

## Centre Assessed Grades (CAG)

Following the Government decision that no public examinations will take place during the summer of 2020, below is an outline of how the process of assigning grades to students will operate. There are a number of important principles to bear in mind regarding this process.

The government has determined that schools and colleges will not be held to account for their performance based on this summer's centre-assessed grades. It is essential, therefore, that the school and teachers put headline measures out of their minds when approaching this exercise. It is entirely about ensuring the students **receive reasonable grades** so that their own lives are as unaffected as possible. It is not about school ranking.

The process of allocating grades to students has some difficult ethical issues associated with it. We know that there are historic differences in performance between girls and boys, between disadvantaged students and their non-disadvantaged peers and so on. For this reason, teachers should ask themselves the question:

*“What grade would this particular student most plausibly have achieved if they were taking the exam?”*

This is not to be confused with a target grade, which might have an inflationary effect if used instead.

There are tools which can help teachers carry out this process. The DfE publishes transition matrices each year showing how students perform nationally in many subjects, broken down by their Key Stage 2 starting points.

Whilst the grades of individual students might vary in this way, we would expect the cohort of students in a typical centre to have a closer resemblance to the national distribution of grades. This alignment is the guiding principle by which awarding organisations and Ofqual will check the process is reasonable as it ensures consistency from year to year.

There should be some differences across schools. **Awarding organisations know which centres tend to perform better than others over time.**

FFT will provide a new service for secondary schools in May to help you validate and benchmark KS4 centre assessment predictions. Schools will be able to submit their teacher predictions to FFT in early May (whole grades only with no ranks). **FFT will then provide a new 'Statistical subject moderation' report for all schools** which analyses your predictions, factoring in FFT estimates and school subject performance in previous years. It will highlight any unusual subject level patterns, which might merit further attention.

Therefore, the process teachers should use to address this task is as follows:

- a) For each student, consider what grade (and raw mark/total UMS) would be the most plausible if they were actually going to take the exam in the summer.
- b) Rank order the students within those grades, so that if the gradings need to be adjusted, then it is clear which students would be affected, in either direction. This is a difficult process and relies on teachers being fair and reasonable with their own students but also understanding the same process is being applied everywhere else.
- c) Finally, consider whether the cohort of students and their grades taken together would be what you would have expected on results day, and whether it resembles the national picture derived from DfE

transition matrices, taking into account whether that individual subject in that school performs above or below national average. Above all, does it look fair?

On a practical note, we should not be seeking any further work from students at this point to support centre-assessed grades. Not all students will be able to respond; some will be ill whilst others will be living under more difficult circumstances at home. It is important that the process is thorough, robust and works in the best interest of students.

## Further guidance from the DfE

Exam boards will provide detailed instructions to schools and colleges on when and how to submit centre assessment grades after Easter. The deadline will not be earlier than **29 May 2020** and centres will have a window of at least two weeks in which to submit the data.

In some subjects students will have completed, or nearly completed, non-exam assessment. This will be helpful to schools and colleges in deciding each student's grade and rank order. Where there are several subject teachers within a school or college, this work might also be helpful in standardising teachers' approach to determining the rank order and awarding grades. Schools and colleges do not need to ask students to complete any unfinished non-exam assessment work for the purposes of grading. This work, in whatever completed state, will need to be marked.

### Do schools and colleges need to submit the evidence they have used for grading?

No, schools and colleges do not need to submit any supporting evidence, such as student work, to exam boards, but they should retain records of this in case exam boards have any queries about the data.

In the case of tiered GCSE subjects, schools and colleges should only provide centre assessment grades, which reflect the tier of entry of the individual student (9 to 3 for higher tier; 5 to 1 for foundation tier).

## WHS CAG process and timeline

Stage	Action	Completed by
1	Subject leaders collate information about which objective evidence could be used in the process, including progress on NEAs.	Tues 21 April
2	Decision made by subject leaders regarding the evidence they propose to use to create an overall mark for each student.	Wed 22 April
3	Discussion with your Line manager over evidence base and mark calculation decisions to ensure fair and robust process	Fri 24 April
4	Subjects calculate the overall mark for each student from the evidence base and carefully check the calculations	Fri 1 May
5	Discussion with line manager regarding Stage 4 calculations to quality assure process and detail	Wed 6 May
6	Submission of grades (and <b>all ranking students within grades</b> ) by subject teachers and leaders based on Stages 4 and 5 (above)	Mon 11 May
7	Moderation of grades using national distributions and understanding of past centre performance (including FFT analysis)	Fri 15 May