



# **VENERABLE BEDE CE ACADEMY**

**Centre Number: 39540**

## **Centre Policy**

**Awarding Qualifications: Summer 2021**

**Ratified by:** Executive Headteacher

**Date of review:** April 2021

**Date of next review:** This policy is valid for the awarding of GCSEs in 2021 only.

Venerable Bede CE Academy, part of the Dayspring Trust, aims to serve its community by providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian faith and practice. It encourages an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith and promotes Christian values through the experience it offers to all its pupils. We believe that our Christian values spring from the two great commandments, 'Love God and love your neighbour'. We seek to live this out through the power of the Holy Spirit. St Paul reminds us in Galatians 5.22-23 that the fruit of the Spirit is 'Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control'. These are also underpinned by the Old Testament injunction to 'Do justly, love mercy and walk humbly with our God', Micah 6.8.

These values rooted in the Christian Faith come as a package and we aim to embed them in the life of our academies in a worked-out way. We recognise that at times we may highlight values to bring them into greater prominence within our academies and these are currently the five values of Forgiveness, Hope, Joy, Perseverance and Wisdom. We believe these values to be in accordance with British values springing from our Judeo-Christian roots. Collective worship will play a major and vital part in assisting with this process of embedding these values in the life of our academies.

The Multi Academy Trust Members and Directors are aware of their responsibilities in law and are committed to the provision of an excellent education within its academies in accordance with our Anglican foundation. This is embraced in our Dayspring Trust vision statement:

- **Forge a supportive and challenging family of academies.**
- **Provide excellent education within a strong Christian community.**
- **Resource our pupils for wise and generous living.**

In addition, each academy also has its own distinctive mission statement, flowing out from the vision statement of the Dayspring Trust.

**At Venerable Bede CE Academy:** 'To create a stimulating, secure and caring environment within which all members of our community will realise their potential in the light of the Christian Gospel'. This is embodied in our school motto: 'Soar to the Heights Together'.

This policy has been developed to take into consideration our ethos as well as local and national policy and guidance.

#### **Relevant staff applicable to this policy**

**Head of Centre:** Mr D. Airey

**Deputy Headteacher, Curriculum:** Mrs T. Burgess

**Examinations Officer:** Mr A. Common

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## Contents

<b>Contents</b>		<b>Page Number</b>
1.	Aims and Statement of Intent	<b>4</b>
2.	Roles and Responsibilities	<b>5</b>
3.	Training, Support and Guidance	<b>6</b>
4.	Use of Appropriate Evidence	<b>7</b>
5.	Determining Teacher Assessed Grades	<b>8</b>
6.	Internal Quality Assurance	<b>8</b>
7.	Comparison of Teacher Assessed Grades to Results from Previous Cohorts	<b>9</b>
8.	Access Arrangements and Special Consideration	<b>9</b>
9.	Addressing Disruption and/or Differentiated Lost Learning (DDL)	<b>10</b>
10.	Objectivity	<b>10</b>
11.	Recording of Decisions and Retention of Evidence and Data	<b>11</b>
12.	Authenticating Evidence	<b>11</b>
13.	Confidentiality, malpractice, and conflicts of interest	<b>12</b>
14.	External Quality Assurance	<b>13</b>
15.	Private Candidates	<b>13</b>
16.	Results	<b>14</b>
17.	Appeals	<b>14</b>

## 1. Aims and Statement of Intent

At Venerable Bede CE Academy, we understand the need to ensure GCSE grades awarded to pupils in the summer of 2021 are reliable assessment outcomes for pupils, in a standard qualification series. These grades will be supported by assessment evidence collected by the centre and will be a grade that reflects what each pupil is **performing at now, not their potential**.

Pupils will be assessed based on learning that has taken place, ensuring sufficient coverage of the curriculum. Through this process, Ofqual has stated that, 'This gives [centres] the flexibility within the overall parameters and principles to be as fair as possible with pupils within each subject.'

Senior leaders will be actively engaged in discussions to ensure that the centre assessed grades submitted are appropriate and that there is an overall process of control and oversight at each stage.

We will use consistent sources of evidence for a class or cohort related closely to the specification requirements. For tiered subjects, which specify content for higher tier pupils only, and in all qualifications, we will provide accessible questions and tasks for all pupils, including demanding questions for the most able. Through our **DEEP and CONNECT curriculum** which is built on our **5 Christian Values (Hope, Joy, Forgiveness, Wisdom and Perseverance)** the purpose of this policy is to:

- ensure that teacher assessed grades are determined fairly, consistently, free from bias and effectively within and across departments.
- ensure the operation of effective processes with clear guidelines and support for staff.
- ensure that all staff involved in the processes clearly understand their roles and responsibilities.
- support teachers to take evidence-based decisions in line with Joint Council for Qualifications guidance.
- ensure the consideration of historical centre data in the process, and the appropriate decision making in respect of, teacher assessed grades.
- support a high standard of internal quality assurance in the allocation of teacher assessed grades.
- support our centre in meeting its obligations in relation to equality legislation.
- ensure our centre meets all requirements set out by the Department of Education, Ofqual, the Joint Council for Qualifications and awarding organisations for Summer 2021 qualifications.
- ensure the process for communicating to candidates and their parents/carers how they will be assessed is clear, to give confidence.

## 2. Roles and Responsibilities

This section outlines the personnel who have specific roles and responsibilities in the process of determining teacher assessed grades this year.

### 2.1 The Directors and Executive Headteacher are responsible for:

- agreeing the policy (Directors).
- Ratifying the policy (Executive Headteacher).

### 2.2 The Head of Centre is responsible for:

- the overall strategic responsibility for the Academy as an examinations centre and will ensure that clear roles and responsibilities of all staff are defined.
- confirming that teacher assessed grade decisions represent the academic judgement made by teachers and that the checks in place ensure these align with the guidance on standards provided by awarding organisations.
- ensuring a robust internal quality assurance process has been produced and signed-off in advance of results being submitted.
- understands the responsibility to report to the relevant awarding body any suspected cases of malpractice involving candidates, teachers, or other administrative staff.

**The Head of Centre may delegate some of these responsibilities to the Deputy Headteacher, Curriculum, however, will maintain overall responsibility for the policy within the centre.**

### 2.3 The Deputy Headteacher, Curriculum is responsible for:

- providing training and support to teaching staff.
- supporting the Head of Centre in the quality assurance of the final teacher assessed grades.
- ensuring an effective approach within and across departments and authenticating the preliminary outcome from single teacher subjects.
- ensuring staff have a clear understanding of the internal and external quality assurance processes and their role within it.
- Reports any instances of malpractice involving candidates, teachers, or other administrative staff to the Head of Centre immediately when notified.

### 2.4 Curriculum Leaders are responsible for:

- planning the assessment tasks and timeline for completion within their curriculum area, including moderation points and rationale for their decisions.
- producing an Assessment Plan for each subject cohort, that includes the nature of the assessment evidence being used, the level of control for assessments considered, and any other evidence that explains the determination of the final teacher assessed grades.
- ensuring that all teachers within their department make consistent judgements about student evidence in deriving a grade.
- ensuring all staff conduct assessments under the appropriate levels of control with reference to guidance provided by the Joint Council for Qualifications.
- ensuring teachers have the information required to make accurate and fair judgments.
- ensuring that a Curriculum Leader Checklist is completed for each subject/qualification that they are submitting.

- reports any concerns regarding any form of malpractice involving candidates, teachers, invigilators, or other administrative staff to the DHT (Curriculum) immediately.

## **2.6 The SENDCo is responsible for:**

- ensuring that all relevant staff are aware of any specific pupil access arrangements that need to be applied for individual pupils to complete work successfully. This is in accordance with guidance detailed in the 'Reasonable adjustments, access arrangements and special consideration' of the [JCQ Guidance in Determining Grades Summer 2021](#).

## **2.6 Subject Teachers are responsible for:**

- ensuring they conduct assessments under our centre's appropriate levels of control and have sufficient evidence, in line with this Centre Policy and guidance from the Joint Council for Qualifications, to provide teacher assessed grades for each pupil entered for a qualification.
- ensuring that the teacher assessed grade they assign to each pupil is a fair, valid, and reliable reflection of the assessed evidence available for each pupil.
- making judgements based on what each pupil has been taught and what they have been assessed on, as outlined in the section on grading in the main JCQ guidance.
- Liaising with their Curriculum Leaders to agree any necessary variation for individual pupils to the cohort Assessment Plan. **Any variation must be approved by the Curriculum Leader.**

## **2.7 The Examinations Officer is responsible for:**

- the administration of our final teacher assessed grades and for managing the post-results services.

# **3. Training, support, and guidance**

This section outlines the training, support, and guidance that we will provide to those determining teacher assessed grades this year.

## **3.1 Training**

- Teachers involved in determining grades will attend any centre-based training to help achieve consistency and fairness to all pupils, led by Curriculum Leaders or members of staff within the team who have experience of assessing for the examination board.
- Teachers will engage fully with all training and support that has been provided by the Joint Council for Qualifications and the awarding organisations, accessing webinars and support material publications.

## **3.2 Support for NQTs and teachers less familiar with assessment**

- NQTs and teachers less familiar with assessment will be provided mentoring and support from experienced teachers.
- Additional internal reviews of teacher assessed grades for NQTs and other teachers as appropriate.

## 4. Use of appropriate evidence

This section indicates how due regard will be given to the section in the JCQ guidance entitled: *Guidance on grading for teachers*.

- Teachers making judgements will have considered the Ofqual Head of Centre guidance on recommended evidence, and further guidance provided by awarding organisations.
- All candidate evidence used to determine teacher assessed grades, and associated documentation, will be retained and made available for the purposes of external quality assurance and appeals.
- Teachers will use pupil work produced in response to assessment materials provided by our awarding organisation(s), including groups of questions, past papers, or similar materials such as practice or sample papers.
- Teachers will use non-exam assessment work (often referred to as coursework), even if this has not been fully completed. [Additional guidance produced by JCQ for NEAs](#).
- Teachers will use pupil work produced in centre-devised tasks that reflect the specification, that follow the same format as awarding organisation materials, and have been marked in a way that reflects awarding organisation mark schemes.
- Teachers will use internal tests taken by pupils.
- Teachers will use mock exams taken over the course of study.
- Teachers will use records of a pupil's capability and performance over the course of study in performance-based subjects such as music, drama, and PE.

Furthermore, we may use additional assessment materials to:

- give pupils the opportunity to show what they know, understand, or can do in an area of content that has been taught but not yet assessed.
- give pupils an opportunity to show improvement, for example, to validate or replace an existing piece of evidence.
- to support consistency of judgement between teachers or classes by giving everyone the same task to complete.

In the creation of materials there may be combinations and/or removal of elements of questions. For example, a multi-part question including a part which focuses on an element of the specification that hasn't been taught.

The appropriateness and balance of evidence in arriving at grades will be ensured in the following ways:

- consider the level of control under which an assessment was completed, for example, whether the evidence was produced under high control and under supervision or at home.
- ensure that we can authenticate the work as the pupil's own, especially where that work was not completed within the school or college.
- consider the limitations of assessing a pupil's performance when using assessments that have been completed more than once, or drafted and redrafted, where this is not a skill being assessed.
- consider the specification and assessment objective coverage of the assessment.
- consider the depth and breadth of knowledge, understanding and skills assessed, especially higher order skills within individual assessments.

## 5. Determining teacher assessed grades

This section outlines the approach that will be taken in the awarding of teacher assessed grades.

- Teachers will determine grades based on evidence from a **broad range across the taught content** which is commensurate with the standard at which a pupil is performing, i.e. their demonstrated knowledge, understanding and skills across the content of the course they have been taught by ensuring **sufficient coverage** of the curriculum to enable progression.
- teachers will record how the evidence was used to arrive at a fair and objective grade, which is free from bias.
- Curriculum Leaders will produce an Assessment Plan for each subject cohort. Any necessary variations for individual pupils will also be agreed with Curriculum Leaders and implemented by subject teachers.

## 6. Internal Quality Assurance

This section outlines the approach that will be taken to ensure internal standardisation of teacher assessed grades, to ensure consistency, fairness, and objectivity of decisions. It gives details of the approach to internal standardisation, within and across subject departments.

- All teachers involved in deriving teacher assessed grades will read and understand the centre's Quality Assurance Process document (the practical application of the Policy).
- In subjects where there is more than one teacher and/or class in the department, internal standardisation processes will take place.
- All teachers will be provided with training and support to ensure they take a consistent approach to:
  - arriving at teacher assessed grades
  - marking of evidence
  - reaching a holistic grading decision
  - applying the use of grading support and documentation
- Internal standardisation across all grades will be conducted.
- Subject Assessment Plans will form the basis of internal standardisation and discussions across teachers to agree the awarding of teacher assessed grades.
- Where possible, external verification of marking will support the assessment of pupils' work to provide comparative measures.
- Where necessary, review and reflection of individual grading decisions will ensure alignment with the standards as outlined by our awarding organisation(s).
- Where appropriate, amendments to individual grade decisions will ensure alignment with the standards as outlined by our awarding organisation(s).
- Where there is only one teacher involved in marking assessments and determining grades, (i.e. where the teacher is also the Head of Area) then the output of this activity will be reviewed by Deputy Headteacher, Curriculum.
- In respect of equality legislation, the range of evidence for pupils of different protected characteristics included in our internal standardisation will be given consideration.

Internal quality assurance is included within the Head of Centre Declaration.



## **7. Comparison of teacher assessed grades to results for previous cohorts**

This section outlines the approach we will take to compare our teacher assessed grades in 2021 with results from previous cohorts. It gives details of internal process to ensure a comparison of teacher assessed grades at qualification level to results for previous cohorts within the centre taking the same qualification.

- Information on the grades awarded to pupils in past June series in which exams took place (e.g. 2017 - 2019) will be compiled.
- Consideration regarding the size of our cohort from year to year will be given.
- Consideration the stability of the overall grade outcomes from year to year will be made.
- Consideration of both subject and centre level variation in our outcomes during the internal quality assurance process will be made.
- A succinct narrative on the outcomes of the review against historic data which, in the event of significant divergence from the qualifications-levels profiles attained in previous examined years, which address the reasons for this divergence will be prepared. This commentary will be available for subsequent review during the QA process.

This section gives details of the approach to be followed if our initial teacher assessed grades for a qualification are viewed as overly lenient or harsh compared to results in previous years.

- Historical data giving appropriate regard to potential mixtures of A\*-G and 9-1 grades in GCSEs will be compiled. Where required, we will use the Ofqual guidance to convert legacy grades into the new 9 to 1 scale.
- We will bring together other data sources and evidence that will help to quality assure the grades we intend to award in 2021.

This section gives details of changes in cohorts that need to be reflected in comparisons.

- Subjects that are no longer offered will be omitted from the historical data.
- Subjects previously offered which were not on offer in 2019, or before, will be compared to the national average where this information is available.

## **8. Access arrangements and special consideration**

This section outlines the approach taken to provide pupils with appropriate access arrangements and consider mitigating circumstances in particular instances.

- Where pupils have agreed access arrangements or reasonable adjustments (for example a reader or scribe), every effort will be made to ensure these arrangements are in place when assessments are being taken.
- Where an assessment has taken place without an agreed reasonable adjustment or access arrangement, this assessment will be removed from the bank of evidence and alternative evidence obtained.
- Where illness or other personal circumstances might have affected performance in assessments used in determining a pupil's standard of performance, this will be considered when making judgements.

- Any necessary variations have been incorporated and recorded to take account of the impact of illness or personal circumstances on the performance of individual pupils in assessments.
- To ensure consistency in the application of Special Consideration, the Deputy Headteacher, Curriculum and Examinations Officer will support teachers in line with the details contained in the document: [JCQ – A guide to the special consideration process, with effect from 1 September 2020](#)
- Past modified question papers can be accessed at:
  - [AQA](#)
  - [WJEC \(Edugas\)](#)
  - [OCR](#)
  - [Pearson](#)

## 9. Addressing disruption and/or differential lost learning (DDL)

Grades will be based on teachers' assessments of the standard at which pupils are performing and will be based on the pupil's demonstrated knowledge and skills. Pupils do not have to have completed a mandated amount of content or demonstrate skills, knowledge and understanding across every area of the specification as they would normally.

- Teacher assessed grades will be determined based on evidence of the content that has been taught and assessed for each pupil.
- If the content for any of the pieces of evidence have not been taught, the teacher should remove that piece of evidence entirely or remove the questions that assess that specific content. If teachers need to remove any evidence at this point, they should consider whether they need to and can replace it with anything else. Any necessary variations for individual pupils will also be agreed with Curriculum Leaders and implemented by subject teachers.

The Head of Centre's declaration will confirm that pupils have been taught sufficient content to form the basis for a grade.

## 10. Objectivity

This section outlines the arrangements in place to ensure objectivity of decisions. Staff will fulfil their duties and responsibilities in relation to relevant equality and disability legislation.

### 10.1 Senior Leaders, Curriculum Leaders and Head of Centre will consider:

- sources of unfairness and bias (situations/contexts, difficulty, presentation and format, language, conditions for assessment, marker preconceptions).
- how to minimise bias in questions and marking and hidden forms of bias.
- bias in teacher assessed grades.

### 10.2 To ensure objectivity, all staff involved in determining teacher assessed grades will be made aware that:

- unconscious bias can skew judgements.

- the evidence presented should be valued for its own merit as an indication of performance and attainment.
- teacher assessed grades MUST not be influenced by pupils' character, behaviour, appearance, their positive or challenging personal circumstances, socio-economic background, or protected characteristics.
- unconscious bias is more likely to occur when quick opinions are formed.
- further guidance can be found through the DfE document [Information for centres about making objective judgements](#).

**Our internal standardisation process will help to ensure that there are different perspectives to the quality assurance process.**

## 11. Recording decisions and retention of evidence and data

This section outlines our arrangements to recording decisions and to retaining evidence and data.

- Teachers and Curriculum Leaders will maintain records that show how the teacher assessed grades process operated, including the rationale for decisions in relation to individual marks/grades.
- Evidence will be maintained across a variety of tasks to develop a holistic view of each pupil's demonstrated knowledge, understanding and skills in the areas of content taught.
- Recording requirements will be put in place for the various stages of the process to ensure the accurate and secure retention of the evidence used to make decisions.
- All obligations regarding data protection legislation will be complied with.
- Grades accurately reflect the evidence submitted provided will accurately reflect the evidence submitted for each pupil.
- Evidence will be retained electronically or on paper in a secure centre-based system that can be readily shared with our awarding organisation(s).

## 12. Authenticating evidence

This section details the mechanisms in place to ensure that teachers are confident in the authenticity of evidence, and the process for dealing with cases where evidence is not thought to be authentic.

- Robust mechanisms, which will include supervision of assessments in school, will be in place to ensure that teachers are confident that work used as evidence is the pupils' own and that no inappropriate levels of support have been given to pupils to complete it, either within the centre or with external tutors.
- Pupils and teachers will sign a declaration which confirms the work used was completed by the pupil under the supervision of their teacher (or appropriate member of staff) in line with the conditions outlined in the Assessment Plan.
- It is understood that awarding organisations will investigate instances where it appears evidence is not authentic. All guidance provided by awarding organisations [AQA](#), [Pearson](#), [OCR](#), [WJEC \(Edugas\)](#) to support these determinations of authenticity.

## 13. Confidentiality, malpractice, and conflicts of interest

This section outlines the measures in place to ensure the confidentiality of the grades, and to make pupils aware of the range of evidence on which those grades will be based. It outlines the measures in place to prevent malpractice and other breaches of exam regulations, and to deal with such cases if they occur. This section also outlines the measures in place to address potential conflicts of interest.

### 13.1 Confidentiality

Measures are in place to maintain the confidentiality of grades, while sharing information regarding the range of evidence on which the grades will be based.

- All staff involved have been made aware of the need to maintain the confidentiality of teacher assessed grades.
- All teaching staff have been briefed on the requirement to share details of the range of evidence on which pupils' grades will be based, while ensuring that details of the final grades remain confidential.
- Relevant details from this Policy, including requirements around sharing details of evidence and the confidentiality requirements, have been shared with parents/guardians.

### 13.2 Malpractice

Measures are in place to prevent malpractice and to handle cases in accordance with awarding organisation requirements, should this occur.

- General centre policies regarding malpractice, maladministration and conflicts of interest have been reviewed to ensure they address the specific challenges of delivery in Summer 2021.
- All staff involved have been made aware of these policies and have received training in them, as necessary.
- All staff involved have been made aware of the specific types of malpractice which may affect the Summer 2021 series including:
  - breaches of internal security
  - deception
  - improper assistance to pupils
  - failure to appropriately authenticate a pupil's work
  - over direction of pupils in preparation for common assessments
  - allegations that centres submit grades not supported by evidence that they know to be inaccurate
  - centres enter pupils who were not originally intending to certificate a grade in the Summer 2021 series
  - failure to engage as requested with awarding organisations during the External Quality Assurance and appeal stages
  - failure to keep appropriate records of decisions made and teacher assessed grades

**The consequences of malpractice or maladministration as published in the JCQ guidance: [JCQ Suspected Malpractice: Policies and Procedures](#) and including the risk of a delay to pupil receiving their grades, up to, and including, removal of centre status have been outlined to all relevant staff.**

### **13.3 Conflict of interest**

This section details the addressing of conflicts of interest, and how such allegations will be responded to.

- To protect the integrity of assessments, all staff involved in the determination of grades must declare any conflict of interest such as relationships with pupils to our Head of Centre for further consideration.
- The Head of Centre will take appropriate action to manage any conflicts of interest arising with centre staff in accordance with the JCQ documents - [General Regulations for Approved Centres, 1 September 2020 to 31 August 2021](#).
- The need to separate duties and personnel to ensure fairness in later process reviews and appeals will be carefully considered.

## **14. External quality assurance**

This section outlines the arrangements in place to comply with awarding organisation arrangements for External Quality Assurance of teacher assessed grades in a timely and effective way. It outlines the arrangements in place to ensure the relevant documentation and assessment evidence can be provided in a timely manner for the purposes of External Quality Assurance sampling, and that staff can be made available to respond to enquiries.

- All staff involved have been made aware of the awarding organisation requirements for External Quality Assurance as set out in the [JCQ Guidance](#).
- All necessary records of decision-making in relation to determining grades have been properly kept and can be made available for review as required.
- All pupil evidence on which decisions regarding the determination of grades has been retained and can be made available for review as required.
- Instances where pupil evidence used to decide teacher assessed grades is not available, for example where the material has previously been returned to pupils and cannot now be retrieved, will be clearly recorded on the appropriate documentation.
- All staff involved have been briefed on the possibility of interaction with awarding organisations during the different stages of the External Quality Assurance process and can respond promptly and fully to enquiries, including attendance at Virtual Visits should this prove necessary.
- Arrangements are in place to respond fully and promptly to any additional requirements/reviews that may be identified because of the External Quality Assurance process.
- Staff have been made aware that a failure to respond fully and effectively to such additional requirements may result in further action by the awarding organisations, including the withholding of results.

## **15. Private Candidates**

At Venerable Bede CE Academy, there are no private candidates being entered for any qualification in summer 2021.

## 16. Results

This section outlines our approach to the receipt and issue of results to pupils and the provision of necessary advice and guidance.

GCSE results will be released to centres on **Wednesday 11 August 2021**.

GCSE pupils will receive their results on **Thursday 12 August 2021**.

- All staff involved have been made aware of the specific arrangements for the issue of results in Summer 2021, including A/AS and GCSE results in the same week.
- Arrangements will be made to ensure the necessary staffing, including exams office and support staff, to enable the efficient receipt and release of results to pupils.
- Arrangements will be in place for the provision of all necessary advice, guidance, and support, including pastoral support, to pupils on receipt of their results.
- Such guidance will include advice on the appeals process in place in 2021 (see below).
- Appropriate staff will be available to respond promptly to any requests for information from awarding organisations, for example regarding missing or incomplete results, to enable such issues to be swiftly resolved.
- Parents/carers have been made aware of arrangements for results days.

The JCQ document [Notice to Centres, June 2021](#) provides detailed information.

## 17. Appeals

This section outlines the approach to Appeals, to ensure that they are handled swiftly and effectively, and in line with JCQ requirements. It details the approach to managing appeals, including Centre Reviews, and subsequent appeals to awarding organisations.

- All staff involved have been made aware of the arrangements for, and the requirements of, appeals in Summer 2021, as set out in the [JCQ Guidance](#).
- Internal arrangements will be in place for the swift and effective handling of Centre Reviews in compliance with the requirements.
- All necessary staff have been briefed on the process for, and timing of, such reviews, and will be available to ensure their prompt and efficient handling.
- Pupils have been appropriately guided as to the necessary stages of appeal.
- Arrangements will be in place for the timely submission of appeals to awarding organisations, including any priority appeals.
- Arrangements will be in place to obtain the written consent of pupils to the initiation of appeals, and a record their awareness that grades **may go down as well as up** on appeal.
- Appropriate information on the appeals process will be provided to parents/carers.
- Pupils will need the following information to help them decide whether to appeal:
  - This Centre Policy
  - Sources of evidence used to determine their grade and any marks associated with them
  - Details of any special circumstances considered in determining their grade