General principl

Introduction

WJEC is a leading awarding organisation, delivering a range of qualifications primarily to centres in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

The qualifications that WJEC offers to all centres in the United Kingdom are regulated by the three regulators; CCEA, Ofqual and Qualifications Wales.

This document consists of the general principles on which WJEC bases its policies and procedures in delivering its assessments, focusing on question paper production, marking/moderating of assessments, awarding and issuing of results.

It has been produced to demonstrate to all stakeholders how we promote quality, consistency, accuracy and fairness in the assessment and awarding of our qualifications.

WJEC as a regulated awarding organisation, ensures it is compliant with each regulators' Conditions of Recognition, Qualification and Subject Level Conditions and any other additional statutory documentation or guidance published by its regulators.

Section 1: Roles and Responsibilities

This section sets out the various roles and responsibilities which WJEC has put in place to ensure that it manages and maintains the quality and standards of the qualifications offered.

Governance

1.1 WJEC's executive leadership team and Board of Directors are responsible for setting in place appropriate procedures to ensure that standards are maintained in each subject examined from year to year.

1.2 These responsibilities are discharged through WJEC's staff and appointees, as described below. The functions described are fulfilled for each qualification specification. One person may discharge more than one role provided that the role does not produce a conflict of interest, such as that between the roles of reviser and scrutineer. WJEC provides appropriate training and support to ensure that its personnel can carry out the functions set out in this document, monitoring and evaluating our provision to make sure that it is effective and remains fit for purpose.

1.3 WJEC appoints a single named person to be accountable directly to our Board of Directors for ensuring the quality and standards of our qualifications (that is, the responsible officer). In doing so, WJEC guarantees to the regulators that it ensures:

i) all necessary action will be taken to maintain parity of standards in each subject and qualification from year to year, across different specifications and with other awarding organisations, where appropriate

Scrutineer

1.8 The scrutineer is responsible for:

i) checking the final drafts of all question papers/tasks without reference to the mark schemes to ensure that the questions can be answered in the time allowed and that there are no errors or omissions

ii) working through question papers, where appropriate

iii) checking the mark scheme to ensure that the marks given are identical to those on the question paper

iv) preparing a report for the WJEC designated member of staff.

Examiners

1.9

Moderators

1.12 Moderators are responsible for moderating centres' assessment of candidates' work in accordance with the agreed assessment criteria and the WJEC's procedures.

Assistant principal examiners, assistant principal moderators, and team leaders

1.13 Assistant principal examiners and assistant principal moderators must be appointed where required by the size of entry. Assistant principals are responsible for a group of senior examiners or moderators where the span of control would otherwise be too great for the principal examiners or principal moderators. If a team structure is used, team leaders must be appointed to supervise a team of examiners or moderators. They must act as mentors for new appointees, check and guide the wooor moderators.

Section 2: Preparing question papers, tasks and mark schemes

This section sets out how WJEC will ensure the production of high-quality question papers, tasks, and marking guidance. It covers:

*** ensuring that checks for quality are in place**

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Revising the question papers, tasks and provisional mark schemes

2.5 The reviser(s) must:

i) scrutinise the initial draft question papers/tasks and mark schemes

ii) check that the nature and range of responses required by the mark scheme are appropriate

iii) comment on individual questions and responses and the draft question paper(s) as a whole.

Account should be taken of feedback from previous examination sessions, including recommendations from relevant monitoring reports where these are available.

2.6

2.12 The committee will ensure that the question papers/tasks and provisional mark schemes meet the requirements of the assessment criteria as set out in the specification and that they are of consistently high quality.

As part of this work, the committee must ensure, where appropriate, that:

Rubrics

i) are presented in a standard format that readily distinguishes them from questions

ii) are w08871 0d7i aset out in the

Mark schemes

xv) include general instructions on marking

xvi) are clear and designed so that they can be easily and consistently applied

xvii) allocate marks commensurate with the demands of questions/tasks

xviii) include the mark allocation for each question/task and part of a question/suFQ1QqGhdQq0.0

2.15 The report will be sent to the principal examiner, who must then approve any necessary changes to the question papers/tasks and provisional mark schemes.

2.16 The final draft question papers/tasks and provisional mark schemes must be submitted for final approval to the WJEC designated member of staff. Where the external ass the

3.6 Examiners and general markers will normally mark candidates' work from a number of different centres, subject to their total load being manageable. They are required to declare any personal interest in a centre before marking. They will not normally mark candidates' work from any centre in which they have a personal interest unless marking anonymised items online. If an examiner or general marker recognises a candidate's work, they are instructed not to mark it and seek guidance from WJEC regarding what action to take. In the case of sole examiners or general markers where this requirement cannot be applied, WJEC ensures that this marking is scrutinised.

3.7 One principal examiner is responsible for each unit/component. Where candidate numbers are small, a principal examiner may be responsible for more than one unit/ component and mark all of the work. Under such circumstances the principal examiner has recourse to a second opinion, as does any examiner who is the sole marker of a unit or component. This is normally provided by the chair of examiners.

3.8 In the interests of reliable marking and to reduce the scope for variability, WJEC ensures that marking is undertaken by the minimum possible number of examiners. In arriving at this minimum number, WJEC ensures that the amount of marking allocated to examiners takes account of:

i) the nature of the unit/component being assessed

ii) t

Team membership and training

3.11 Examiners must have relevant experience in the subject area where this is appropriate. Marking teams normally include a balance between new examiners and examiners with prior marking experience. Where team leaders are appointed, they will normally have examined for at least two years in the same or a related subject. The same requirement applies to principal examiners, whose responsibilities are detailed in Section 1.

3.12 New examiners receive appropriate training to enable them to carry out their duties. This training depends on whether they are:

i) first-time examiners, who need training on all aspects of the examining process relevant to their role before marking items

ii) new to WJEC and require training specific to WJEC's procedures

iii) new to the particular unit/component or specification and require training specific to that unit/component or specification.

During examiners' first marking period, and on subsequent occasions if necessary, they are placed in a team with a more senior examiner who provides close support throughout the marking period.

First-hand marking

3.13 Principal examiners and, where appointed, assistant principal examiners and team leaders all mark items at first-hand to gain direct evidence of the candidates' interpretation of questions and the application of the mark scheme. Principal examiners and designated assistant principal examiners mark all items across the

3.18 The process of helping to secure the consistent application of the mark scheme includes:

3.28 The process of adjustment is fully documented for subsequent reference if necessary.

Online marked items

3.29 The marking of all examiners is monitored by a senior examiner and, if necessary, appropriate corrective action taken. The monitoring includes sampling of sufficient scale, range and frequency to ensure that confidence can be placed in the monitoring process. Marks and outcomes from this sampling process are recorded and used to construct a profile of the quality of marking of each examiner in terms of accuracy, consistency and leniency/severity.

3.30 The marking of individual examiners is compared with that of a senior examiner at regular intervals throughout the process. Action will be taken, where required, to correct examiner inaccuracies. The subject officer will take final responsibility for implementing adjustments made to the marks of individual examiners. This corrective action will include:

i) removing the examiner from marking an item or items and the re-marking of those items already marked

ii) removing the examiner from the entire marking process and the re-marking of all items marked to date.

Checking marking

3.31 The processing of the examination includes checks to ensure that all marks have been accurately recorded and transcribed and that any adjustments have been correctly applied and the marks accurately amended. All items are checked for incomplete marking and errors in totalling.

3.32 WJEC monitors and evaluates the performance of examiners and takes appropriate action to maintain standards in current and future examinations. This may include further training.

Marking review for traditionally marked scripts prior to the issuing of results

3.33 There may be cases where some doubt remains about whether the marks given to a candidate or group of candidates are accurate. The purpose of the marking review is to ensure that such cases are identified and remedial action taken where necessary.

3.34 The marking review consists of a re-marking of scripts marked by examiners about whom there is lingering doubt. Each externally assessed component will be treated in this manner when it is awarded. Other candidates' work may be included in the marking review if WJEC and/or the principal examiner considers there to be good reason to do so.

3.35 After the re-marking by senior examiners of those candidates' work identified as

Section 4:

4.7 Where the specification requires candidates to produce extended written material in English or Welsh, the marks awarded will take into account the quality of written communication as defined by the appropriate qualification-type criteria.

4.8 Whenever a new or significantly revised specification is introduced that involves new internally assessed tasks, WJEC takes steps to ensure that the tasks and mark

4.15 WJEC has a clear policy outlining procedures for entries from private candidates. For specifications with non-examination assessments, centres are required to authenticate the internal assessments of private candidates.

Assessment and standardisation within centres

4.16 WJEC requires internal assessors to show clearly how credit has been assigned in relation to the criteria defined in the specification. Internal assessments must indicate where quality of written communication will be assessed, where this is appropriate.

4.17 Where the regulators have agreed that the nature of the subject requires credit to be allocated for the skills displayed by candidates in redrafting and refining work, internal assessors are given explicit parameters defining the limits within which they may give feedback to candidates.

4.18 WJEC requires centres to standardise assessments across different assessors and teaching groups. This is to ensure that for a particular unit/component all candidates in the centre have been judged against the same standards. If centres accept entries from private candidates, the centre should standardise the work of private candidates alongside the work of internal candidates'

Moderating assessments submitted by centres

4.19 To ensure that standards are aligned within and across centres, WJEC moderates the marks submitted by each centre against the specified assessment criteria.

4.20 WJEC adjusts the marks submitted by centres as necessary to bring each centre's judgements into line with the required standard. Remedial action is taken where there is evidence of standards being applied inconsistently, or of other departures from specification requirements.

4.21 WJEC provides centres with details of the moderation procedures that apply to a specification, amplifying as necessary the account printed in the specification itself. The documentation confirms the WJEC's right to act as it judges necessary to align standards. In particular, arrangements are specified for:

i) requesting, as necessary, at appropriate stages during and at the end of the course, samples of specific internal assessments and associated assessment criteria to indicate how credit has been assigned

ii) drawing samples of marked, internally standardised candidates' work, to cover the full range of units and to represent adequately the range of attainment in the centre

iii) sampling the judgements made by all internal assessors where there is evidence that this is necessary to guarantee confidence in the internal assessment process

iv) requesting additional samples or all relevant work from all candidates, if necessary

v) establishing whether a centre's marks require adjustment, determining the nature of any required adjustment and making the necessary changes

vi) giving centres details of, and reasons for, any significant adjustments made.

4.22 WJEC will adjust marks from a centre where the difference between moderated and unmoderated marks exceeds what would be considered to be reasonable differences in academic judgement, or where the assessment criteria has been incorrectly applied. Final decisions are based on full consideration of the sample of candidates' work. Additional samples will be requested if initial samples indicate that required standards are not being applied but provide insufficient evidence to determine the appropriate remedial action to be taken. To be fair to candidates, WJEC ensures that adjustments do not change the centre's rank order, unless the centre marks are demonstrably inconsistent.

4.23 Statistical information is used, where applicable, to inform WJEC's final judgements on marks awarded.

Methods of moderation

4.24 WJEC uses moderation methods that are reliable and valid for the subject area concerned. For assessments offered through the medium of Welsh, the moderation methods ensure reliable and valid moderation of Welsh-medium internally assessed work. For internal assessment that leads to written outcomes, moderators inspect samples of candidates' written work.

4.25 For assessments from which no written outcome arises, WJEC takes all necessary steps to ensure consistency of standards. This includes reviewing samples of candidates' actual work wherever possible, for example by visit or by post.

Alternatively, WJEC may moderate on the basis of photographed or recorded evidence accompanied by internal assessors' notes detailing the basis for their assessment decisions.

Section 5: Awarding, maintaining an archive and issuing results

This section sets out the arrangements that must be in place to cover the awarding process, archiving process and issue of results. It covers:

***making sure the responsibilities of those involved are clearly defined**

***making sure the membership of the awarding committee is clearly defined**

***making sure the pre-awarding procedures are clearly defined**

***setting out the process for determining grade boundaries**

***maintaining an archive of candidatesôwork at key grade boundaries**

***issuing results on agreed dates.**

Awarding committee composition

5.1 The awarding committee is chaired by the chair of examiners and includes the principal examiner(s) and principal moderator(s). Details of their responsibilities are given in Section 1. In exceptional circumstances where a senior examiner or moderator is unable to participate in an award, the awarding organisation officer will, where possible, ensure that an examiner or moderator of nearest seniority for the specification under consideration participates instead. WJEC staff advise the committee and direct its procedures. Where necessary the committee m nB0BTe awarding organisat

iii) samples of current candidates' work distributed evenly across key boundary ranges for each component, with enough representing each mark to provide a sound basis for judgement so far as the size of entry and nature of work permit. The material should be selected from a range of centres and/or consortia where work has been marked/moderated by examiners/moderators whose work is known to be reliable

iv) archive scripts and examples of internally assessed work (including, in appropriate subject areas, photographic or videotaped evidence) exemplifying grade boundaries for previous awards, together with the relevant question papers and mark schemes

v) in the case of a new specification, pertinent material deemed to be of equivalent standard from other examinations in the subject or other relevant subjects may be considered

Where available

5.13 Awarders will consider candidates' work in the expected range for each key boundary, ensuring that a sufficient amount of candidates' work is inspected.

5.14 A single mark for the grade boundary is recommended by the chair of examiners according to the appropriate procedure.

In an award based on confirmation of the boundary marks (including use of a three-mark range), the procedure is as follows:

i) The chair of examiners identifies whether the consensus of awarders' opinion is that the recommended boundary fairly represents a grade boundary performance. If so this mark is confirmed as the grade boundary. (It is not necessary to identify limiting marks in this scenario.)

ii) If consensus to set the boundary at the recommended boundary has not been reached, the scrutiny range is extended in whatever direction necessary and a recommended boundary established following the procedure outlined below.

In an award based on identification of the boundary marks, the procedure is as follows:

i) First, working down from the top of the range, the chair of examiners identifies the lowest mark for which there is consensus that the quality of work is worthy of the higher grade of the boundary pair. This forms the upper limiting mark

ii) Next, working up from the bottom of the range, the chair of examiners identifies the highest mark for which there is consensus that the quality of work is not worthy of the higher grade. The mark above this forms the lower limiting mark

iii) The chair of examiners then weighs all the available evidence – quantitative and qualitative – and recommends a single mark for the grade boundary, which normally will lie within the range including the two limiting marks. The choice of recommended grade boundary is such that dependent subject-level outcomes are consistent with the evidence of relevant technical and statistical data.

5.15 In all awards, where there are a number of different routes to a subject grade (including replacement papers where there has been a security breach), the chair of examiners ensures that the standards of the awards for grades derived from each route are comparable. Where a component/unit is shared between different specifications or options, the same grade boundaries are used.

5.16 When the boundary marks for an internally assessed component/unit have been pre-set, the grade distribution for the component/unit – together with data on previous distributions and any changes in the entry pattern –

Maintaining an archive

5.27 While a specification remains in use, WJEC maintains a full archive containing candidates' work at the final mark selected for each key grade boundary covering each series for at least the last five series, including at least two summer series. In addition, WJEC retains equivalent evidence from the first examination of the specification to guide the work of examiners and awarders.

5.28 WJEC must supply material in accordance with the requirements of the regulators who maintain their own archives.

Issue of results

5.29 WJEC issues results for each series of examinations on the agreed dates.

5.30 WJEC ensures that all available work from candidates is marked and/or moderated before results are issued. In the event of any difficulty, WJEC will notify the regulators in good time of the nature of the difficulty and the action taken to resolve it.