

How to arrive at grades

Delivered by Mark Howlett
Head of Assessment GQ





What are we covering in this session?

1. General overview of the 2021 Summer assessment window
2. Considerations of determining grades
3. Q&A section



Summer 2021 (General Qualifications)

- Students will receive grades awarded and determined by teachers
- Pupils will only be assessed on what they have been taught
- No algorithm will be used
- Teachers will be able to draw on a range of evidence when determining grades
- Exam boards have provided guidance for teachers on their websites
- Teachers will submit grades to exam boards by 18 June
- Results days for GCSE, A level and some vocational qualifications will take place on the 10 (GCE) & 12 (GCSE) August.

Timeline

- We have updated our full timeline via the [Pearson Qualification website](#) for both UK and International centres.
- **26 April:** Entry deadline for **private candidates**
- **30 April:** Deadline for centre **Quality Assurance Policy submission** via proforma on CAP (Centre Admin Portal) accessed via Edexcel Online
- **26 May to 18 June:** **Teacher Assessed Grades Submission** window opens via awarding organisations' respective portals
- **10 August:** A/AS Levels and relevant Level 3 results
- **12 August:** GCSE and relevant Level 2 results.

Accessing International GCSE and IAL Unseen Modified Materials

Timelines

We know that you are keen to start preparing for grading candidates for our UK General Qualifications, and we are fully committed to making sure you'll have everything you need for each individual qualification at the very earliest opportunity.

Below is the initial timeline of some of the key activities that we are working towards. We will update this as more key dates become available.

 [2021 Key dates and deadlines for general qualifications](#) (PDF | 198.6 KB)

Private candidates



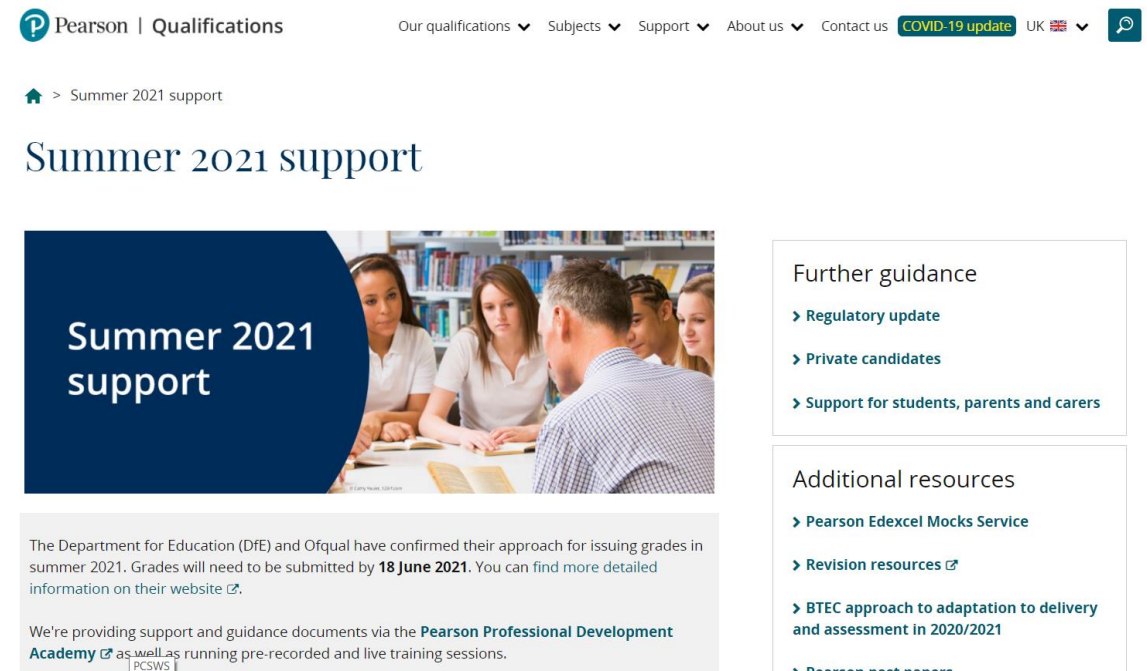
JCQ and Pearson Guidance

JCQ and Pearson Guidance on Determining Grades

- On Friday 26 March the [JCQ Guidance on Determining Grades was released](#).
- On Thursday 1 April our Pearson Guidance on Determining Grades for International Qualifications was released.
- This is the main guide that UK centres will need to follow as they arrive at grades for learners this summer.
- Make sure you have downloaded the following from the JCQ website
 - Editable Centre Policy
 - Assessment Record Sheet
 - Head of Department Checklist
 - Grade Descriptors
- We have shared the link on our website and provided a 'Top 10 Important Things to Note' interactive pdf.

Support from Pearson

- To keep up to date with support Pearson has committed to sending out regular qualifications bulletins to Exams Officers
- Our dedicated Summer 2021 Support page – for general information
- The Pearson Professional Development Academy – for support on key areas of the Summer 2021 approach
- Subject pages – for subject specific information including additional assessment materials



The screenshot shows the Pearson Qualifications website. The header includes the Pearson logo, navigation links for 'Our qualifications', 'Subjects', 'Support', 'About us', and 'Contact us', a 'COVID-19 update' button, and a language selector for 'UK'. The breadcrumb trail indicates the current page is 'Summer 2021 support'. The main heading is 'Summer 2021 support'. Below this is a large image of a group of people in a library setting, with a dark blue overlay on the left containing the text 'Summer 2021 support'. To the right of the image are two boxes: 'Further guidance' with links for 'Regulatory update', 'Private candidates', and 'Support for students, parents and carers'; and 'Additional resources' with links for 'Pearson Edexcel Mocks Service', 'Revision resources', 'BTEC approach to adaptation to delivery and assessment in 2020/2021', and 'Pearson past papers'. Below the image, a text block states: 'The Department for Education (DfE) and Ofqual have confirmed their approach for issuing grades in summer 2021. Grades will need to be submitted by 18 June 2021. You can find more detailed information on their website'. Another text block below that says: 'We're providing support and guidance documents via the Pearson Professional Development Academy as well as running pre-recorded and live training sessions.'



Guidance On Grading

- Heads of Centre should ensure that students have the opportunity to show the full breadth of their knowledge and understanding in each subject based on what they have been taught.
- It is important that grades represent a holistic, objective judgement based on evidence of each student's performance in each subject.
- Evidence should be used consistently across the class or cohort wherever possible.
- The evidence can be of different types and can come from across the course of study.
- Please make sure you have seen and used the subject specific support guides on [our website](#) and have accessed the [Pearson Professional Development Academy](#) training resources.

5 Step Process for grading

- JCQ has outlined a 5 step process in determining grades for Summer 2021.
- We have recreated this in a condensed PDF format on our [Pearson Professional Development Academy](#).

The screenshot shows a document from Pearson with the following content:

Grading for Summer 2021
How to arrive at grades

Window for Teacher Assessed Grades Submission opens via awarding organisations' respective portals

26 May to 18 June

Step 1
Consider what has been taught
Looking at the specification that has been taught to consider:

- what content has each individual been taught?
- what content have you not taught to this cohort because of the impact of the pandemic?
- has the content you have taught been covered deeply or superficially?

The evidence used to make your judgement must only include the appropriate assessment of content that has been taught.

Step 2
Collect the evidence

- Candidate work produced in response to assessment materials provided by Pearson
- Completed or partially completed Non-exam assessment (NEA)
- Candidate work produced in centre-devised tasks that reflect the specification, that follow the same format as awarding organisation
- Records of a student's capability and performance over the course of study in performance-based subjects such as music, drama and PE.
- In some circumstances, an oral assessment (such as a viva voce) may be an appropriate form of evidence.

Step 3
Evaluate the quality of the evidence
Consideration should be given to the following:

- Coverage of assessment objectives;
- Coverage of content;
- Authenticity – is the evidence the student's own work?
- Level of control – was it taken in timed conditions? Was there an opportunity for redrafting? Was it supervised?
- Marking – how much support was available when applying the mark scheme? What internal standardisation processes have been applied?

Step 4
Establish whether the proposed range of evidence is appropriate for all students
Wherever possible the same range of evidence should be used for all students in a class or cohort, although there may be individual students for whom the proposed evidence is not appropriate. The rationale for any exceptions must be documented by the centre.

Step 5
Assign a grade
Grades should be based on a holistic, objective judgement of the evidence of the students' performance on the subject content they have been taught. Consider the quality of the work in relation to the assessment materials used as well as the grade descriptors and grading exemplification available to help reach a final grade.

The grading exemplification
We are releasing grade exemplification by the 19th of April to support teachers in assigning a grade this summer. We will be using historic exam responses from candidates to show the midgrade performance for each specification.

Step 1: Consider what has been taught

Look at the specification that has been taught to consider:

- what content has been taught?
- what content has not been taught to this cohort because of the impact of the pandemic?
- has the content that has been taught been covered deeply or superficially?

The evidence used to make judgements must only include the appropriate assessment of content that has been taught.



Step 2: Collect the evidence

Ofqual's guidance on recommended evidence is as follows:

- Student work produced in response to assessment materials
- Non-exam assessment (NEA) work (often referred to as coursework)
- Student work produced in centre-devised tasks that reflect the specification
- Records of a student's capability and performance over the course of study in performance-based subjects such as music, drama and PE
- Records of each student's standard of work over the course of study.

Although there is no minimum requirement of content that students must have been taught, Heads of Centre will be required to confirm that students have been taught sufficient content to form the basis for a grade

Retention of evidence

It is important that evidence on which a student's grade is based, including copies of the student's work where available and any mark records, is retained safely by the centre; it will be needed to:

1. support the centre's determination of students' grades;
2. the internal and external quality assurance processes; and
3. the appeals process.

Scanned copies of handwritten evidence or other digital documentation will be acceptable



Step 3: Evaluate the quality of evidence

Consideration should be given to the following:

- Coverage of assessment objectives;
- Coverage of content; • Authenticity – is the evidence the student's own work?
- Level of control – was it taken in timed conditions? Was there an opportunity for redrafting? Was it supervised?
- Marking – how much support was available when applying the mark scheme? What internal standardisation processes have been applied?

While there is no one type of evidence that takes precedence, evidence gathered in conditions that enable confidence about the authenticity of the students' work will give more confidence in the overall holistic judgement.

Step 4: Establish whether the proposed range of evidence is appropriate for all students

- Wherever possible the same range of evidence should be used for all students in a class or cohort, although there may be individual students for whom the proposed evidence is not appropriate. The rationale for any exceptions must be documented by the centre.
- Some students may have missed a section of teaching due to valid reasons such as bereavement or long-term illness, or it may be the case that reasonable adjustments or access arrangements weren't in place for a particular assessment. Where such adjustments/arrangements weren't in place, teachers must consider whether to either:
 1. use the evidence when assigning a grade on the basis that it is the most appropriate evidence available, and disregarding it would disadvantage the student – if this is the case, the impact must be accounted for at stage 5 (see below), and the rationale recorded; or
 2. use alternative evidence to replace assessments that are not appropriately representative of



Step 5: Assign a grade

Consider the quality of the work in relation to the assessment materials used as well as the grade descriptors and grading exemplification available to help reach a final grade.

Decisions about potential must not factor in the student's grades. For example, if all the evidence collected for a student is of grade 6 and 7 standard, there would be no reason to consider providing that student any other grades.

JCQ has released: [Worked examples to assist teachers in making grading decisions](#)

Note that teachers are not making grading decisions in isolation. Once grades have been assigned, centres' internal quality assurance process will ensure that standards are appropriate prior to sign-off by the Head of Centre.

Guidance On Grading

- Grade descriptors have been created for GCSE, AS and A level subjects. They describe midgrade performance.
 - A level: grade descriptors exist for Grades A, C and E. Characteristics of performance at the Grade A/Grade B borderline are included.
 - AS level: grade descriptors exist for Grades A, C and E only.
 - GCSE: grade descriptors have been created at Grades 8, 6, 5, 4 and 2.
 - The Ofqual descriptors for 8, 5 and 2 have been used as the starting point. Characteristics of performance at the Grade 4/Grade 3 borderline are included
- Each awarding organisation has created grading exemplification for each specification. The grading exemplification uses student responses from historical examination scripts (and other sources) to illustrate midgrade performance in previous summer series in which exams took place. The exemplification gives examples of the standards you will use to make grade judgements.



Use of data

One source of data which is available to centres is tracking systems, that provide target grades or predicted grades based on assessment inputs and data modelling. As the policy direction is that the final grade is derived solely based on performances produced by students, a grade derived based on a predicted trajectory or target grade is not permitted.

Used appropriately, data on historical student and centre performance can help support the internal quality assurance process for assigning grades. The purpose of reviewing data on past performance is not to attempt to determine a student or a centre's outcomes this summer, but as one source of evidence from examination series which operated as normal, that can inform teachers' professional judgement on the level of attainment achieved by their students.

Centres should be aware of the distribution of grades awarded to students in previous June series. However, grading judgements should not be driven by this data. Historical grade data should only be considered after grading judgements have been made.



Q&A Section



Pearson