

# Coláiste Feirste

## Centre Determined Grades

### Summer 2021

Adopted by Board of Governors on 31/3/21

Issued to staff on 12/04/21

Responsible: Mícheal Mac Giolla Ghunna

School website: <https://www.colaiستهfeirste.org/>



## Statement of Intent

The purpose of this policy is:

- To ensure that the effective operation of the Centre Determined Grades process produces fair, objective, consistent and timely outcomes within and across departments.
- To ensure that all staff involved in producing Centre Determined Grades know, understand and can complete their roles in the process as published by CCEA.
- To ensure that Centre Determined Grades are produced in line with the process as published by CCEA, using the professional judgement of teachers, with internal moderation, ensuring quality and accuracy of the grades submitted to CCEA.
- To ensure that the centre meets its obligations in relation to relevant legislation.

It is the responsibility of everyone involved in the generation of Centre Determined Grades to read, understand and implement this policy. The Centre Determined Grades policy will be in line with **CCEA Alternative Arrangements – Process for Heads of Centre**, subject- specific guidance and other CCEA guidance and information issued in relation to Summer 2021. All staff involved in centre determined grades will support the implementation of alternative arrangements as set out by CCEA, including the CCEA review stage. Staff will familiarise themselves with all relevant guidance provided by CCEA, the JCQ requirements and the relevant centre policies.

*All CCEA support materials are available on the HoD Shared Drive or can be accessed from the CCEA website.*

### Process Overview

There is a five step process for the Summer 2021 awarding arrangements as outlined in the **CCEA Alternative Arrangements – Process for Heads of Centre**. Internal deadlines relating to the steps of the CCEA process are provided in Appendix 1 (CCEA Guidance). Coláiste Feirste has devised an additional internal verification calendar alongside the CCEA guidance to guide teachers and HoDs through the process.

*The training materials used during HoD and subject meetings are available via the HoD Shared Drive.*

## Roles and Responsibilities

Roles and responsibilities of **Coláiste Feirste** staff are outlined below:

The **Board of Governors** is responsible for approving the policy for producing Centre Determined Grades and must notify CCEA of arrangements should the Head of Centre be unavailable to confirm the Centre Determined Grades.

The **Head of Centre** has overall responsibility for the centre as an examinations centre and will ensure the roles and responsibilities of all staff are defined.

The Head of Centre will confirm that Centre Determined Grade judgements are accurate and represent the professional judgement made by staff. The Head of Centre will ensure that the method of determining grades by the centre (in line with processes published by CCEA) uses the professional judgement of teachers, with internal moderation and participation in an external review process set out by CCEA.

The Head of Centre will work collaboratively with CCEA in terms of engaging with professional dialogue and the provision of evidence as requested.

The **Senior Leaders** will provide support to staff involved in producing Centre Determined Grades. They will support the Head of Centre in the quality assurance of the final Centre Determined Grades. They have a role in achieving a consistent approach across departments and authenticating the preliminary outcomes in subjects where there is only one teacher. This will be agreed on a case-by-case basis but may include, for example;

Senior Leaders validating the outcomes after comparing them with outcomes in associated subject areas where applicable.

Senior Leaders designated to support the authentication process:

- Danielle Ní Riabhaigh
- Padraig Mac Cathail
- Wayne Pickering
- Daithí Ó hAnluain

Danielle Ní Riabhaigh and Padraig Mac Cathail attended the **CCEA Chartered Institute of Educational Assessors (CIEA)** training and will act as Lead Assessors in Coláiste Feirste and disseminate the content of the programme to all teachers involved in producing Centre Determined Grades.

The **Examinations Officer** is responsible for ensuring accurate and timely entries are submitted to CCEA. They must ensure that all information from CCEA is shared promptly with all relevant staff. The Examinations Officer will ensure that they know, understand and can use the CCEA

Centre Manager Applications. They will ensure that the centre's systems for data capture are enabled and that the Centre Determined Grades are submitted for each candidate entry by the published date(s) for Summer 2021 (21/5/21 and 4/6/21).

The Examinations Officer is responsible for the administration of the final Centre Determined Grades and for managing the post-results services within the centre.

**Heads of Department** are responsible for supporting departmental staff and ensuring all staff conduct assessments under the appropriate levels of control and have the information required to make accurate and fair judgements. They will ensure that a Head of Department Checklist is completed for each qualification that they are submitting.

Additional support and, where appropriate, quality assurance measures will be provided for newly qualified teachers through departments and the **Teacher Tutor**.

**Teachers** are responsible for ensuring that they conduct assessments (which may include the optional assessment resource) under the centre's appropriate levels of control, where it is safe to do so, and that they have sufficient evidence, in line with the centre policy, to support Centre Determined Grades for each candidate they have entered for a qualification. They must ensure that the Centre Determined Grade they assign to each candidate is a fair, valid and reliable reflection of the assessed evidence available for each candidate. All teachers are required to contact HoDs or Senior Leaders immediately regarding any concerns about the CDGs process. They must complete the Candidate Assessment Record to include a description of the assessment evidence used, the level of control for each assessment considered, and any other evidence that explains the final Centre Determined Grade submitted. Teachers have the responsibility for internal standardisation and moderating candidates' work, in conjunction with departmental colleagues and Senior Leaders as required. They must securely store and be able to retrieve evidence to support their decisions in accordance with departmental and whole school policy.

The knowledge, expertise and professionalism of the staff of **Coláiste Feirste** is central to determining Centre Determined Grades.

### **Training, Support and Guidance**

Teachers involved in determining grades must attend any centre-based training provided.

Training 1 (HoDs): 9/3/21

Training 2 (subject teachers without HoDs): 10/3/21

Further training and information sessions will be held at departmental level using information provided by the Lead Assessors and any other relevant information from the Examinations Officer, SENCO etc.

Directed time is dedicated to the CDG process and all departments are required to attend training, support and moderation sessions.

**Coláiste Feirste will** engage fully with all training and support that CCEA has provided, including web-based support and training. Further general and subject-specific support

and guidance can be found on the CCEA website at [www.ccea.org.uk](http://www.ccea.org.uk)

The centre policy will be supported through training provided by CCEA to Senior Leaders through the CIEA. **Senior Leaders will disseminate this training to all teachers involved in producing Centre Determined Grades (Danielle/Padraig)**. HoDs will use this information to guide teachers through the process and ensure validity, non-bias and fairness is implemented throughout this robust process.

If relevant staff are unable to attend subject support meetings or training, they must delegate to the most suitable alternative member of staff and ensure that the information is shared at the earliest possible opportunity with all relevant staff. **Danielle Ní Riabhaigh** should be notified if no one from a department has been able to attend support meetings and **Danielle Ní Riabhaigh** will consider how this is addressed.

### Appropriate Evidence

**Coláiste Feirste** will use the following candidate evidence in arriving at Centre Determined Grades. The first part of the list indicates the key evidence that will be considered, and the asterisked evidence will be used if key evidence is not available:

- CCEA assessment resources for 2021;
- CCEA grades (public examinations);
- CCEA past papers;
- mock examinations, which relate to the CCEA specification (December series);
- coursework or controlled assessments, even where not completed – if applicable to the subject;
- class tests;
- oral examinations;
- practical tasks;
- homework\*;

**Coláiste Feirste** will base all evidence on the relevant CCEA qualification specifications as set out in the **CCEA Alternative Arrangements – Process for Heads of Centre**.

**Coláiste Feirste** has taken into account the information provided by CCEA about unit omissions before the cancellation of examinations. These are detailed on the Summer 2021 Information Pre-Examination Cancellation section of the CCEA website.

**Coláiste Feirste** is taking account of disruption that candidates have faced to their learning as a result of COVID-19 by ensuring that pupils are only assessed on what they have been taught and to provide sufficient evidence to assess the student's standard of performance, as measured against the requirements of the relevant specification.

Departments will keep a record of the assessments they will use for the subject cohort. Heads of Department will use the CCEA Departmental Assessment Evidence Grid for this. If required for submission to CCEA the Departmental Assessment Evidence Grid will include a record of the assessment evidence used and a brief record where an Assessment Objective is not covered at all in the evidence or if an assessment has been adapted.

Coláiste Feirste will keep records at individual student level. The CCEA Candidate Assessment Record will be submitted for candidates selected by CCEA for sampling. The departmental approach will take into account the level and impact of the disruption. The individual student records will indicate how specific additional disadvantage has been considered. The Candidate Assessment Record will record, where relevant any access arrangements and enhancements to marks as a result of special consideration (in line with JCQ requirements).

Any adaptations that have been made will be based on the **CCEA Alternative Arrangements – Process for Heads of Centre**.

**Candidates will be made aware of the evidence that will be used in determining their grades (minus grade information) through the Candidate Record Sheets and pupil/teacher discussion beginning from April 12th. Each pupil will have an evidence portfolio which will be kept in a secure location in the centre. Senior Leaders will support departments and parents through clarity and communication regarding the CDGs process and the role of CCEA.**

### **Centre Determined Grades**

**Coláiste Feirste** will determine grades based on evidence that reflects the standard at which a candidate is performing, i.e. their demonstrated knowledge, understanding and skills in /regard to the specification content they have covered.

To make accurate judgements, teachers must have a clear understanding of:

- the range of skills, knowledge and understanding covered by the specification;
- the assessment requirements and the structure of the specification;
- the grade descriptions at key grades;
- the level of demand of the qualification assessments; and
- the weighting of each component/unit and the type of assessment.

Information on these aspects for each qualification will be drawn from the CCEA specification, specimen assessment materials, past papers, controlled assessment/coursework assessment tasks, and Chief Examiner and Principal Moderator reports, which are available on the CCEA website at **[www.ccea.org.uk](http://www.ccea.org.uk)**.

All teachers will complete the Candidate Assessment Record and will forward to their Head of Department/Subject Leader. All teachers are responsible for ensuring that all evidence has been stored safely and is accessible to support the CCEA Review of Evidence and Award process. It is important that decisions are justified and recorded to show how the evidence was used to arrive at a fair and objective grade.

## Internal Standardisation

In subjects where there is more than one teacher and/or class in the department, it is a requirement to carry out internal standardisation. **The purpose of internal standardisation is to provide teachers with confidence in the grades they have assigned, to ensure fairness and objectivity of decisions, and to ensure consistency in the application of assessment criteria and standards. This allows for any teachers' differences to be resolved.**

Internal standardisation should include cross-checking of marking across the full range of marks and include candidates from each class.

The Candidate Assessment Records should form the basis of discussions around decisions made.

As a result of the internal standardisation process, it may be necessary for a teacher or the Head of Department to adjust the original decision:

- to match the standards as established and understood in the guidance provided; and
- to bring judgements into line with those of other teachers in the department.

*In the context of internal standardisation, any necessary decisions will be made by the Head of Department. They should complete the relevant checklist, which will record any adjustments and relevant information.*

Refer to the school assessment policy for whole school assessment information.

## Head of Centre Moderation and Declaration

**Coláiste Feirste** strives to have a consistent approach across departments/subjects. Senior Leaders (**KS3, KS4, KS5**) will carry out moderation, to include a review of marking and the internal standardisation arrangements and will investigate whether decisions have been justified. Unexplained grade profiles will be considered and may result in a review of the evidence used or remarking. A record of decisions should be retained. All subject grades for each piece of evidence gathered, for every pupil are required to be available for moderation during departmental and HoC sessions and evidence must also be available from the secure locations agreed at whole school level.

The moderation exercise will include professional discussions with Heads of Department. **Senior Leaders** will consider both the subject and centre outcomes based on the evidence available.

The Head of Centre will submit a declaration on behalf of the centre. This will include a confirmation that the Centre Determined Grades for candidates are a true representation of their performance.

## Access Arrangements and Special Consideration

Coláiste Feirste launched *An Coiste scrúdaithe* in 2019 which consists of a professional group of teaching and non-teaching staff to ensure examination standards within the school are kept high. Access arrangements and reasonable adjustments are also an integral part of the examination standards within the school. This professional working group ensures staff are aware of access arrangements and reasonable adjustments and works with departments to ensure pupils are supported. Meetings are scheduled for the CDGs process in accordance with the internal calendar for the whole school process.

Members of *An Coiste Scrúdaithe*: VP Curriculum, Examinations Officer, SENCO, SEN Executive Officer.

Where candidates have agreed access arrangements or reasonable adjustments (for example a reader or scribe), **Coláiste Feirste** will make every effort to ensure that these arrangements are in place when assessments are being taken. Details on access arrangements can be found in the JCQ document [Adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties](#), which is available on the JCQ website.

As public examinations have been cancelled, the normal application process to the awarding organisation for special consideration will not apply this summer in the usual manner.

However, where illness or other personal circumstances, covered by the JCQ guidelines, might have affected the candidate's standard of performance, **Coláiste Feirste** will take account of this when making judgements. Class teachers will record how they have determined any impact of illness or personal circumstances and how this was incorporated into their judgements in the Candidate Assessment Record. **Coláiste Feirste** will ensure consistency in the application of special consideration by following the guidance on pages 4–7 of the JCQ document [A guide to the special consideration process, with effect from 1 September 2020](#).

### Bias and Discrimination

**Coláiste Feirste** will fulfil its duties and responsibilities concerning relevant equality and disability requirements.

Senior Leaders **Padraig Mac Cathail and Danielle Ní Riabhaigh** will disseminate guidance from the CIEA training on potential bias in judgements, including the challenges and solutions relevant to a holistic approach to assessing the validity of assessment judgements. This will include information on:

- sources of unfairness and bias (situations/contexts, difficulty, presentation and format, language, conditions for assessment and marker pre-conceptions);
- minimising bias (how to minimise bias in questions and marking, and hidden forms of bias); and
- bias in teacher assessments.

To avoid bias and discrimination, all staff involved in Centre Determined Grades will consider that:



- unconscious bias can skew judgements;
- the evidence should be valued for its own merit as an indication of performance and attainment;
- Centre Determined Grades should not be influenced by positive or challenging personal circumstances, character, behaviour, appearance, socio-economic background, or the performance of candidates' siblings;
- unconscious bias is more likely to occur when quick opinions are formed; and
- having effective internal standardisation will help to ensure that there is consideration from different perspectives.

### **Recording Decisions and Retention of Evidence and Data**

It is fundamental that teachers and Heads of Department maintain records that show how Centre Determined Grades have been produced and internally standardised, including the rationale for decisions in relation to individual marks/grades. All evidence used to support the grade determined for each candidate will be retained electronically on the C2k network. *Refer to the centre's Acceptable Use of Computers or an equivalent policy.*

It is essential that there are **robust, accurate and secure records of decisions and retention of evidence to comply with data protection legislation and in anticipation of centre moderation and the CCEA Review of Evidence and Award process and potential appeals.**

When requested, evidence will be uploaded via the CCEA application used to submit the Centre Determined Grades. The Examination Officer will coordinate this process.

The following CCEA documentation must be fully and accurately completed and retained securely:

- Candidate Assessment Records;
- Head of Department Checklists and Departmental Assessment Evidence Grid; and
- Head of Centre Declaration.

### **Confidentiality**

**Coláiste Feirste will not disclose any candidates' Centre Determined Grades in advance of the official issue of results. This is in keeping with the centre's GDPR policy and CCEA requirements.**

### **Malpractice/Maladministration**

**Coláiste Feirste** will act ethically, to uphold the integrity of the qualifications system and to report potential cases of malpractice or maladministration to CCEA for investigation. There may be instances where the centre or individual teachers are put under improper pressure from a candidate or their parent/guardian to influence the decision-making on a grade. Any improper pressure will be reported to CCEA, who may investigate this as potential malpractice or maladministration.

Other examples of potential malpractice include:

- deception;
- improper assistance to a candidate;
- failure to appropriately authenticate a candidate's work;
- over-direction of candidates in preparation for assessments;
- the centre submitting grades not supported by evidence or that they know to be inaccurate;
- centres entering candidate(s) who were not originally intending to cash in a grade in the Summer 2021 series;
- failure to engage as requested with CCEA during the review stage of the process; and
- failure to keep appropriate records of decisions made and Centre Determined Grades.

The consequences of malpractice or maladministration are as published in the JCQ guidance [Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures](#), which is available on the JCQ website, and include the risk of a delay to candidates receiving their grades, up to and including removal of centre status.

All staff are required to contact the VP Curriculum with any concerns pertaining to malpractice.

### **Private Candidates**

For subjects where entries have been made for private candidates, Coláiste Feirste will ensure that sufficient evidence is available to confidently submit an objective Centre Determined Grade. If evidence is limited, these candidates will complete the CCEA assessment resource or an appropriate adaptation of the assessment resource. Thereafter, decisions for the private candidate will be made with the same approach as for all other candidates at Coláiste Feirste.

***CCEA Guidance on Private candidates will be used during this process - Information Regarding Private Candidates and Summer 2021 Alternative Awarding Arrangements.***

### **Conflicts of Interest**

To protect the integrity of assessments, staff must declare any potential conflicts of interest to the **Head of Centre**. Instances when there may be a conflict include teaching and preparing members of their family or close friends for qualifications that include internally assessed components.

The Head of Centre will take the appropriate actions to manage any potential conflicts of interest arising with centre staff, following the requirements set out in **CCEA's Alternative Arrangements – Process for Heads of Centre** document issued in March 2021.

**Coláiste Feirste** will also carefully consider the requirements of their centre policies, particularly in relation to the separation of duties and personnel to ensure fairness in later process reviews and appeals.

### **Internal Appeals Procedure Relating to Centre Determined Grades**

A written internal appeals procedure is available to permit candidates recourse in relation to the production of a Centre Determined Grade. **Coláiste Feirste's** internal appeals procedure is available for staff, candidates and parents on the centre. Copies can be requested through the school office and from Heads of Key Stage 4&5. All policies are also available via the school website. It outlines the roles and responsibilities for centre staff and provides clarity on the various steps in the internal procedure. The various steps of the internal appeals procedure

are timebound and in line with CCEA requirements. Candidates will be updated at each stage and will be informed in writing of the outcomes and recourse procedures.

### **Complaints Procedure**

Coláiste Feirste's internal complaints procedure permits candidates to challenge the centre's delivery or administration of a qualification (including failure to follow their internal appeals procedure correctly) and is available on the centre website or via the school office.

### **Requirements as a JCQ Registered Centre**

**Coláiste Feirste** has reviewed and amended, where necessary, all assessment and examination-related policies and procedures in line with the JCQ [General Regulations for Approved Centres, 1 September 2020 to 31 August 2021](#) to ensure appropriateness for the unique context of Summer 2021 qualifications.

### **Associated/Related Centre Documents**

All school policies can be found online:

<https://www.colaiستهirste.org/policies>

School Office: 028 90320707

*Please note the Centre Determined Grades Policy updated in accordance with the most recent CCEA guidelines.*

CCEA support for pupils, parents and teachers: <https://ccea.org.uk/summer-2021>

## Appendix 1

### FIVE STEP AWARDING PROCESS

Step and Indicative Timeframe		Activity	Personnel	Internal Deadlines
1	Guidance, Information and Readiness (March, April)	CCEA guidance documentation shared and understood by all involved staff. Centre fully participates in support offered by CCEA and other partner bodies, such as EA and CCMS.	Centre Leadership Team, Heads of Department (HoD) and teaching staff	12/4/21
		Centres agree their quality assurance process to ensure consistency across teachers, subjects and departments.	Centre Leadership Team, HoD and teaching staff	12/4/21
		Centre policy for awarding Centre Determined Grades developed, documented and shared with all staff. Policies to be sent to CCEA by 23 April so they are available for review at grade submission stage.	Centre Leadership Team	20/4/21
		Preliminary consideration of value of available evidence	Centre Leadership Team and HoD	23/4/21
2	Evidence Gathering and Provision of Assessment Resource (March, April and May)	Completion and marking of defined assessments in line with centre policy; for example, this could comprise CCEA assessment resources which will be available from April 2021.	Centre Leadership Team, HoD and teaching staff	GCE: 6/5/21 GCSE/Other: 13/5/21
		All other available evidence collated and documented	Centre Leadership Team, HoD and teaching staff	14/5/21
3	Centre Professional Judgement and Moderation (April and May)	All available evidence moderated in line with centre policy	Centre Leadership Team, HoD and teaching staff	GCE: 7/5/21 GCSE/Other: 14/5/21
		Any potential bias in Centre Determined Grades and outcomes considered	HoD and teaching staff	7/5/21
		Centre Determined Grade outcomes reviewed by senior leadership teams	Centre Leadership Team	17/5/21
		Head of Centre sign-off and submission of Centre Determined Grades	Head of Centre	GCE: 20/5/21 GCSE/Other: 3/6/21

Step and Indicative Timeframe		Activity	Personnel	Internal Deadlines
4	Review of Evidence and Award (June and July)	Centre evidence and grade outcomes reviewed	CCEA personnel	24/5/21-June
		If evidence submitted is considered reasonable, centre grades proceed to award. If necessary, additional evidence requested and reviewed.	CCEA personnel	
		Where CCEA still has concerns, there will be engagement with the centre and, in some cases, this may require the centre to re-run their grading process.	Head of Centre and CCEA personnel	CCEA will contact the Head of Centre if concerns arise
5	Post-Award Review Service (August and September)	After the issue of results, students will have the right to appeal to their centres and to CCEA.	Head of Centre and CCEA personnel	10/8/21 12/8/21