This will include the implementation of our Centre Assessment Policy, the process by which assessments will take place, the appropriate collection of all related data and all Quality Assurance (QA) processes. They will ensure that the best interests of all the learners remain central to the process, keep parents and learners informed throughout, and ensure the provision of necessary training for staff. Members of the SLT will quality assure the grades to be awarded ensuring consistency in outcome and also that grades are broadly in line with grades awarded in previous years.
- **Examinations Officer** - Mrs W. Hinchcliffe will manage the administration of Centre Determined Grades and Qualifications, including coordinating the collation of entries of learners to the appropriate qualifications, as well as supporting teaching staff and the School Leadership Team. As Examinations Officer, Mrs Hinchcliffe will provide teaching staff with information on the provision of 'special consideration', which will not follow the same format as in previous years (See *Appendix 1*). A list of students who may require special consideration on assignments has been circulated to all teaching staff. It will be the responsibility of everyone involved in the generation of Centre Determined Grades to read, understand and implement the Centre Assessment Policy. The Examinations Officer will also ensure the accurate submission of CDGs to WJEC and make applications for appeals if required.
- **The Additional Needs Co-ordinator ALNCo** – Dr N. Davies - will ensure that all staff are aware of the necessary access arrangements, and such reasonable adjustments for entitled learners as necessary. **The ALNCo and Examinations Officer** will also coordinate the provision of additional support as required and appropriate.
- **Subject Leaders (SLs)** will work closely with their **Learning Area Managers (LAMs)** and the **ALNCo** to ensure that assessments are carried out in accordance with the policy and guidelines (including the provision of access arrangements). This will include the preparation of learners, the collection and recording of marks, the secure storage of assessments and related data. They will also ensure that the Quality Assurance process, as described in this document, is followed. Subject Leaders will produce a suitable Subject Assessment Plan (*please refer to Appendix 2*). Learning Area Managers, in conjunction with Subject Leaders and class teachers, will identify any conflicts of interest and determine how these will be managed in collaboration with their SLT link, and with guidance from the Welsh Joint Examination Committee (WJEC). The Learning Area Manager will identify and ensure access to, and monitoring of, any training needs for members of their teams involved in assessments to allow them to run and administer the process in an appropriate and transparent manner.
- **Teaching Staff** will work under the direction of their LAMs/SLs and ensure that they follow this policy and relevant Subject Assessment Plan. Their work will include the preparation of learners, carrying out the assessments, making sure those learners who are entitled to access arrangements and reasonable adjustments receive their entitlement and carrying out marking and quality assurance within the given time frame.

Teachers will endeavour to retain all evidence on which a learner's grade is based, although there may be a very few instances where this is not possible due to local circumstances, whereupon WJEC guidance will be followed about the awarding of grades. This evidence could include copies of the learner's work and any mark records. Teachers will ensure that this evidence is stored securely. This vital evidence will be needed to support both the quality assurance and the appeals process.

2. Subject assessment plans

Subject Leaders and Learning Area Managers will generate a Subject Assessment Plan that outlines how grades will be awarded. These will be in keeping with the Qualification Assessment Frameworks. Examples of work provided by the WJEC will be used, as will a range of other materials. The plans put in place by Subject Leaders and Learning Area Managers will include detail of the assessments being used, the level of control / supervision given and detail on the quality assurance arrangements employed to ensure consistency and rigour across and within subjects. Each Subject Assessment Plan will also outline how access arrangements and matters relating to equality will be addressed. Training requirements will also be indicated in these plans (please refer to Appendix 2). These plans will be shared with students and parents to ensure transparency.

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

- **Adapted past paper questions.**

Castell Alun will make full use of WJEC adapted past papers when setting tasks to help determine a grade for each qualification. Adapted past papers have already been externally quality assured; are fully supported by mark schemes; and are familiar to both learners and staff.

Teachers will ensure that these past papers are incorporated appropriately into their teaching and learning in replacement of other activities undertaken in lessons.

- **Non-examination Assessment (NEA)**

NEA (or more familiarly known as 'controlled assessment') currently exists in many qualifications. Our teachers will use the performance of learners in this element to help contribute towards the determination of a grade. However, teachers may also need to consider the weighting of this element as defined by the WJEC.

A subject area may have only partially completed an NEA (coursework) activity. This will not prevent its use in determining a grade.

- **Other contributing evidence**

a) Previously completed WJEC past papers - Teachers may use evidence from previously completed WJEC past papers which have been externally quality assured and published with an approved mark scheme and completed under appropriately controlled conditions.

b) Assessments undertaken prior to the publication of the agreed WJEC approach - This type of evidence, for example mock examinations, may be used to confirm a judgement but not necessarily to determine a judgement.

The number of pieces of evidence required to determine a grade will vary for each qualification.

Teachers will ensure that there is sufficient opportunity for learners to provide clear evidence to demonstrate competency against key themes in a qualification. Such key themes are documented in the WJEC subject frameworks.

Subject areas that decide to create their own assessment must consult with their line manager in the first instance, having read the WJEC Centre Assessment Creation Guide.

Subject staff will also need to evidence that appropriate WJEC online training has been completed. All staff will be guided by the principle of a 'best-fit' grade, based solely upon hard evidence available.

3. Centre devised assessments

All departments at Castell Alun will be using, in part at least, the WJEC assessments. Where amendments are made, reference will be drawn to the WJEC Centre Assessment Creation Guide. Any departments that decide to devise their own assessments have been informed about the online training on the theme of Assessment Foundations and Creation, available on the 2021 area of the WJEC secure website. Any centre devised assessment materials must follow all school policies and procedures.

4. Assessment delivery

Subject areas will document the assessment methodology in their subject assessment plans. This must include:

- Where the assessment will take place
- The level of supervision
- The nature and duration of the assessment
- Access arrangements

Learners will be given sufficient notice of assessments and told which topics will be covered. Learners will not be provided with the assessment in advance. Learners will be given the same time to complete an assessment as in a standard series e.g. 45 minutes to complete an essay.

Castell Alun teachers will not necessarily deliver an assessment activity in one session – as an examination paper. Teaching staff may split assessment materials to fit with the programme of learning. Learners with approved access arrangements will be given their additional extra time to complete the assessment tasks.

To ensure fairness for all learners, Castell Alun staff must be confident that a learner's work is their own. Learners will be informed of the regulations around malpractice prior to undertaking any assessment.

Teachers should give careful consideration if levels of control are altered part way through an NEA, that piece of work may be completed without the usual level of supervision. They need to document how comparisons can be made between work that has been supervised and work that has been completed without supervision.

Type of supervision for assessments

High:

Formal supervision. Students produce their work under direct supervision and with a restricted set of resources, usually during class time. No assistance may be given to students. This is not achievable online.

Medium:

Informal supervision. Work is mainly completed under teacher supervision in the classroom, e.g. writing up investigations. This can be achieved virtually using monitoring platforms online such as Class Notebook and Spiral, well designed assessments where simple answers cannot be harvested from an internet search engine or peers, strict time frames of completion.

Low:

Limited supervision. Work may be completed outside of the classroom without direct supervision. Most, but not all, online completed assessments would be considered low control due to the inability to monitor students at home.

Wherever possible, work will be completed in class and in place of usual classroom activities. It may be that there are occasions where work needs to be completed at home e.g. in the event of national lockdown or self-isolation. The school will introduce additional mitigating measures at this point to ensure that as far as possible, a learner's work is their own.

The school will also consider work that has been produced by the learner against previously assessed work to verify authenticity; this is particularly relevant where evidence submitted is atypical of the usual standard demonstrated by the learner. Staff may undertake further activities with learners in order to ascertain that work is a learner's own. E.g. a Question-and Answer session with the learner or an additional assessment activity.

Decisions relating to the awarded grade will not be communicated to students and/or parents by individual staff within the subject until the given date in June, although staff may employ formative feedback to students before this date which may indicate approximate standards of assessed pieces, in keeping with school regular assessment procedure.

In line with existing policies in relation to Public Examinations and Controlled Assessment, the centre will ensure that it is compliant with its Public Sector Equality Duty.

Castell Alun will ensure that it is compliant with data protection and data processing regulations.

We will ensure that appropriate provision for students with access arrangements has been made and guidance regarding the alternative arrangements in place for the summer 2021 series has been followed.

Where a conflict of interest may exist, Castell Alun will inform the WJEC in the usual way and other members of relevant departments will be required to play a role in the moderation process.

5. Quality assurance of assessment and grading decisions

For each qualification, teachers will make use of WJEC subject assessment frameworks which include descriptors for key grades. Each grade awarded by the school must be underpinned by robust evidence.

It will not be permitted for subject teachers to issue a Centre Determined Grade based on professional prediction or the potential of a learner in a given subject. Teachers will be required to apply professional judgement and decide whether the knowledge and skills that have been demonstrated by a learner, meet the usual standard for a specified grade.

Grades will be decided on a 'best-fit' basis underpinned by evidence of attainment in areas a learner has covered.

The standard expected for any particular grade will be no lower than previous years, but the volume of work completed in the specification will inevitably have been reduced.

Learners are not required to demonstrate all aspects of a grade descriptor in order to be awarded the grade. Learners should be awarded a grade supported by evidence across sufficient breadth of content as determined by WJEC. The same grade may be achieved by demonstrating different combinations of knowledge, skills and understanding. Although weightings are not prescribed, teachers will take into account unit and assessment objective weightings in the specification. Evidence of high achievement in a narrow aspect of the qualification will not, on its own, justify a high grade.

Learner assessment data (i.e. the student's previous performance in that subject) will form the basis of discussions around the decisions made.

Castell Alun has robust quality assurance processes in place. In addition, for this summer series (2021) there will be further moderation within departments, utilisation of relevant 4Matrix, SMID, ALPS and other internal tracking data as well as scrutiny of results through SLT link meetings.

SLT will meet to quality assure grades during the process. This will be conducted without access to candidates' names. There will be a significant internal sampling strategy looking at the grades awarded by every teacher and a wide range of candidates including those with protected characteristics. 'Blind' sampling will be used on occasions as an extra mechanism to ensure fairness and for the confirmation and ratification of wholly impartial judgements.

In school variance will be checked on an individual and subject basis at GCSE and A level, considering gender, ALN and other student characteristics by the ALNCo, Learning Area Managers and SLT.

If internal moderation highlights the need to adjust a teacher's decision the Learning Area Manager and SLT link will work with the teacher to look again at the evidence and make any necessary changes to CDGs.

Castell Alun will take part in any cross moderation process set-up by the regional consortia where possible. At all times the importance of objectivity and avoiding bias and discrimination will be stressed.

Grading guidance produced by the WJEC will be followed and staff are all able to access the training on 'avoiding bias and discrimination' available on the WJEC secure website. Staff will be trained in standardisation and consistent protocols will be in place for the marking, standardisation and moderation of students' work.

The purpose of internal standardisation and quality assurance is to:

- Provide teachers with confidence in the Centre Determined Grades they have assigned,
- Ensure fairness and objectivity of decisions
- Ensure consistency in the application of assessment criteria and standards.
- Resolve any teachers' differences of opinion over awarded grades.

Subject Outcomes

The Centre Determined Grades should take into account the overall standards achieved in that subject over recent years. The Learning Area Manager will ensure that the grades awarded are in line with that particular subject's performance in recent years and provide a rationale for any significant variation.

The Learning Area Manager will also consider in school variance of results using the 4 Matrix/ALPs/SMID analysis tools.

A further Quality Assurance process will be undertaken by the SLT to ensure that the grades awarded are in line with those from previous external examination series.

The SLT will draw together and submit contextual performance information for a given year group. This may include CATS data, Key Stage 3 levels, National tests and Key Stage 4 STR (in-house monitoring) data. This information will provide an anchor to the performance data.

6. Learner and parents/carers communication

Frequent communication has been maintained with learners and parents. All letters to learners from Qualifications Wales have been shared with students via email. The school has provided copies of all documents regarding CDGs and has answered any questions that have arisen. The Subject Assessment Plans will be shared with Learners and Parents, as will this School Assessment Policy, as soon as it has been quality assured by the WJEC to ensure transparency at all times.

The school will submit its CDGs by the deadline, 2nd of July 2021 using the system provided by WJEC for capture of the grades. Provisional grades will be shared with students prior to this and students will have the opportunity to go through an appeal if, based on the standard of their assessed pieces, they do not agree with the grade awarded or they think an error has been made. *Students however, cannot appeal if they are just not happy with their grade.* If students do appeal a review of the grading process will take place using the evidence from the teacher. Students will be told of the results of this review prior to the submission of the grade to the WJEC.

7. Internal reviews and complaints

All learners will be informed of their right to request a review of their grade once provisional grades are issued in June.

- Stage 1: A learner may ask for a provisional grade to be reviewed before submission to WJEC. This may lead to a grade being raised or lowered. The member of staff that undertakes this review process will be an objective member of staff and not the relevant subject teacher. Where members of SLT are involved in this process, at least one member will not be used.
- Stage 2: Once final results have been issued on results days, learners may appeal to WJEC through the school, if a judgement is felt to be unreasonable or erroneous. WJEC may lower or raise the grade following this process.
- Stage 3: Learners may request an Exam Procedures Review Service from Qualifications Wales to check whether WJEC has followed the required procedures.

APPENDIX 1 Guidance on Special Consideration for summer 2021

Introduction

The purpose of this guidance is to provide advice to centre staff when making decisions on centre determined grades.

The guidance covers the following Qualification Wales approved qualifications:

- Qualifications Wales approved GCSE, AS and A level
- Skills Challenge Certificates

Special consideration

The process of centres submitting special consideration applications to awarding bodies will not apply this summer.

As the evidence is flexible and can be tailored to an individual candidate according to the coverage of the specification, instances of special consideration should be limited. Centres should be able to select work completed by candidates where they are unaffected by adverse circumstances. Where this is not possible and a temporary illness, injury or other event outside of a candidate's control may have affected their performance in assessments which will be used to determine a grade, teachers should take this into account.

The event must relate to the candidate's performance(s) at the time of taking relevant assessments which contribute to the centre determined grade and due to events outside of their control.

These include:

- Temporary illness or accident/injury
 - Bereavement
 - Domestic crisis
 - The centre not implementing previously approved access arrangements.
- Candidates will not be eligible for special consideration if preparation for, or performance in their assessments is affected by:
- Long term illness, disability, or other difficulties unless the illness or circumstances manifest themselves at the time of an assessment
 - Bereavement occurring more than six months before the assessment, unless an anniversary has been reached at the time of the assessment or there are on-going implications such as an inquest or court case
 - Consequences of disobeying the centre's internal regulations.

Special consideration is never applied due to lost teaching and learning time. Lost teaching and learning is being addressed this summer via the assessment methods and the flexibility afforded to the centre in the content that will be assessed, as outlined in the qualification assessment, frameworks provided by WJEC. Additional information will be provided in the WJEC guidance on grading. Centre determined grades are based on the evidence produced by the candidate and not their potential.

How to apply for special consideration

Special consideration should be implemented by the centre at assessment level through applying an allowance of additional marks to each assessment affected. The size of the allowance depends on the timing, nature and extent of the illness or other circumstance. The maximum allowance given will be 5% of the total raw marks available in the assessment.

The severity of the circumstances and the date of the assessment in relation to the circumstances should be considered.

Centres must be satisfied that the issue or event has had, or is reasonably likely to have had, a material effect on a candidate's ability to demonstrate his or her normal level of attainment in an assessment.

Special consideration cannot be applied in a cumulative fashion. For example, because of a recent trauma at the time of the assessment and the candidate suffering from a viral illness. Special consideration should only be applied for the most serious indisposition.

The following are examples of circumstances which must apply at the time of the assessment.

5% this is the maximum allowance and will be reserved for the most exceptional cases, such as:

- terminal illness of the candidate
- terminal illness of a parent/carer
- death of a member of the immediate family within two months of the assessment
- very serious and disruptive crisis/incident at or near the time of the assessment.

4% Very serious problems such as:

- life-threatening illness of candidate or member of immediate family
- major surgery at or near the time of the assessment
- severe disease • very recent death of member of extended family • severe or permanent bodily injury occurring at the time of the examination
- serious crisis/incident at the time of the assessment.

NB 'Very recent' is defined as within one month of the assessment(s) taking place.

3% A more common category (more cases will fall into this category), including:

- recent traumatic experience such as death of a close friend or distant relative
- recent illness of a more serious nature
- flare-up of a severe congenital/medical condition or a psychological condition
- broken limbs
- organ disease
- physical assault trauma before an assessment
- recent crisis/incident
- witnessing a distressing event on the day of the assessment. NB 'Recent' is defined as up to four months prior to the examination(s) taking place.

2% the most common category of allowance – most cases will fall within this category:

- illness at the time of the assessment
- broken limb on the mend
- concussion
- effects of pregnancy (not pregnancy per se)
- extreme distress on the day of an assessment (not simply assessment related stress).

1% Reserved for more minor problems:

- illness of another candidate which leads to disruption in the assessment
- stress or anxiety for which medication has been prescribed
- hay fever on the day of an assessment
- minor upset arising from administrative problems

Appeals

As in other series, appeals may be submitted on the grounds of the application of special consideration.

Appendix 2: Centre Determined Grades – Draft Subject Assessment Plans – School Template

Learning Area:

Subject:

GCSE/AS/A2/Other:

No. of entries:

Rationale

Castell Alun will give all students fair opportunities to prove themselves equitably, irrespective of self-isolation / lockdown periods. We will award individual students with fair grades for which we have hard evidence, using the recommended assessment frameworks provided by WJEC, and following a robust and internal and external moderation process which will be at the heart of the process.

Schools have been asked to submit Centre Determined Grades (CDGs) to enable the award of GCSE, AS, A level and Skills Challenge Certificate (SCC) qualifications. Subject Leaders will identify the scope of evidence which will be used to contribute towards the Centre Determined Grades. This information will be shared with students and Parents. The portfolios of evidence are evolving documents and will be updated following release of materials from the WJEC.

We will agree consistent mechanisms to ensure that subject teachers make certain that access arrangements and special considerations are taken into account for each student who would have received additional support during exams e.g. extra time, reader, and scribe. These arrangements will be recorded by each subject.

All teachers will compile the evidence base for each student they teach and keep in individual student folders. Moderation will take place between subject areas and will be quality assured by members of the SLT. Grades will be determined following the guidance issued by the WJEC and must be evidence based, it cannot be on the basis of potential. Teachers will use the grade descriptors issued by the WJEC to inform their judgement.

The school will submit its CDGs by the deadline, 2nd of July 2021 using the system provided by WJEC for capture of the grades. Provisional grades will be shared with students prior to this and students will have the opportunity to go through an appeal if they do not agree with the grade awarded or they think an error has been made. Students cannot appeal if they are just not happy with their grade. If students do appeal a review of the grading process will take place using the evidence from the teacher. Students will be told of the results of this review prior to the submission of the grade to the WJEC.

Type of supervision for assessments

High:

Formal supervision. Students produce their work under direct supervision and with a restricted set of resources, usually during class time. No assistance may be given to students. This is not achievable online.

Medium:

Informal supervision. Work is mainly completed under teacher supervision in the classroom, e.g. writing up investigations. This can be achieved virtually using monitoring platforms online such as Class Notebook and Spiral, well designed assessments where simple answers cannot be harvested from an internet search engine or peers, strict time frames of completion.

Low:

Limited supervision. Work may be completed outside of the classroom without direct supervision. Most but not all online completed assessments would be considered low control due to the inability to monitor students at home.

Type of assessment

Standardised Assessment Material (SAMS)- these are materials/assessments provided by the WJEC with mark schemes provided. They could be past papers or the material for the adapted specifications.

A Centre Devised Assessment (CDA) –an assessment created by the teacher/department. If assessments have been created the teacher must have completed the online training that is on WJEC Secure Website, read the WJECs Centre Assessment Creation Guide and undergone QA with SLT link.

Non-examination assessment materials (NEA) – this could be part or fully completed

What Evidence/Assessments have already been collected/taken?

Type of Evidence/Assessment	Date collected	How it links to specification	Type of Supervision H/M/L	Weighting of qualification	Type of assessment

What Evidence/Assessments are planned?

Type of Evidence/Assessment	Date Planned	How it links to specification	Type of Supervision H/M/L	Weighting of qualification	Type of assessment

What assessment arrangements are needed for ALN students?

Students identified	Access arrangements	Special Consideration

What Moderation and QA processes have taken place/need to take place?

Date	Details	Who was present	Outcome of meeting

Have you any potential conflicts of interest and if so what has been done to mitigate their effects?

Staff involved	Affected Student	Actions taken