



## Update on Assessment Processes and Alternative Arrangements for the Award of GCSE, AS & A Level Grades for Summer 2021

**This information is particularly important to all parents and learners of Years 11, 12, 13, and those in year 10 undertaking GCSE English Literature.**

**Dear Parent Carer and Learner**

We hope this update finds you and your family safe and well. Firstly, we would like to express our sincere thanks for your support over the last fortnight as pupils have returned to school. As we progress through the Summer Term 2021, we appreciate that there remain some uncertainties and we hope that the following information will be helpful.

### **1. Centre Determined Grades Replace Exams in 2021.**

As shared in previous newsletters, you will be no doubt aware of the following:

*In November 2020, the Education Minister announced that there would be no summer examination series for students taking GCSEs, AS levels or A levels in 2021. In January 2021, it was confirmed that these qualifications would be awarded using Centre Determined Grades. This means that individual schools and colleges, would determine the actual grades awarded for each qualification in relation to guidance from examination regulator Qualifications Wales*

### **2. The Framework**

In the best interests of our learners and their parents, it is our aim to provide important clarity and confidence in this process by sharing an understanding of the decisions that teachers will make, how teachers will make these decisions and identifying the evidence teachers will be utilising to support the decision-making process. While this letter is designed to provide an overview of the approach, a full copy of the Centre determined grade policy will be shared once it is approved by the Local Authority and the WJEC.

### **3. What is a Centre-Determined Grade?**

Each grade awarded by the school will be underpinned by robust evidence to demonstrate a student's attainment across key topics and skills. These will vary according to qualification, as determined by the requirements of each of the WJEC Qualification Assessment Frameworks. In determining grades, the school will be required to make 'best-fit' judgements. This means that learners are not required to have covered all aspects of the course and demonstrate all aspects of a grade descriptor to be awarded the grade.

### **5. Evidence for Centre Determined Grades**

Centre Determined Grades will be generated using evidence of work completed by our learners, using the adapted specification content provided by WJEC. In determining a grade, the following types of evidence will be used in each qualification based on work completed by learners:

- a. Adapted WJEC questions:** The school will make use of WJEC adapted questions when setting assessments to help determine a grade for each qualification.
- b. Non-Examination Assessment:** Non-examination assessment (controlled assessment) exists in many qualifications. Where non-examination assessment remains part of an adapted qualification, teachers will use the performance of learners in this element to help contribute towards the determination of a grade.
- c. Other contributing evidence:**

- **Previously completed WJEC examination questions:** Teachers may use evidence from previously completed WJEC examination questions, which have been externally quality assured, with a published mark scheme, and where they have been completed under controlled conditions.
- **Assessments undertaken prior to the publication of the centre approach:**  
*However, this evidence may not be used in isolation to determine grades since, at the time it was completed, it is possible that learners would not have been aware of the importance of these tasks. This is designed to ensure fairness and equity to all our learners.*

## 6. Quality Assurance Processes

The WJEC will require very formal and robust internal processes to be undertaken in school to promote accuracy and consistency. The school will undertake thorough quality assurance processes, within all subjects and across all subjects, to ensure the grades determined are always valid, reliable, equitable and fair, while seeking always to avoid discrimination.

## 7. Equality, Diversity and GDPR

To ensure that the school will eliminate bias whilst awarding CDG's we will follow the guidance set out in the Equality Act (2010). Making objective decisions is fundamental to fulfilling the principal aims of assessment: fairness, reliability, and validity. The steps the school will take, will ensure that these principal aims are met. The school will also follow the guidance set out by 'Diverse Cymru' to eliminate bias.

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 intended purpose.

## 8. Review of Centre Determined Grades and Appeals

- The school will be required to submit Centre Determined Grades to WJEC by the specified date you can see on the attached timeline. At this point, our learners will be informed of the provisional grades awarded. Where a learner is satisfied with the grades determined by the school, there is no further action. Carmarthenshire secondary schools have an agreed window between the 11<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> June for this process. It is our intention to release these provisional grades early in that window.
- There will also be an opportunity at this time for any learner to request a review of the centre's judgement of their grade and/or correct any factual errors. The process undertaken by the school will be similar to the approach used in internal moderation. The review will be considered independently by a member of staff who was not the original assessor. The Headteacher will also review that the school's processes have been followed, in terms of associated decision-making records and such like. Where a review is upheld, the Centre Determined Grade will be amended before submission to WJEC.

**9. Issue of results.** The WJEC will issue final results on **10<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup> August 2021**. They will implement a process to permit learners to appeal a Centre Determined Grade, on the grounds of procedural error only, where a review of grade has been unsuccessful. Similarly, Qualifications Wales will also implement an Examination Procedures Review Service. At each stage of the review/appeal process, learners will need to be aware that a centre determined grade has the potential to be improved or be lowered.

The next half term is a crucial time for our learners. It is vital that our pupils attend fully to benefit from the support and assessment opportunities provided in school. It is also important that they engage with any work set online. However, where attendance is not always possible due to valid reasons, it is of crucial importance that you communicate with us so that we can make any necessary alternative arrangements and resolve or understand any mitigating factors.

Each subject will outline specific topics and skills that may be assessed as evidence towards the award of Centre Determined Grades in order to help learners prepare. An overview will be shared as soon as plans are approved, and teachers will share more detailed information with learners during the course of their lessons.

Looking ahead, the results day for AS/A Levels is 10<sup>th</sup> August 2021 and for GCSE results is scheduled for 12<sup>th</sup> August 2021. We hope to operate a socially distanced results day in the same format as last year, depending on legislation in the event of any further COVID related restrictions.

We appreciate that this remains an anxious time for all learners, parents and indeed staff. We will always strive to support all our learners through this process and will communicate to parents through our website and social media channels, as we have done all year.

Kind regards

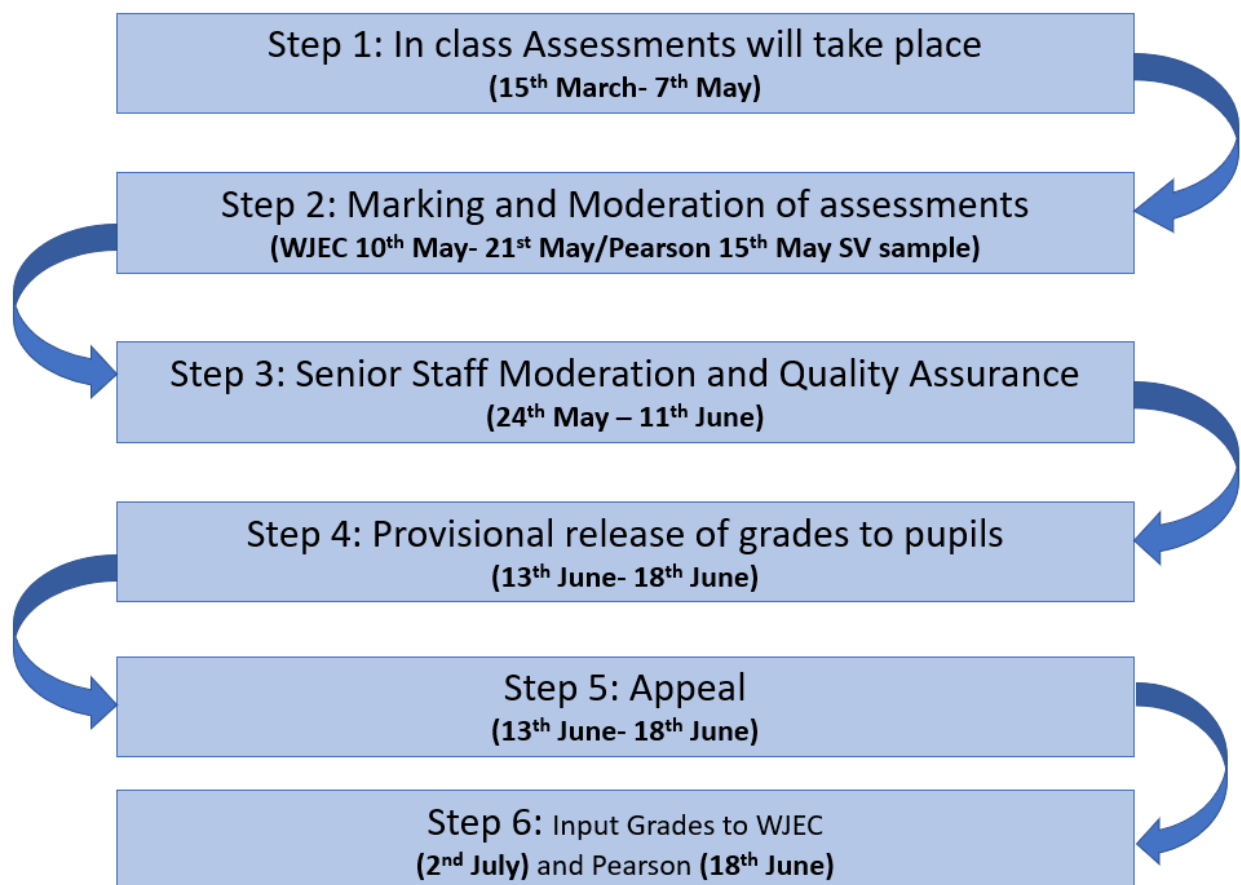
Dave Williams

Headteacher

Queen Elizabeth High School

### Important dates and timelines for Summer 2021

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WJEC- A-level/AS and GCSE qualifications

Pearson- BTEC qualifications

SV Sample – BTEC coursework sample will be sent away to the exam board for approval.