



Rewarding Learning

GCSE and GCE
Code of Practice
April 2018

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Introduction

This Code of Practice replaces the GCSE, GCE, Principal Learning and Project Code of Practice (May 2011). Its content is in line with the regulatory conditions set out for the CCEA Awarding Organisation and it has been endorsed by the Regulator. This Code of Practice will apply to all GCSE and GCE qualifications awarded by CCEA from summer 2017 until further notice.

The public expects qualifications to be high quality. It wants qualifications to:

- be fit for purpose;
- command public confidence;
- be fair and accurate.

It also wants the standard of qualifications to be the same across awarding organisations and over time. It needs to know that awarding organisations are competent and if something goes wrong that there will be a right of appeal.

This code of practice will help to uphold public confidence in qualifications.

Who is this code of practice for?

This code is for the CCEA awarding organisation in Northern Ireland that delivers:

- General Certificate of Education (GCE);
- General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE).

Who regulates these qualifications?

These qualifications are regulated by the three regulators:

- in England: Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual);
- in Wales: Qualifications Wales;
- in Northern Ireland: Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA Regulation).

What is this code of practice for?

This code aims to:

- promote quality, consistency, accuracy and fairness in the assessment and awarding of qualifications covered by this code;
- help maintain standards across specifications, both within and between awarding organisations and from year to year.

To help achieve these aims, this code sets out:

- the agreed principles and practices for the assessment and quality assurance of qualifications covered by this code;
- the roles and responsibilities of the awarding organisation and a centre;
- the requirements for a high-quality examinations process.

Principles underpinning the code of practice

The aim of all those involved in producing, delivering, assessing, awarding, certificating and regulating accredited qualifications is to make sure that all candidates receive the results their performance merits when judged against the relevant specification content and assessment criteria.

The regulator requires that awarding organisations are committed to the following principles that underpin a high-quality assessment system and promote good practice. Awarding organisations are responsible for ensuring that:

- 1 Procedures and systems must comply with relevant current legislation and regulatory requirements.
- 2 Management and administrative systems are efficient and effective.
- 3 Assessment instruments are fit for purpose, valid and reliable.
- 4 Assessment instruments are designed to make sure that all candidates are treated fairly.
- 5 The assessment system is transparent so that:
 - the evidence on which decisions are based is clear;
 - it is possible to audit the decision-making process;
 - those making decisions can be held accountable.
- 6 For each process in the assessment system there is an audit trail that sets out the key evidence that supports the decision taken.
- 7 Those involved in the assessment system must:
 - be clear about their roles and responsibilities;
 - have appropriate experience and expertise;
 - receive appropriate training to carry out their roles.
- 8 Enquiries and appeals from centres and private candidates are investigated and resolved.

Awarding organisations must provide clear documentation, procedures and guidance to support centres in meeting their responsibilities relating to the conduct and administration of examinations and internal assessments.

Awarding organisations must take account of any regulatory reports in the delivery and conduct of assessments.

Awarding organisations must seek the permission of the regulator before deviating from any of the requirements set out in this code.

Section 1

The responsibilities of the awarding organisation and awarding organisation personnel

This section sets out what the awarding organisation (including its governing body, staff and examining personnel) will do to organise and manage themselves to maintain the quality and standards of the qualifications they offer.

The awarding organisation's governing body

- 1.1 The awarding organisation's governing body is responsible for setting in place appropriate procedures to ensure that standards are maintained in each GCE and GCSE subject examined from year to year, across different specifications within a qualification and with other awarding organisations. It will act upon feedback from previous awards, including recommendations from relevant monitoring and other reports. The procedures will ensure that any necessary action is taken to maintain parity of standards with other awarding organisations offering similar qualifications. This action includes exchanging appropriate information with the other awarding organisations and the regulator soon after awarding meetings and before the publication of results. It also includes providing the regulator with raw data and reports to an agreed timescale.
- 1.2 The responsibilities of the governing body, as discharged through its staff and fee-earning personnel, are described below. The functions described will be 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. However, for each specification, regardless of the size of its entry, the following separate roles should be identified and fulfilled: awarding organisation officer (as distinct from any examining personnel who are treated as direct employees of the awarding organisation), chief examiner and reviser. The awarding organisation will provide appropriate training and support to ensure that its personnel can carry out the functions set out in this code of practice. The awarding organisation should monitor and evaluate this provision to make sure that it is effective and remains fit for purpose.
- 1.3 Where additional tiers of personnel are needed to cope with the numbers of candidates involved in a particular specification, one person will have overall responsibility.
- 1.4 The governing body will ensure that representatives of the regulator are provided with all the information they require and are given access to such meetings and staff as the regulator deems necessary for them to carry out their duties. The governing body will work in cooperation with these representatives to ensure, as far as possible, that schedules are arranged to facilitate their work.

- 1.5 The awarding organisation will appoint a single named person to be accountable directly to its governing body for ensuring the quality and standards of its qualifications. In doing so, the awarding organisation guarantees to the regulator 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;
 - (ii) compliance with the requirements of this code of practice and other relevant regulations;
 - (iii) effective means for the consideration of the recommendations of the chairs of examiners;
 - (iv) its participation in comparability and monitoring activities, and that such changes as this work shows to be necessary are made.

Awarding organisation officers

- 1.6 The awarding organisation officers manage all stages of the examining process to ensure that:
- (i) they are carried out in accordance with this code of practice and with the awarding organisation's policies and procedures;
 - (ii) fee-earning personnel and committees are provided with all necessary administrative, subject specialist and technical support;
 - (iii) awarding organisation senior management, including the awarding organisation officer with overall responsibility for the quality and standards of qualifications, are alerted to issues or concerns that arise during the process.

Chair of examiners

- 1.7 A chair of examiners¹ is responsible to the awarding organisation for maintaining standards across different specifications in a subject within a qualification and from year to year. The chair of examiners will:
- (i) chair the question paper evaluation committee meetings, where possible, for every specification in the subject in that particular qualification type;
 - (ii) monitor the standards of the chief examiner;
 - (iii) lead the awarding process and recommend grade boundaries for each specification to the awarding organisation.

¹ An assistant chair of examiners can be appointed, subject to the approval of the regulator, where the awarding organisation considers this to be appropriate. When this option is taken, it is the responsibility of the awarding organisation to ensure that arrangements are made for coordinating the work of assistant chairs of examiners. The chair of examiners will remain the single point of accountability.

Chief examiner

- 1.8 The chief examiner² for a specification is responsible to the chair of examiners for ensuring that the examination as a whole – including both internal and external assessment – meets the requirements of the specification and maintains standards from one year to the next. The chief examiner will:
- (i) act as principal examiner or principal moderator for at least one unit/component;
 - (ii) supervise the construction of question papers and mark schemes and, where appropriate, the criteria for internal assessment to ensure appropriate standards;
 - (iii) ensure that the external assessments as a whole cover the assessment criteria, as set out in the specification, and satisfactorily sample the appropriate content;
 - (iv) ensure that, over a reasonable number of years, the examination as a whole will address all the specification content;
 - (v) seek to ensure parity across alternative components and options in terms of the demands made on candidates;
 - (vi) monitor the standards of principal examiners and principal moderators;
 - (vii) submit, as directed by the awarding organisation, an overall evaluation report on the internal and external assessment for the qualification.

Principal examiner

- 1.9 The principal examiner for each unit/component is responsible for the setting of the question paper/task and the standardising of its marking. The principal examiner will:
- (i) set the questions and mark schemes for the question paper or approve those set by other examiners³;
 - (ii) seek to ensure parity of standards across optional questions in the paper and assist the chief examiner in ensuring parity of standards across optional papers;
 - (iii) monitor the standards of marking of all the examiners for the paper, including, where necessary, any assistant principal examiners and team leaders, and take appropriate steps to ensure accuracy and consistency;
 - (iv) be involved in the awarding process, advise members on how the question paper functioned and where appropriate, recommend preliminary mark ranges for the judgemental grade boundaries for the question paper;
 - (v) submit to the chief examiner an evaluation report on the performance of the question paper/task.

² Assistant chief examiners can be appointed, subject to the approval of the regulator, where the awarding organisation considers this to be appropriate. When this option is taken, it is the responsibility of the awarding organisation to ensure that arrangements are made for coordinating the work of the assistant chief examiners. The chief examiner will remain the single point of accountability.

³ The term 'question papers' applies to all externally assessed components, including tasks and awarding organisation set assignments.

Reviser

1.10 The reviser is required to:

- (i) provide written comments on early drafts of question papers/tasks and provisional mark schemes;
- (ii) work through question papers, where appropriate.

The awarding organisation may appoint more than one reviser for each examination.

Scrutineer

1.11 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 awarding organisation officer.

Examiners

1.12 Examiners are responsible for marking candidates' work in accordance with the agreed mark scheme and marking procedures.

General markers

1.13 General markers are responsible for marking candidates' work where a high level of subject expertise is not necessary to apply the mark scheme. They will mark such work in accordance with the agreed mark scheme and marking procedures.

Principal moderator

1.14 The principal moderator for each internally assessed unit/component is responsible to the chief examiner for ensuring that the standards of the unit/component are maintained and are consistent with the unit specification and assessment criteria. The principal moderator will:

- (i) compile exemplar work, annotated to show how the assessment criteria are to be applied;
- (ii) ensure that moderators meet the standardisation requirements and take action if any moderator fails to maintain the required standard;
- (iii) ensure that all moderators correctly interpret and apply the assessment criteria and that they are using the same criteria as the awarding organisation provides for the teachers;
- (iv) monitor the standards of any assistant principal moderators, team leaders and moderators;

- (v) ensure that appropriate preparatory, follow-up and remedial work with centres is carried out;
- (vi) be involved in the awarding process and advise members on how the unit/component functioned and, where appropriate, recommend preliminary mark ranges for the judgemental grade boundaries;
- (vii) submit to the chief examiner an evaluation report on issues relating to the performance of the component.

Moderators

- 1.15 Moderators are responsible for moderating centres' assessment of candidates' work in accordance with the agreed assessment criteria and the awarding organisation's procedures.

Assistant principal examiners, assistant principal moderators and team leaders

- 1.16 Assistant principal examiners and assistant principal moderators will 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 will be appointed to supervise a team of examiners or moderators. They will act as mentors for new appointees, check and guide the work of the examiners and moderators for whom they are responsible and advise on the need for adjustments to examiners' marks or moderators' recommendations.

Section 2

The relationship between the awarding organisation and centres

This section sets out what the awarding organisation will do to make their relationship with centres clear and streamlined. It covers:

- administrative demands;
- responsibilities of centres;
- reporting results;
- feedback to centres;
- support and guidance.

Administrative demands and confidentiality

- 2.1 The awarding organisation's demands on centres will be the minimum necessary to support professional competence and maintain the integrity of the examination. The awarding organisation will agree collectively with other JCQ awarding organisations – and comply individually – with common administrative and other practices in areas specified by the regulator to an agreed timetable and standard.
- 2.2 The awarding organisation will produce and distribute clear statements of administrative procedures and products that have an impact on centres.
- 2.3 The awarding organisation will take precautions to ensure the confidentiality of examinations, including controlled assessments. These precautions will ensure that scripts or copies of scripts from externally assessed components are seen by no one other than awarding organisation staff, our authorised agents and fee-earning personnel, representatives of the regulator and authorised staff at the candidate's centre until the closing date for enquiries about results.⁴

Responsibilities of centres

- 2.4 The awarding organisation will require centres offering its examinations to commit themselves to ensuring that:
 - (i) they meet the administrative requirements of the awarding organisation;
 - (ii) they comply with regulations concerning the security and confidentiality of external and controlled assessments;
 - (iii) they conduct external and internal assessments in accordance with the standards and procedures specified by the awarding organisation for the qualification;
 - (iv) internal assessments are conducted by staff who have the appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills in the area being assessed;

⁴ This does not exclude candidates' rights to access scripts as detailed in Section 10 of this document.

- (v) assessment evidence provided by candidates has been produced and authenticated according to the requirements of the specification;
- (vi) they secure the consistency of internal assessment through internal standardisation where more than one assessor is involved;
- (vii) they avail themselves of the training and guidance offered by the awarding organisation that is needed to ensure understanding of the expectations of the specification, including attendance at any compulsory training sessions for teachers;
- (viii) they retain candidates' assessment evidence under secure conditions to allow for the possibility of enquiries about results or appeals; if the nature of the work makes retention of portfolios or artefacts a problem, teachers must keep sufficient evidence (documentary, photographic, audiotaped or videotaped, as appropriate) to support their judgements;
- (ix) published appeals procedures relating to internal assessment decisions are made widely available and accessible to all candidates;
- (x) they meet requests from the awarding organisation for information for the purposes of moderation and monitoring;
- (xi) they comply with the procedures of the awarding organisation for dealing with and, as appropriate, reporting malpractice.

Reporting results

2.5 The awarding organisation will report results on a consistent basis applicable to all specifications within a qualification. Information about results will be presented in a clear and readily understood manner. Candidates, centres and other recipients of information about results will receive such information in a standard format.

2.6 The outcomes of the assessment of individual units will be reported.

Feedback to centres

2.7 The awarding organisation will provide a mechanism for receiving and responding to comments from centres and others about their examinations, and for providing information about the performance of candidates where appropriate.

2.8 The awarding organisation will take steps to help ensure that centres carry out their procedures correctly and that instructions given to centres have been followed.

Support and guidance

This section of the code should be read in conjunction with Section 5.

2.9 The awarding organisation will ensure that centres have access to regular advice and guidance, as appropriate, on the delivery and assessment of qualifications that are covered by this code of practice, supported by meetings as required.

- 2.10 The awarding organisation will provide appropriate support and guidance for teachers when a specification involving new techniques and approaches is introduced. This will take the form of written guidance, supported by meetings as appropriate.
- 2.11 The awarding organisation will provide opportunities – normally in the form of meetings – where teachers can discuss relevant qualifications issues.
- 2.12 The awarding organisation will provide further guidance to centres that fail to meet the requirements for internal assessment.

Section 3

Preparing question papers, tasks and mark schemes

This section should be read in conjunction with Section 5 and the appropriate appendix.

This section sets out what the awarding organisation will do to produce high-quality question papers, tasks and marking guidance. It covers:

- ensuring that checks for quality are in place;
- ensuring that the required content is covered in question papers;
- using clear language in question papers, tasks and marking instructions.

Division of responsibilities

- 3.1 The awarding organisation personnel involved in setting question papers, tasks and mark schemes include the chair of examiners, chief examiner, principal examiner(s), scrutineer, reviser(s) and awarding organisation officer(s). Their responsibilities are described in Section 1.
- 3.2 The chief examiner and principal examiner(s) are responsible for:
- (i) demonstrating how the specification's content and assessment criteria and objectives have been met in the question paper or task; this may take the form of a grid;
 - (ii) ensuring that the manner in which the content is tested in questions is clear and fit for purpose;
 - (iii) ensuring that, where candidates can choose between questions, it can be demonstrated that any permitted combination of questions provides for the coverage of a similar balance of content and assessment criteria;
 - (iv) taking account of feedback from previous assessment sessions, including recommendations from relevant monitoring reports;
 - (v) ensuring that final draft question papers/tasks meet the specification content and assessment objectives.

The timetable for drafting the question papers, tasks and provisional mark schemes will allow for all the above.

Preparing assessments including provisional mark schemes

- 3.3 Question papers/tasks and provisional mark schemes will be produced at the same time. The awarding organisation will make sure that they have contingency plans in place that allow them to react swiftly in the event of question paper security being breached before an examination.

Assessment of written communication

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

Revising the question papers, tasks and provisional mark schemes

- 3.5 The reviser(s):
- (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.

- 3.6 The initial draft question papers/tasks and mark schemes will be amended in the light of the comments and forwarded, together with the original comments of the reviser(s), to the awarding organisation officer for consideration by the question paper evaluation committee.

Evaluating assessments and mark schemes

- 3.7 A committee, normally chaired by the chair of examiners, will be convened to evaluate the question papers/tasks. The chief examiner and the principal examiner responsible for the particular units/components will attend. In addition, the question paper evaluation committee should include the reviser(s).
- 3.8 The committee will be serviced by an awarding organisation officer, who will provide administrative and technical support and guidance and ensure that awarding organisation policies are observed.
- 3.9 When the draft question papers/tasks and provisional mark schemes are submitted to the committee, they will be accompanied by the reviser's comments and details indicating where the content and assessment criteria for the specification have been met in the question papers/tasks, this maybe in the form of a grid.
- 3.10 The committee will seek to ensure that the challenge and level of demand of the question papers/tasks and mark schemes are maintained from one series to the next, referring, as appropriate, to previous years' question papers/tasks and mark schemes where these exist. For reasons of confidentiality the committee should not expect to have sight of question papers/tasks from the previous series where these have not been taken.

- 3.11 Where there is more than one option within a particular qualification type, the chair of examiners will seek to ensure that the question papers/tasks set for the different options make comparable demands on candidates.
- 3.12 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 will ensure, where appropriate, that:

Rubrics

- (i) are presented in a standard format and consistent style that readily distinguishes them from questions;
- (ii) are written so that candidates can distinguish between advice, instructions and information;
- (iii) indicate where candidates are expected to produce extended written material, and where marking will take into account their quality of written communication;
- (iv) detail any resources required, such as dictionaries, maps or calculators.

Questions/tasks

- (v) are within the specification;
- (vi) can be answered in the time allowed;
- (vii) use language that is clear, precise and intelligible to candidates;
- (viii) use source material that does not cause offence because of inappropriate subject matter or language;
- (ix) are not identical in successive years or examinations, except where this is consistent with the assessment model stated in the specification.

Question papers or tasks

- (x) show mark allocations;
- (xi) do not, as far as is practicable, advantage or disadvantage particular groups of candidates on grounds other than competence in the subject;
- (xii) make comparable demands on candidates who take alternative routes in the specification;
- (xiii) discriminate effectively across the range of attainment targeted by the assessment.

Mark schemes

- (xiv) include general instructions on marking;
- (xv) are clear and designed so that they can be easily and consistently applied;
- (xvi) allocate marks commensurate with the demands of questions/tasks;
- (xvii) include the mark allocation for each question/task and part of a question/sub-task, with a more detailed breakdown where necessary;

- (xviii) include marking instructions for those questions where extended written answers are expected and the quality of written communication used by candidates will be assessed;
- (xix) include an indication of the nature and range of responses, appropriate to the subject, likely to be worthy of credit;
- (xx) state the acceptable responses to each question/task, or part thereof, with detail that allows marking in a standardised manner;
- (xxi) allocate credit for what candidates know, understand and can do.

Equipment or materials

- (xxii) required for any externally assessed test or task set by the awarding organisation, including practicals, are specified in sufficient detail for the assessment to be carried out properly. The requirements for any such test/task should not make unreasonable demands on centres.

Checking the question papers, tasks and provisional mark schemes

- 3.13 The awarding organisation will ensure that it has appropriate arrangements in place to evaluate those question papers/tasks and mark schemes that have had to be extensively rewritten at the original question paper evaluation committee meeting and therefore could not be signed off for progression to the next stage.
- 3.14 Question papers/tasks and provisional mark schemes will be checked by the scrutineer. This process will include:
- (i) checking the final drafts of the 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 the question papers/tasks where appropriate;
 - (iii) checking the mark schemes to ensure that the marks given are identical to those on the question papers/tasks;
 - (iv) preparing a report for the awarding organisation officer.
- 3.15 The report will be sent to the chief examiner, who will then approve any necessary changes to the question papers/tasks and provisional mark schemes.
- 3.16 The final draft question papers/tasks and provisional mark schemes will be submitted for final approval to the chair of examiners and awarding organisation officer. Where the external assessment is to be offered through the medium of Irish, the final Irish-medium draft will be checked by an Irish-medium specialist who will advise the chair of examiners or awarding organisation officer on its approval.
- 3.17 Awarding organisation officers will alert appropriate senior management if they believe that a breach of the awarding organisation's policy has occurred. Senior management will act decisively and promptly to maintain quality and standards.

Section 4

Standardising marking: external assessment

This section applies to traditional and online marking.

This section does not apply to items that are marked solely by computer, such as objective test questions, or questions with responses that lend themselves to auto-marking by computer. In such cases, computer marking be designed to ensure 100 per cent accuracy from the outset. Appropriate quality control systems should be used to confirm the accuracy of computer-marked items.

This section sets out the processes that will be in place to ensure that candidates' examination papers are marked consistently and accurately to an agreed standard. It covers:

- **training, monitoring and supervising examiners;**
- **checking the work of examiners;**
- **action to be taken if marking instructions are not followed;**
- **reviewing examiner performance.**

Division of responsibilities

- 4.1 The awarding organisation personnel involved in the standardisation of marking include awarding organisation officer(s) and the following examiners: the chair of examiners, the chief examiner, principal examiner(s), assistant principal examiners and team leaders, where appointed, and examiners. Details of their responsibilities are given in Section 1.
- 4.2 There will be a chief examiner responsible for the specification as a whole. A principal examiner will be responsible for the professional judgements underpinning the process of standardisation for one or more specified units/components. An awarding organisation officer will be responsible at all times for supervising and guiding the standardisation process and ensuring that all steps in the process are followed.

General markers

- 4.3 Individuals who are not necessarily subject experts may mark candidates' work where they are not required to use a high level of subject expertise to interpret the mark scheme. Such individuals, known as general markers, will be trained, supervised and monitored to ensure that they are marking accurately and consistently.
- 4.4 The procedures used to train and monitor general markers will be as rigorous as those set out for examiners. These procedures will be fully documented.

Marking candidates' work

- 4.5 Candidates' work deriving from externally assessed units/components will be marked by suitably experienced and trained examiners and general markers. They will mark an item, which may be:
- (i) a script, which is a candidate's entire response to an external assessment;
 - (ii) a number of questions or tasks within a script;
 - (iii) one question or task within a script;
 - (iv) part of a question or task within a script.
- 4.6 Examiners and general markers will normally mark candidates' work from a number of different centres, subject to their total load being manageable. They must declare any personal interest in a centre before marking. They should 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 must not mark it but must instead seek guidance from the awarding organisation on what action to take. In the case of sole examiners or general markers where this requirement cannot be applied, the awarding organisation will make arrangements to ensure that this marking is scrutinised.

Number of examiners

- 4.7 There will be one principal examiner responsible for each unit/component, except where candidate numbers are small, when the chief examiner may be responsible for all units/components and mark all of the work. Under such circumstances the chief examiner will have recourse to a second opinion, as will any examiner who is the sole marker of a unit or component. This will normally be provided by the chair of examiners.
- 4.8 In the interests of reliable marking and to reduce the scope for variability, the awarding organisation will ensure that marking is undertaken by the minimum possible number of examiners.

In arriving at this minimum number, the awarding organisation will ensure that the amount of marking allocated to examiners takes account of:

- (i) the nature of the unit/component being assessed;
- (ii) the time required to mark candidates' work;
- (iii) the experience of examiners;
- (iv) the amount of marking they are able to manage during the marking period, within limits to be specified by the awarding organisation.

Where principal examiners, assistant principal examiners and team leaders are appointed, the amount of marking allocated to each of them will take their other duties into consideration.

- 4.9 Where there are Irish-medium items, the allocation of these items to examiners will ensure that standardisation and monitoring of marking can be undertaken even when the supervising examiner is not able to mark scripts in the medium of Irish. This will normally entail allocating both Irish- and English-medium scripts to Irish-medium examiners.
- 4.10 Where the number of examiners required demonstrably exceeds that which a chief examiner or principal examiner could reasonably oversee unaided, an appropriate supervisory structure will be established. If a team structure is used, the number of teams should be kept to the minimum needed to secure reliable and consistent marking. The relationships between and the functions of examiners with responsibility for supervising others will be clearly specified by the awarding organisation to secure the efficient monitoring and management of marking.

Team membership and training

- 4.11 Examiners will have relevant experience in the subject area where this is appropriate. Marking teams will 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 and the chief examiner, whose responsibilities are detailed in Section 1.
- 4.12 New examiners will receive appropriate training to enable them to carry out their duties. This training may depend 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 the awarding organisation and require training specific to the awarding organisation'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 will be allocated a mentor, normally a more senior examiner, to provide close support throughout the marking period.

First-hand marking

- 4.13 Principal examiners and, where appointed, assistant principal examiners and team leaders will 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 will mark all items across the paper to gain a feel for the candidates' performance.

The standardisation process

- 4.14 The standardisation process is designed to make sure that all examiners mark candidates' work consistently and accurately. It establishes a common standard of marking that will be used to maintain the quality of marking during the marking period.
- 4.15 All examiners are expected to have studied and provisionally marked an agreed range of items before standardisation.
- 4.16 All examiners must satisfactorily complete all aspects of the standardisation process relevant to their responsibilities; inability or failure to do so will result in disqualification from marking. Where disqualification occurs, the awarding organisation will take steps to ensure that the integrity of the marking process is maintained.

Securing consistent application of the mark scheme

- 4.17 The awarding organisation will ensure that all examiners have a well-founded and common understanding of the requirements of the mark scheme (appropriate to their responsibilities) and can apply them reliably. This is the responsibility of the principal examiner, whose professional judgements on the interpretation and application of the mark scheme for the unit/component must be final. Where there are large numbers of examiners and a supervisory structure has been set up, the awarding organisation will ensure that coordination of all assistant principal examiners and team leaders takes place to ensure consistency of practice.
- 4.18 The process of helping to secure the consistent application of the mark scheme will include:
- (i) an administrative briefing from the awarding organisation that includes reference to this section of the code, awarding organisation procedures, time schedules, administrative documentation and contact points;
 - (ii) an explanation from the principal examiner of the nature and significance of the standardisation process;
 - (iii) a briefing from the principal examiner on relevant points arising from current examinations, drawing as necessary on relevant points made about previous examinations in chief examiners' reports and regulatory monitoring reports;
 - (iv) a discussion of marking issues, including:
 - full consideration of the mark scheme in the context of achieving a clear and common understanding of the range of acceptable responses and the marks appropriate for each item being marked, and comparable marking standards for optional questions;
 - handling of unexpected, yet acceptable, answers;
 - (v) the marking of a number of common, clean responses sufficient to:
 - illustrate the range of performance likely to be demonstrated by the candidates in an examiner's allocation;
 - help consolidate a common understanding of the mark scheme, including any criteria for the assessment of written communication.

- 4.19 Where changes are made to the original mark scheme, the revised mark scheme will be agreed and authorised by the principal examiner. An awarding organisation officer will be responsible for providing the revised mark scheme, which is issued to all examiners during or within one working day of standardisation. Examiners must not finalise any marking until they have received this authorised revised version. In the case of small-entry examinations, even where there is only one examiner, final detailed mark schemes will be prepared.

Initial sampling to ensure consistent application of the mark scheme

- 4.20 Immediately after standardisation examiners will mark a sample of items for checking by a more senior examiner. The sample will normally be not less than 10 of each allocated item. This sample should also:

- (i) cover the range of performance within the allocated items as far as possible;
- (ii) cover as many different types of response as possible.

Examiners will review the marking of those scripts marked provisionally before standardisation to ensure the standard agreed at the meeting is applied correctly.

The awarding organisation has defined procedures in place that seek to ensure that principal examiners' marking is consistent.

- 4.21 Following standardisation, senior examiners will check the marked samples of the examiners for whom they are responsible to ensure that the authorised mark schemes are being accurately and consistently applied. A record will be kept of the marks awarded by both examiners and of the feedback given to the initial examiner.
- 4.22 Examiners will not complete marking until they have received clearance from the relevant senior examiners. Where senior examiners are not satisfied with the quality of an examiner's marking, they will explain the reasons to the examiner concerned. A further sample of marked items, normally the same size, should then be sent to the senior examiner for checking. Only if marking is then satisfactory will an examiner be allowed to proceed. Examiners who do not display sufficient care, accuracy or consistency when applying the mark scheme at this stage will not be allowed to continue marking and their items will be reallocated.

Monitoring marking and taking corrective action

- 4.23 The process of monitoring and taking corrective action to ensure that all examiners are marking consistently and accurately will be fully recorded to provide an audit trail.

4.24 The systems put in place to monitor marking may vary according to the method adopted by the awarding organisation: either traditional or online marking. The requirements for each method are set out below. The awarding organisation will meet the requirements set out in the appropriate subsection.

Traditionally marked scripts

4.25 The marking of all examiners who have been cleared by their senior examiners will continue to be monitored by a senior examiner and, if necessary, the appropriate corrective action taken. The monitoring will include sampling of sufficient scale, range and frequency for the awarding organisation to demonstrate that confidence can be placed in the monitoring process. Marks from this sampling process will be recorded by the senior examiner and used to construct a profile of the quality of marking of each examiner in terms of accuracy, consistency and leniency/severity.

4.26 A review of the entire marking process will be undertaken to decide if any adjustments should be made to the marks of individual examiners. The review will involve the awarding organisation officer, chief examiner, principal examiners and, where appointed, team leaders. The awarding organisation officer has final responsibility for implementing any adjustments made to the marks of individual examiners. Where adjustments are made to the marks of examiners who have marked both Irish- and English-medium scripts, the marks for scripts in both languages will be changed.

4.27 Adjustments to the marks of individual examiners will only be made after reference to:

- (i) sufficient scripts marked by the individual examiner to confirm, or refute, any suspected shift in accuracy, consistency and leniency/severity;
- (ii) how the marking of individual examiners compares with that of the relevant senior examiners;
- (iii) appropriate statistical evidence, for example raw mark distributions;
- (iv) where possible, the distribution of performance of the same candidates on different papers marked by different examiners.

4.28 Where the review shows that examiner inaccuracies have occurred, positive or negative adjustments of appropriate size will be made across the relevant range of marks. To be fair to candidates, the awarding organisation will ensure that adjustments do not change the rank order of marks given by the examiner, unless the examiner has been demonstrably inconsistent.

4.29 The process of adjustment will be fully documented for subsequent reference if necessary.

Online marked items

- 4.30 The marking of all examiners will continue to be monitored by a senior examiner and, if necessary, appropriate corrective action taken. The monitoring will include sampling of sufficient scale, range and frequency for the awarding organisation to demonstrate that confidence can be placed in the monitoring process. Marks from this sampling process will be recorded and used to construct a profile of the quality of marking of each examiner in terms of accuracy, consistency and leniency/severity.
- 4.31 The marking of individual examiners will be compared with that of a senior examiner at regular intervals throughout the process. Action will be taken, where required, to correct examiner inaccuracies. The awarding organisation 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

- 4.32 The processing of the examination will include 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 will be checked for incomplete marking and errors in totalling.
- 4.33 The awarding organisation will monitor and evaluate the performance of examiners and take appropriate action to maintain standards in current and future examinations. This may include further training.

Marking review for traditionally marked scripts

- 4.34 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.
- 4.35 The marking review will consist of a re-marking of scripts marked by examiners about whom there is lingering doubt.⁵ 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 the awarding organisation and/or chief/principal examiner considers there to be good reason to do so.

⁵ For GCSE linear specifications, the marking review may include the re-marking by senior examiners of components marked by examiners about whom there is lingering doubt, where candidates' aggregate marks are one per cent or less below the C/D grade boundary.

- 4.36 After the re-marking by senior examiners of those candidates' work identified as indicated in paragraphs 4.34 and 4.35, the revised mark will replace the original mark and the result will be automatically recalculated.
- 4.37 Where the awarding organisation offers examinations through the medium of Irish, the procedures for marking review will allow for the review, as appropriate, of the work of Irish-medium candidates.

Supervising externally assessed set assignments

- 4.38 The awarding organisation will specify the conditions under which externally set assignments should be undertaken. The conditions specified will facilitate the supervision and authentication of candidates' work by the centre.
- 4.39 The awarding organisation will require centres to record full details of the nature of any substantial assistance given to individual candidates that is beyond that of the teaching group as a whole, but within the parameters laid down by the specification.
- 4.40 The awarding organisation will require centres to confirm that they have satisfied themselves that the work is that of the candidate and has been carried out within the parameters governing assistance. The centre must present a written declaration that the candidate's assignment was conducted under the required conditions. The awarding organisation will make centres aware of the likely consequences if excessive assistance outside the parameters of the specification is given.

Retaining evidence

- 4.41 The awarding organisation will ensure that candidates' work is available for reference during the awarding meeting. All work will be retained for a sufficient period of time thereafter to allow for the possibility of enquiries about results or appeals.

Section 5

Standardising marking and moderation: internal assessment

Throughout this section, 'centre' should be taken to mean 'centre or consortium'.

This section sets out the arrangements to ensure that candidates' internally assessed work is marked consistently and accurately, to an agreed standard. It covers:

- **the systems for setting, authenticating, supervising and assessing this internally assessed work;**
- **training, monitoring and supervising moderators;**
- **action to be taken if the agreed standards are not applied or procedures are not followed;**
- **reviewing moderator performance.**

Division of responsibilities

- 5.1 The awarding organisation personnel involved in the assessment and moderation of internal assessments includes the chair of examiners, chief examiner, principal moderator, assistant principal moderators and team leaders, where appointed, moderators and awarding organisation officer(s). Details of their responsibilities are described in Section 1.
- 5.2 The awarding organisation will appoint a principal moderator for each internally assessed unit/component. The principal moderator will have substantial relevant experience of teaching and assessment in the subject area concerned.
- 5.3 The awarding organisation will appoint moderators and, where necessary, assistant principal moderators and team leaders with relevant teaching and assessment experience. The number of moderators appointed will be sufficient to ensure that standards in a given specification can be aligned effectively within and across centres to the timescale required. Moderators will, wherever possible, consider work from several centres, subject to their total load being manageable, and will not normally moderate the work of candidates from any centre in which they have a personal interest. An awarding organisation officer will be responsible at all times for supervising and guiding the proceedings and ensuring that all steps in the process are implemented.

Instructions, training and guidance for teachers

- 5.4 The awarding organisation will provide clear and comprehensive instructions and guidance to teachers. Centres and teachers will be given comprehensive information and feedback to ensure that they understand and can meet their responsibilities in relation to the requirements of the specification. The awarding organisation will provide training for teachers in task-setting, marking and internal standardisation when new or significantly revised specifications are introduced and as necessary thereafter. The awarding organisation will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the instructions, training and guidance provided for teachers so that they can be continually improved.
- 5.5 The awarding organisation will provide centres with clear administrative instructions, including details of how to record, transcribe and check individual candidates' marks. The awarding organisation will provide guidance on how to make decisions and record relevant information.

Setting internally assessed tasks

- 5.6 Where internally assessed tasks are set by the awarding organisation, the tasks and marking criteria will receive appropriate quality checks. The awarding organisation will ensure that it adheres to the relevant principles of paragraph 3.12.
- 5.7 Where the scheme of assessment allows centres/candidates to devise tasks, the awarding organisation will set down parameters and guidance for task-setting and must publish detailed assessment criteria. The parameters will define the scale and nature of tasks that are acceptable. The marking criteria will require the appropriate assessment objectives to be fully addressed.
- 5.8 Where the scheme of assessment requires candidates to produce extended written material in English or Irish, the marks awarded will take into account the quality of written communication as defined by the appropriate qualification-type criteria.
- 5.9 Whenever a new or significantly revised specification is introduced that involves new internally assessed tasks, the awarding organisation will take steps to ensure that the tasks and mark schemes that centres devise are of an appropriate standard and conform to the requirements of the specification.

Supervising internal assessment

- 5.10 The awarding organisation will specify the conditions under which internally assessed work can be undertaken. The specified conditions will facilitate the supervision and authentication of candidates' work by teachers. Where, because of the nature of the subject, the specification requires centre-based candidates to undertake some internally assessed activities outside their school or college, the awarding organisation will require that sufficient work takes place under direct supervision to allow the teachers concerned to authenticate each candidate's work with confidence. The awarding

organisation will ensure that moderators apply awarding organisation guidelines relating to word limits.

- 5.11 The awarding organisation will specify the degree to which candidates are allowed to redraft their work prior to it being marked by the teacher.

Authentication of candidates' work

- 5.12 The awarding organisation will require teachers to record full details of the nature of all assistance given to individual candidates that is beyond that of the teaching group as a whole, but within the parameters laid down by the specification. A record must be kept where the amount of assistance given varies between teaching groups. The awarding organisation will require teachers to take any assistance into account, according to the awarding organisation's instructions, when assessing candidates' work.

- 5.13 The awarding organisation will require teachers to provide a written declaration for each candidate that confirms that:

- (i) the candidate's work was conducted under the conditions laid down by the specification;
- (ii) they have authenticated the candidate's work and are satisfied that the work produced is solely that of the candidate concerned.

- 5.14 The awarding organisation will require centres to obtain from each candidate a signed declaration that authenticates the work they produce for internal assessment as their own. A mark of zero or absent must be recorded if a candidate cannot provide confirmation of the authenticity of the work they have produced for internal assessment.

- 5.15 The awarding organisation will investigate any cases where a centre is unable to authenticate internally assessed work submitted for moderation. Where a centre is unable to authenticate internally assessed work produced by any of its candidates, either within the initial moderation sample or the teaching group as a whole, that work must be recorded as contributing zero marks to the overall award for the candidates concerned.

- 5.16 Where the awarding organisation accepts entries from private/external candidates, it will ensure that adequate procedures exist for the authentication of internally assessed components.

Assessment and standardisation within centres

- 5.17 The awarding organisation will require teachers to show clearly how credit has been assigned in relation to the criteria defined in the specification. Internal assessments will indicate where quality of written communication will be assessed, where this is appropriate. The awarding organisation will provide guidance on how this is to be done.

- 5.18 Where the regulator has agreed that the nature of the subject requires credit to be allocated for the skills displayed by candidates in redrafting and refining

work, the awarding organisation will ensure that teachers are given explicit parameters defining the limits within which they may give feedback to candidates.

- 5.19 The awarding organisation will require 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. The awarding organisation will specify the necessary procedures, including the use of reference and archive materials where available and trial marking of common pieces of work. The awarding organisation will normally provide training.
- 5.20 The awarding organisation will provide an opportunity for centres to check that they are applying the assessment criteria appropriately.

Moderating assessments submitted by centres

- 5.21 To ensure that standards are aligned within and across centres, the awarding organisation will moderate the marks submitted by each centre against the specified assessment criteria.
- 5.22 The awarding organisation will adjust the marks submitted by centres as necessary to bring each centre's judgements into line with the required standard. The awarding organisation will take remedial action where there is evidence of standards being applied inconsistently, or of other departures from specification requirements.
- 5.23 The awarding organisation will provide centres with details of the moderation procedures that apply to a specification, amplifying as necessary the account printed in the specification itself. The documentation will confirm the awarding organisation's right to act as it judges necessary to align standards. In particular, arrangements will be specified for:
- (i) 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;
 - (ii) sampling the judgements made by all teachers where there is evidence that this is necessary to guarantee confidence in the internal assessment process;
 - (iii) requesting additional samples or all relevant work from all candidates, if necessary;
 - (iv) establishing whether a centre's marks require adjustment, determining the nature of any required adjustment and making the necessary changes;
 - (v) giving centres details of, and reasons for, any significant adjustments made.
- 5.24 The awarding organisation will normally adjust marks from a centre where the difference between moderated and unmoderated marks exceeds the awarding organisation's specified tolerance limits. Final decisions will be based on consideration of the full 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, the awarding organisation will ensure that adjustments do not change the centre's rank order, unless the centre marks are demonstrably inconsistent.

- 5.25 Statistical information will be used, where applicable, to inform the awarding organisation's final judgements on marks awarded.
- 5.26 The awarding organisation will use one or more moderation methods that are reliable and valid for the subject area concerned. Where the awarding organisation offers assessments through the medium of Irish, the moderation methods will ensure reliable and valid moderation of Irish-medium internally assessed work. For internal assessment that leads to written outcomes, moderators will inspect samples of candidates' written work.
- 5.27 For assessments from which no written outcome arises, the awarding organisation will take all necessary steps to ensure consistency of standards. This will include reviewing samples of candidates' actual work wherever possible, for example by visit or by post. Alternatively, the awarding organisation may moderate on the basis of photographed or recorded evidence accompanied by teacher's notes detailing the basis for their assessment decisions. Where appropriate, checks on the consistency of standards may take forms other than centre visits or the review of audio/visual evidence.

Standardisation of moderators

- 5.28 The awarding organisation will provide training and follow-up guidance for moderators in all relevant aspects of the internal assessment units and the moderation procedures. All moderators must take part in the training.
- 5.29 The awarding organisation will arrange for the standardisation of all moderators, to ensure common understanding of procedures and standards before moderation begins. This is the responsibility of the principal moderator, who will ensure that the standards of the unit/component are maintained and are consistent with the specification and assessment criteria, and whose professional judgements on the interpretation and application of the marking criteria for the unit/component must be final. Where the number of moderators is sufficiently large to require a supervisory structure, pre-standardisation of all assistant principal moderators and team leaders who have been appointed will take place to ensure consistency of practice. All standardisation will include the consideration of archive material, where appropriate, selected to show candidates' work assessed in relation to the full range of assessment criteria and exemplar material, where available.
- 5.30 All principal moderators and, where appointed, assistant principal moderators and team leaders will undertake some first-hand moderation of centres' assessments in each examination series.

- 5.31 The standards applied by each moderator will be checked by a more senior moderator, who repeats the assessment of candidates' work on a specified sample. Where the awarding organisation offers examinations through the medium of Irish, the allocation of candidate work to each moderator must allow the checking of the work of Irish-medium moderators by senior moderators.
- 5.32 A senior moderator will complete a report for the awarding organisation on the work of each moderator. Moderators whose standards are judged to be unsatisfactory may not continue their moderation, and candidates' work from all their centres will be re-moderated. Such moderators may not be reappointed without satisfactorily completing further training.
- 5.33 Where candidates' moderated work or evidence of that work cannot, for logistical reasons, be posted or inspected at a meeting, a senior moderator will normally accompany the moderator on at least one visit to a centre (normally a centre specified by the senior moderator or the awarding organisation) to check the moderator's judgements.
- 5.34 Moderators will be provided with clear administrative instructions, including details of how to record, transcribe and check moderated marks. The awarding organisation will ensure that checks are made of the accuracy with which moderators record and transcribe marks.

Reusing marks

- 5.35 Where candidates repeat non-unitised qualifications, moderated marks for their internally assessed work may be carried forward during the lifetime of the specification.

Dealing with unsatisfactory practice

- 5.36 The awarding organisation will provide centres that fail to meet its requirements for internal assessment with further guidance.
- 5.37 Where a significant problem occurs – including non-engagement in compulsory training – the awarding organisation will approve and monitor the centre's arrangements for assessment and standardisation for as long as necessary, informing:
- (i) the regulator;
 - (ii) where it is in the public interest to do so, the other awarding organisations.
- 5.38 Where a centre fails to engage in compulsory training, the awarding organisation will take such steps as are necessary to safeguard the interests of candidates in future awards.

Section 6

Awarding, maintaining an archive and issuing results

This section should be read in conjunction with the appropriate appendix.

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 candidates' work at key grade boundaries;**
- **issuing results on agreed dates.**

Awarding committee composition

- 6.1 The awarding committee is chaired by the chair of examiners and will include the chief examiner(s), principal examiner(s) and principal moderator(s).⁶ 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. Awarding organisation officers will advise the committee and direct its procedures. Where necessary the committee may include others with particular expertise.
- 6.2 Where there is more than one specification in the same subject, or where specifications share units, or where the same unit is assessed through the medium of English and Irish, there will be a single awarding committee or an overlap of membership (chair of examiners and at least one other member) across the committees responsible. The particular responsibility of the overlapping members of the committee is to consider the consistency of the recommendations in the light of standards applied in other specifications.
- 6.3 For specifications with a large number of units or components, a sub-group of the awarding committee may be convened to award a component or unit of a specification. Recommendations made by the sub-group will be referred to the awarding committee for approval. A sample of candidates' work at the proposed boundary marks will be available to the awarding committee for reference.

⁶ The roles of chief examiner, principal examiner and principal moderator may be combined in one person in small-entry specifications.

Responsibility of the awarding committee

- 6.4 The awarding committee is responsible for checking that the required standards are brought to bear in each component/unit and in the qualification as a whole, assisting the chair of examiners in arriving at recommended boundary marks for each key grade in the qualification.
- 6.5 The objectives of the awarding committee are to maintain grade standards over time, and to align grade standards across awarding organisations and across different specifications within a qualification type. For the first award of specifications with no cognate predecessor, the prime objective of the awarding committee is to establish appropriate grade standards. Where specifications are offered by more than one awarding organisation, standards should be aligned across awarding organisations.
- 6.6 The awarding committee is required to make boundary recommendations, which must be made in the light of available aggregated subject outcomes.

Additional information on aggregation for each qualification type and full details of the key grade boundaries is provided in Appendix 1.

Prior to the award

- 6.7 For an ongoing specification, the awarding organisation will ensure before the award that the awarding committee is fully conversant with the standard of work associated with particular unit/component grades in previous equivalent examination series. Prior to the award, the awarding organisation will therefore provide the awarding committee with question papers/tasks, mark schemes and candidates' work (marked scripts and/or internally assessed material) exemplifying grade boundaries for previous awards.
- 6.8 The awarding organisation will:
- (i) ensure that sufficient marks are on its system to inform the awarding committee's grading decisions;
 - (ii) ensure that appropriate ranges of candidates' work (marked scripts and/or internally assessed material) are available for the award;
 - (iii) identify, on the basis of preliminary calculation of outcomes, where problems of consistency and comparability may arise.
- 6.9 Principal examiners and principal moderators may be asked by the awarding organisation to propose preliminary ranges of marks at the key grade boundaries for each component/unit. These proposals will be made following consideration of sufficient candidates' work (marked scripts and/or internally assessed material) and/or item-level data.
- 6.10 In readiness for consideration by the awarding committee, the awarding organisation will select candidates' work covering the expected range⁷

⁷ Typically this range could span between three and seven marks.

for each key grade boundary, based on the available statistical and technical data as detailed in paragraph 6.12 viii–xiv, and informed by the principal examiners' and principal moderators' proposed preliminary ranges of marks, when they have been requested.

The award

- 6.11 The awarding organisation will provide the awarding committee with procedures that are consistent with this code. These will be used to conduct the award and may be set out as an agenda.
- 6.12 The following will be used, as appropriate, to inform the determination of the key grade boundary marks. In particular, certain types of evidence will be more appropriate when maintaining qualification standards over time than when setting standards in a new qualification:

Qualitative evidence

- (i) copies of question papers/tasks and final mark schemes;
- (ii) principal examiners' reports on how the assessment functioned;
- (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

- (vi) any published performance descriptions, grade descriptions and exemplar material;
- (vii) any other supporting material (such as marking guides for components where the evidence is of an ephemeral nature).

Quantitative evidence

- (viii) subject-level expectations, when available;
- (ix) information on candidates' performance in at least two previous equivalent series, where available;
- (x) details of changes in entry patterns, choices of options and prior attainment, where available;
- (xi) information about the relationship between component/unit level data and whole-subject performance, where available;

- (xii) technical information, including mark distributions relating to the question papers/tasks and individual questions for the current and previous series, where available;
- (xiii) item-level statistics⁸;
- (xiv) information on centres' estimated grades for all candidates, including:
 - qualification-level estimates for linear (including linear unitised) specifications;
 - unit-level estimates for externally assessed units in all other unitised specifications.⁹

Instructions from the regulator

- (xv) any written instruction from the regulator specifying particular evidence that must inform the awarding process for a particular series;
- (xvi) relevant evidence from the regulator' monitoring and comparability reports.

6.13 Awarders will consider candidates' work in the expected range for each key boundary, ensuring that a sufficient amount of candidates' work is inspected. At this stage the awarders will work independently.¹⁰

6.14 A single mark for the grade boundary will then be recommended by the chair of examiners according to the appropriate procedure.¹¹

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 will identify whether the consensus of awarders' opinion is that the statistically recommended boundary fairly represents a grade boundary performance. If so, this mark will be 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 statistically recommended boundary has not been reached, the scrutiny range will be extended in whatever direction necessary and a recommended boundary established following the procedure outlined below.

⁸ Reference to item – level statistics is compulsory for units that are entirely composed of multiple-choice questions.

⁹ For units that are entirely composed of multiple-choice questions, information on centres' estimated grades for all candidates need to be collected only for a period that includes two summer awarding series.

¹⁰ Whether that be face-to-face within the same meeting room or independently in an e-awarding environment.

¹¹ At a face-to-face award, the chair of examiners identification of the final recommended grade boundary mark for a key grade will normally take place immediately after the awarders' consideration of scripts at that grade. In the e-awarding scenario, it will normally occur once the awarders' consideration of scripts at all grades has been concluded.

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 will identify the lowest mark for which there is consensus that the quality of work is worthy of the higher grade. This forms the upper limiting mark.
 - (ii) Next, working up from the bottom of the range, the chair of examiners will identify 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 will then weigh all the available evidence – quantitative and qualitative – and recommend 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 should be such that dependent subject-level outcomes are consistent with the evidence of relevant technical and statistical data.
- 6.15 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 will ensure 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 will be used.
- 6.16 When the boundary marks for an internally assessed component/unit have been preset, the grade distribution for the component/unit – together with data on previous distributions and any changes in the entry pattern – will be reported to the awarders.
- 6.17 For internally assessed components/units or externally assessed components/units where the tasks are not specified by the awarding organisation, where the nature of the assessment tasks and the marking criteria have not changed, the key boundary marks may be carried forward from the previous series. The boundary marks should be carried forward only if this is recommended by the principal moderator after completion of the moderation process, and by the designated awarding organisation officer in the light of the technical and statistical evidence available. A sample of current candidates' work at the proposed boundary marks to be carried forward will be available in the awarding organisation's office for reference, should this be necessary.¹² Regardless, the grade distribution for the component/unit will be reported to the awarders.
- 6.18 Boundary marks for internally assessed components/units, or externally assessed components/units where the tasks are not specified by the awarding organisation, which have not been preset and which are not being carried forward, must be determined according to the procedures set out in paragraphs 6.7–6.14.¹²

¹² It is not compulsory for awarders to consider work on these components at boundaries that are being carried forward, whether in the face-to-face scenario or at an e-award.

- 6.19 For units that are entirely composed of multiple-choice questions, the chair of examiners, chief examiner and principal examiner will be provided with item-level analyses, including facility and discrimination indices, and the correct answer to each item. A valid methodology will be used to generate grade boundary recommendations, which will ultimately be endorsed by the chair of examiners.
- 6.20 Other arrangements may apply to specifications or options with small entries to avoid distortions caused by atypical mark distributions. See Appendix 2 for appropriate alternative arrangements.

After the award

- 6.21 The chair of examiners' recommendations will be reviewed by the awarding organisation officer with overall responsibility for the quality and standards of qualifications to ensure that grades awarded represent continuity and parity of standards over time, between awarding organisations and across specifications. In this review, the following evidence will be considered:
- (i) reports from the award, including the chair of examiners' recommendations;
 - (ii) evidence of awarders' professional judgements on the quality of candidates' work within the range considered at the award;
 - (iii) the most complete technical and statistical evidence available, including that outlined in paragraph 6.12 and any generated subsequent to the award (for example, information from cognate subjects).
- 6.22 Should the awarding organisation require a reconsideration of the chair of examiners' recommendations then, whenever possible, the chair of examiners will be engaged in this process and be consulted before any change is finalised.
- 6.23 Where a final boundary mark is proposed that lies outside the range over which candidates' work was considered at the award, the awarding committee (or a sub-group which will include the chair of examiners) will be consulted and the regulator will be informed.
- 6.24 Responsibility for setting the final grade boundary rests with the awarding organisation officer with overall responsibility for the quality and standards of qualifications. If this officer selects a final grade boundary that is not supported by the chair of examiners, the regulator will be informed before the decision is finalised and provided with an evidence-based justification.
- 6.25 If upon receipt of such information, the regulator is dissatisfied with the justification and proposed decision, the awarding organisation will reconsider and provide the regulator with a further report on the final decision.

Maintaining an archive

- 6.26 While a specification remains in use, the awarding organisation will maintain 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, the awarding organisation will retain equivalent evidence from the first examination of the specification to guide the work of examiners and awarders.
- 6.27 The awarding organisation also will supply material in accordance with the requirements of the National Archive.

Issue of results

- 6.28 The awarding organisation will issue results for each series of examinations on the agreed dates.
- 6.29 The awarding organisation will ensure that all available work from candidates is marked and/or moderated before results are issued. In the event of any difficulty, the awarding organisation will notify the regulator in good time of the nature of the difficulty and the action taken to resolve it.

Section 7

Candidates with particular requirements

This section sets out the arrangements that are in place to meet the needs of candidates with particular requirements without undermining standards. It covers:

- **giving centres clear information about the arrangements available, eligibility criteria, application process and deadlines;**
 - **giving the regulators data about the arrangements annually.**
- 7.1 The awarding organisation will consider the needs of all candidates, including those with particular requirements, when preparing question papers, tasks (including internally assessed tasks) and mark schemes, without compromising the assessment criteria.
- 7.2 Concerning access arrangements and special consideration, the awarding organisation will identify a person, team or department to be responsible for administering the arrangements for candidates with particular requirements. Staff involved in administering these arrangements will be provided with appropriate training to carry out their duties.
- 7.3 Candidates may have particular requirements for a number of reasons including:
- (i) a permanent (long-term) disability¹³ or medical condition;
 - (ii) a temporary (short-term) disability or medical condition;
 - (iii) an illness, other indisposition or unforeseen incident at the time of the assessment;
 - (iv) where their first language is not English or Irish.
- 7.4 The assessment requirements of individual candidates may vary over time and according to the demands of the subject and the method of assessment. Centres should consider the particular requirements of individual candidates and then follow the awarding organisation's regulations and guidelines to make sure that these needs are met appropriately.

Access arrangements¹⁴

- 7.5 The awarding organisation will, when necessary, approve appropriate access arrangements for candidates with particular requirements to enable them to have access to fair assessment and to demonstrate attainment. The awarding organisation will not approve access arrangements that will directly affect performance in the attributes that are the focus of assessment or otherwise affect the integrity of the award.

¹³ This would lead to a reasonable adjustment. See the glossary.

¹⁴ Defined in the glossary.

- 7.6 The awarding organisation will provide centres with information for making access arrangements that includes:
- (i) conditions for eligibility;
 - (ii) the range of available access arrangements;
 - (iii) clear guidance on when an access arrangement may not be permitted, as it would undermine the assessment in question;
 - (iv) how and when applications should be made.
- 7.7 The awarding organisation will ensure that access arrangements:
- (i) take account of all current legislation and regulatory requirements that have an impact on equality of access to assessment and qualifications;
 - (ii) comply with regulatory requirements and do not invalidate the assessment requirements set out in the specification for the relevant qualification;
 - (iii) do not give the candidates an unfair advantage or disadvantage when compared with candidates for whom access arrangements are not being made;
 - (iv) maintain the relevance, validity, reliability, comparability and integrity of the assessment.

Special consideration¹⁵

- 7.8 Special consideration involves procedures that may result in an adjustment to the marks of candidates who have not been able to demonstrate attainment because of exceptional circumstances at the time of the assessment. The awarding organisation will arrange for such adjustments to be given to candidates who were present for the assessment but were disadvantaged, or were unable to be present for a unit/component for reasons deemed to be acceptable. The awarding organisation will provide centres with information about applying for special consideration, including:
- (i) conditions for eligibility, including minimum assessment requirements;
 - (ii) the application procedures and deadlines.
- 7.9 The awarding organisation must ensure that the minimum evidence required to make an award by special consideration is specified. This is an award that is made to a candidate who has covered the course but is unable through temporary illness, injury or indisposition to complete all of the usual assessment requirements.

Monitoring and reporting

- 7.10 The awarding organisation must collect and report to the regulator data in relation to access arrangements and special consideration.

¹⁵ Defined in the glossary.

- 7.11 The awarding organisation has procedures in place to monitor actively the work of centres, with the option of taking any or all of the following actions to maintain the integrity of accredited qualifications:
- (i) routine inspection of a range of different types of centre;
 - (ii) increasing the level of monitoring and sampling;
 - (iii) de-registering a centre.
- 7.12 The awarding organisation will report annually to the regulator on the outcome of its centre monitoring. This report will include any issues or problems that have been identified, including malpractice, and the action taken to maintain the integrity of assessments.
- 7.13 The awarding organisation will regularly review and evaluate the effectiveness of its arrangements for candidates with particular requirements. This evaluation should include:
- (i) the identification of any changes or improvements that need to be made (including the evidence base on which judgements have been made);
 - (ii) the actions arising from evaluation (including any target dates for completion).

Section 8

Malpractice

This section sets out the arrangements that identify and deal with cases of malpractice to make sure standards are maintained. It covers reporting and investigating malpractice, and taking action.

- 8.1 The awarding organisation has procedures in place for dealing with malpractice on the part of candidates, centre staff or others involved in providing a qualification and will ensure that all centres, its own staff and the regulator receive copies of those procedures.
- 8.2 The awarding organisation will require centres to report to it any malpractice suspected after candidates have been registered, making clear any possible implications of a failure to cooperate for the issue of certificates and the future acceptance of entries.
- 8.3 The awarding organisation will report significant cases of malpractice to the regulator automatically and report all cases on request. The awarding organisation will initiate investigations and cooperate fully with any follow-up investigations required by the regulator, sharing information with other awarding organisations or with other agencies as necessary.
- 8.4 The awarding organisation will investigate any instances of alleged or suspected malpractice in either the internally or externally assessed components and will take such action, with respect to the candidates and centres concerned, as is necessary to maintain the integrity of the examination.
- 8.5 The awarding organisation has the right to impose special conditions on the future involvement of a teacher in the conduct, supervision or administration of its examinations and to refuse to accept examination entries from a centre in cases where malpractice is established. Other awarding organisations will be informed when such special conditions are imposed.
- 8.6 The awarding organisation will investigate each case of alleged malpractice to establish the full facts and circumstances relating to the case and, where appropriate, the candidate's conduct in other assessments. The head of a centre will normally be asked to submit a written report on the case to the awarding organisation and to provide appropriate supporting documentation.
- 8.7 Each case of malpractice will be considered and judged on an individual basis in the light of all information available. The outcome should be commensurate with the gravity of the malpractice as determined by the awarding organisation.

Section 9

Enquiries about results and appeals

This section sets out the arrangements for further checks if a centre or candidate believes their results are incorrect. It covers the range of services and relevant deadlines.

- 9.1 The awarding organisation will publish its arrangements for the submission of enquiries about results and for appeals against the awarding organisation's decisions. These arrangements will indicate that all summer enquiries must be received by 21 September and advise of a comparable schedule for any additional series that has been agreed with the regulator.
- 9.2 The awarding organisation will publish agreed arrangements for dealing with enquiries about results and for appeals against their decisions.
- 9.3 The services available for enquiries about results will include a clerical check and post-results reviews of marking and moderation of internally assessed components. For level 3 qualifications where a candidate's place in higher education is dependent upon the outcome, a post-results review of marking service is available on a priority basis for individual candidates.
- 9.4 The enquiry about results procedure, which is carried out on internally assessed work, will be undertaken on the sample used at initial moderation.
- 9.5 The awarding organisation will publish common administrative arrangements and deadlines. The awarding organisation will provide notification of the outcome of any enquiry concerning a subject grade within the following deadlines:
 - (i) a priority post-results review of marking, within 15 calendar days of receipt;
 - (ii) a clerical check, within 10 calendar days of receipt;
 - (iii) a post-results review of marking, within 20 calendar days of receipt;
 - (iv) a post-results review of moderation, within 35 calendar days of receipt.All reports relating to paid enquiries will also normally be provided within 40 calendar days.
- 9.6 Where an enquiry has been made, the original script cannot be returned until the enquiry is completed.
- 9.7 The awarding organisation will, wherever possible, ensure that a post-results review of marking or moderation is undertaken by someone other than the original examiner/moderator.
- 9.8 The awarding organisation will make a charge for the result enquiry services. The awarding organisation will publish principles relating to the refund of fees in instances where candidates' grades are changed following an enquiry or subsequent appeal. In the case of a group enquiry, the awarding organisation

will refund either the total fee or a proportion depending on the outcomes of the enquiry. Information about these principles and their application will be provided to all centres.

- 9.9 In cases where the outcome of an enquiry brings into question the accuracy of results for other candidates in the same examination, the awarding organisation will take whatever steps it considers appropriate to protect the interests of all candidates who may have been similarly affected.
- 9.10 In cases where a clerical check or post-results review of marking reveals inaccurate marking, subject grades or unit marks may be confirmed, raised or lowered. The awarding organisation will ensure that centres confirm to them that candidates whose work is to be clerically checked or the subject of a post-results review of marking have consented to their inclusion in the process. In the case of private candidates, the awarding organisation will ensure that the candidate is advised that their mark may be confirmed, raised or lowered and establish that the candidate consents to this. The awarding organisation will inform centres that before giving their consent, candidates should be advised that their grades may be confirmed, raised or lowered as a result of the initial enquiry or any subsequent appeal. Where the awarding organisation initiates an extended review of marking because the outcome of a post-results review of marking brings into question the accuracy of results for other candidates in the same examination, marks and subject grades already awarded to candidates who were not part of the initial enquiry may be lowered, confirmed or raised.
- 9.11 In cases where a post-results review of moderation reveals inaccurate moderation, subject grades already awarded can only be confirmed or raised. Marks for units or components may be confirmed, raised or lowered, and these marks will be carried forward to any subsequent subject grade. It is not necessary to obtain candidates' permission before a centre requests re-moderation.
- 9.12 The awarding organisation will not consider enquiries about results directly from internal candidates or their carers. Enquiries about results will be accepted directly from private candidates.
- 9.13 The awarding organisation requires centres offering its examinations to ensure that they have in place:
- (i) a procedure for candidates or their carers to request access to the enquiry and appeals system;
 - (ii) a procedure for lodging enquiries about results in cases where the centre supports an enquiry lodged by a candidate or carer;
 - (iii) a formal, codified procedure for handling disputes when a candidate or carer disagrees with a decision by the centre not to support an enquiry.

Centres are be required to ensure that the procedures are published and made widely available and accessible to all candidates and their carers.

- 9.14 In deciding whether to support an enquiry or appeal, centres should take account of all relevant factors and afford candidates or their carers a reasonable opportunity to express their views.
- 9.15 Following receipt of the outcome of an enquiry, appellants will be allowed up to 30 calendar days in which to lodge an appeal. Appeals should focus on whether the awarding organisation:
- (i) used procedures that were consistent with this code of practice;
 - (ii) applied its procedures properly and fairly in arriving at judgements.
- 9.16 Appeals will be heard by awarding organisation appeals panels including at least one independent member (who is not, and has not been, a member of the awarding organisation's board or committees, or an employee or examiner at that awarding organisation, at any time during the previous five years). The awarding organisation will advertise for and appoint independent members of appeals panels who match a specification agreed by the regulator. The awarding organisation will use arrangements, endorsed by the regulator, to appoint (for terms up to four years) and train independent panelists to hear appeals. All appointments of independent panelists should be notified to the regulator.
- 9.17 Where appeals are lodged, the awarding organisation will carry out a preliminary appeals process and then – unless the outcome leads the appellant to withdraw the application – conduct a formal appeals hearing and send a decision letter within 50 working days¹⁶ of the lodging of the original request.
- 9.18 When the awarding organisation's enquiries and appeals procedures have been exhausted, a request for an appeal may be made to the Northern Ireland Regulator.

¹⁶ Any working days falling between 25 December and 1 January inclusive will be excluded from the allowed 50 working days.

Section 10

Access to marked examination scripts

This section sets out the arrangements are in place for providing access to marked examination scripts. It covers conditions of access and relevant deadlines.

10.1 A 'script'¹⁷ refers to any candidate's work deriving from an externally assessed component that is primarily written, subject to a list of excluded components agreed by the regulator. These arrangements do not apply to internally assessed components.

Rights to access

10.2 Access to externally assessed components will be granted when a request is made to the awarding organisation either by a centre or by a private candidate. Access will be available by individual component within the parameters published on the awarding organisation's website.

10.3 The awarding organisation will make clear to centres that all requests to have access to their marked examination scripts from candidates who sat examinations at that centre should be processed and transmitted to the awarding organisation within the timescales prescribed below. The awarding organisation will accept access to scripts requests directly from private candidates.

10.4 The awarding organisation will inform centres that it is the centre's responsibility to make candidates aware of the arrangements for access to scripts in advance of the candidates sitting any examination to which the arrangements apply.

Conditions of access

10.5 The awarding organisation will release scripts to centres on the following conditions:

- (i) Scripts must be seen only by teachers who are members of staff at that centre or returned directly to the candidates concerned.
- (ii) Prior written permission must be obtained from any candidates concerned where teachers intend to use their scripts as examples for other students. This permission must be sought only after the candidates have received their results. Candidates who grant their permission have the right to anonymise their scripts before use.
- (iii) Scripts used by teachers at the centre must be kept securely within the centre. Once no longer required, scripts must be disposed of confidentially. Confidential disposal must not take place earlier than

¹⁷ An electronic image, including marks and annotations, may be provided.

three months after the publication of results or appeal involving those scripts.

- (iv) Candidates have the right to instruct their centres not to request their scripts for any purposes.
- (v) The originals of scripts that are or have been the subject of any malpractice investigation can be withheld by the awarding organisation. In these circumstances a centre or private candidate may request copies of the scripts.

Supporting enquiries

- 10.6 In order to allow consideration of scripts for the sole purpose of deciding whether to request a GCE enquiry about results, centres and private candidates may request advance copies of the relevant scripts. A request for such copies must be sent to arrive at the awarding organisation no later than eight days after the publication of results. The copies will be sent by the awarding organisation so that the centre or private candidate receives them no later than 10 days before the closing date for enquiries about results.
- 10.7 The awarding organisation will make available on request copies of candidates' marked scripts along with the outcomes of enquiries about results for both priority and regular enquiries about results.

Supporting teaching and learning

- 10.8 Requests for access to scripts for teaching and learning purposes must be received by the awarding organisation no later than one week after the closing date for enquiries about results. In response to these requests, scripts will be sent by the awarding organisation so that the centre or private candidate receives them no earlier than the closing date for such enquiries and no later than eight weeks after the closing date for enquiries about results.
- 10.9 The originals of scripts that have been the subject of an enquiry about results cannot be returned until the enquiry is completed.
- 10.10 Once the awarding organisation has returned an original script to a centre, that script can no longer be subjected to an enquiry or investigation.

Further responsibilities of the awarding organisation

- 10.11 The awarding organisation will continue to mark and annotate all scripts in accordance with good practice recognised by the regulator.
- 10.12 The awarding organisation will continue its arrangements to collect appropriate archive materials for all examinations.

Appendix 1

Grading for GCE (legacy and revised) and GCSE (legacy and revised) qualifications

Qualifications that use uniform marks

- 1 Aggregate marks will be calculated on the basis of a uniform mark scale (UMS). Uniform marks for each unit must be calculated in such a way as to maintain the candidates' relative position between the raw grade boundaries. Each unit must be reported in uniform marks. Uniform marks for individual assessment units are added to generate a final grade for the qualification as a whole.
- 2 The terminal requirement and resit rules for each qualification level are as follows:
 - (i) GCSE
Units that account for at least 40% of the assessment must be taken in the terminal series in which certification is requested. The final qualification grade must include assessment results from that series for the unit/s which satisfy the terminal requirement, whether or not there is a higher mark from a previous attempt. In unitised specifications, any individual assessment unit may be resat once before certification, with the better mark counting towards the final grade (subject to the application of the relevant terminal requirements).
 - (ii) GCE
Individual assessment units may be resat once before certification, with the best mark counting towards the final grade.
- 3 The awarding organisation will generate the highest subject grade possible from unit results, subject to the conditions above. Candidates' results for individual assessment units can count towards a specification until it is withdrawn by the awarding organisation.

GCE (legacy and revised) qualifications

- 4 For revised GCE qualifications (first teaching September 2016) the AS units will contribute 40% of the total uniform marks available for the full A level, with the A2 units contributing 60%. Legacy GCE qualifications will continue to have a 50:50 percentage weighting until their withdrawal.
- 5 Grade boundary marks for each unit or component will be determined judgements for the key boundaries in the following sequence:
 - (i) E/U
 - (ii) A/B

- 6 When a unit consists of two or more components, such as a written paper and internally assessed work, grade E/U and A/B boundary marks may be determined for each component separately. The boundary mark for each component is scaled as necessary to reflect the weighting for that component as detailed in the specification, and these scaled component boundary marks are added to give unit boundary marks. These unit boundary marks will then be used as the basis for conversion to uniform marks. Alternatively the key boundaries may be set at unit level based on inspection of candidates' combined work for both components.
- 7 Where candidates repeat a unit that consists partly of internally assessed work, moderated marks for their internally assessed work may be carried forward during the lifetime of the specification (if allowed by the specification).
- 8 For each unit, the grade B/C, C/D and D/E boundary marks are determined arithmetically. The grade B/C, C/D and D/E boundary marks are calculated by dividing the mark interval between the A/B and E/U boundaries by four.
 - (i) Where there is a remainder of one, the extra mark is added to the A–B mark range.
 - (ii) Where there is a remainder of two, one extra mark is added to each of the A–B and B–C mark ranges.
 - (iii) Where there is a remainder of three, one extra mark is added to each of the A–B, B–C and C–D mark ranges.
- 9 In A level, the A* conversion point is provisionally set on each unit as follows:
 - (i) Where the mark width from the grade A boundary to the maximum mark is more than twice the width from A to B, A* is the same width above A as B is below A.
 - (ii) Where the mark width from the grade A boundary to the maximum is less than or equal to twice that from A to B, A* is halfway between A and the maximum, rounded down where necessary to the nearest whole number below.
- 10 In order to maintain standards for A* at subject level, it may be necessary to adjust the A* conversion point on some units. Before any changes are made to an A* conversion point consideration should be given to moving one or more boundaries at the judgemental grades (normally grade A), in order to bring the subject outcome at grade A* within tolerance. If adjustments are needed, the maintenance of subject standards at the judgemental grades must be the first priority. Adjustments to the A* must be agreed by the Chair of Examiners but do not need to be discussed by the whole awarding committee. Adjustments to an A* conversion point should not normally be made in a series where the majority of learners are not cashing in.

Conversion to uniform marks in GCE (legacy and revised) qualifications

- 11 For all units, raw marks are converted to uniform marks according to the table below. The awarding organisation will select an appropriate maximum uniform mark for the subject award in light of the assessment scheme. At qualification level for GCE single award, the uniform mark grade boundaries are set at the same percentages of the maximum uniform mark for the qualification.

For GCE	A	B	C	D	E
Percentage of available uniform marks	80	70	60	50	40

- 12 A mark of zero on the raw mark scale must always be converted to zero on the uniform mark scale. The maximum raw mark for the unit is always converted to the maximum uniform mark for the unit.
- 13 For A level, with the exception of mathematics and further mathematics, an A* grade will be awarded to candidates who achieve grade A overall and also achieve 90 per cent or more of the maximum uniform mark on the aggregate of the A2 units.
- (i) For A level mathematics, an A* grade will be awarded to candidates achieving a grade A overall and 90 per cent or more of the maximum uniform mark on the aggregate of units C3 and C4.
 - (ii) For A levels in further mathematics, an A* grade will be awarded to candidates achieving a grade A overall and 90 per cent or more of the maximum uniform mark on the aggregate of the three best A2 units.

GCE double award (legacy and revised)

- 14 For double awards, the grade range at qualification level is extended to allow credit for intermediate performance. The uniform mark grade boundaries are set at the percentages of the maximum uniform mark for the qualification according to the table below.

For GCE double award	AA	AB	BB	BC	CC	CD	DD	DE	EE
Percentage of available uniform marks	80	75	70	65	60	55	50	45	40

- 15 For the A level double award, there will be an A*A* and an A*A grade. In each case, candidates will need to achieve an AA grade overall. The A*A* grade will be awarded to those achieving 90 per cent or more of the maximum uniform mark on the aggregate of all of the A2 units. The A*A grade will be awarded to those achieving 90 per cent or more of the maximum uniform mark on the aggregate of the three best A2 units but not achieving A*A*.

GCSE (legacy - unitised)

Non-tiered units

- 16 The three key grade boundaries must be dealt with in the following sequence for each unit:
- (i) C/D
 - (ii) A/B
 - (iii) F/G
- 17 All other boundaries are determined arithmetically.
- (i) The B/C boundary is obtained by dividing the mark interval between the A/B and C/D boundaries by two. Where there is a remainder of one, the extra mark is added to the grade B interval.
 - (ii) The D/E and E/F boundaries are obtained by dividing the mark interval between the C/D and F/G boundaries by three. Where there is a remainder of one, the extra mark is added to the grade D interval. Where there is a remainder of two, one extra mark is added to each of the grade D and grade E intervals.
 - (iii) The G/U boundary is the same number of marks below the F/G boundary as the E/F boundary is above the F/G boundary.
- 18 In GCSE, the A* boundary is provisionally set on each unit as follows:
- (i) Where the mark width from the grade A boundary to the maximum mark is more than twice the width from A to B, A* is the same width above A as B is below A.
 - (ii) Where the mark width from the grade A boundary to the maximum is less than or equal to twice that from A to B, A* is halfway between A and the maximum, rounded down where necessary to the nearest whole number below.
- 19 In order to maintain standards for A* at subject level, it may be necessary to adjust the A* boundary on some units. Before any changes are made to an A* boundary consideration should be given to moving one or more boundaries at the judgemental grades (normally grade A), in order to bring the subject outcome at grade A* within tolerance. If adjustments are needed, the maintenance of subject standards at the judgemental grades must be the first priority. Adjustments to the A* must be agreed by the Chair of Examiners but do not need to be discussed by the whole awarding committee. Adjustments to an A* boundary should not normally be made in a series where the majority of learners are not cashing in.

Tiered units

- 20 The key grade boundaries must be dealt with in the following sequence for each unit:
- (i) C/D foundation tier
 - (ii) C/D higher tier
 - (iii) A/B higher tier
 - (iv) F/G foundation tier
- 21 All other boundaries are determined arithmetically:
- (i) The B/C boundary on the higher tier is obtained by dividing the mark interval between the A/B and C/D boundaries by two. Where there is a remainder of one, the extra mark is added to the grade B interval.
 - (ii) The D/E on the higher tier is set as follows. The mark interval between B/C and C/D boundaries is multiplied by two and if this figure is equal to or greater than the C/D boundary then the D/E boundary is set the same number of marks below the C/D boundary as the B/C boundary is above the C/D boundary. Otherwise the D/E boundary is set as half the C/D boundary (rounding down to the nearest whole number).
 - (iii) When a review of technical and statistical evidence leads the awarders to judge that the D/E boundary should be set at a different mark, the D/E boundary may be adjusted.
 - (iv) On the foundation tier, the D/E and E/F boundaries are obtained by dividing the mark interval between the C/D and F/G boundaries by three. Where there is a remainder of one, the extra mark is added to the grade D interval. Where there is a remainder of two, one extra mark is added to each of the grade D and grade E intervals.
 - (v) The E/U boundary on the higher tier is set by subtracting half the mark interval between the C/D and D/E boundaries (rounding up half marks) from the D/E boundary.
 - (vi) The G/U boundary on the foundation tier is the same number of marks below the F/G boundary as the E/F boundary is above the F/G boundary.
- 22 The A*/A boundary is provisionally set on higher tier as follows:
- (i) Where the mark width from the grade A boundary to the maximum mark is more than twice the width from A to B, A* is the same width above A as B is below A.
 - (ii) Where the mark width from the grade A boundary to the maximum is less than or equal to twice that from A to B, A* is halfway between A and the maximum, rounded down where necessary to the nearest whole number below.
- 23 In order to maintain standards for A* at subject level, it may be necessary to adjust the A* boundary on some units. Before any changes are made to an A* boundary consideration should be given to moving one or more boundaries at the judgemental grades (normally grade A), in order to bring the subject outcome at grade A* within tolerance. If adjustments are needed, the

maintenance of subject standards at the judgemental grades must be the first priority. Adjustments to the A* must be agreed by the Chair of Examiners but do not need to be discussed by the whole awarding committee. Adjustments to an A* boundary should not normally be made in a series where the majority of learners are not cashing in.

- 24 When a unit consists of two or more components, such as a written paper and internally assessed work, the key grade boundary marks may be determined for each component separately. The boundary mark for each component is scaled as necessary to reflect the weighting for that component as detailed in the specification, and these scaled component boundary marks are added to give unit boundary marks. These unit boundary marks will then be used as the basis for conversion to uniform marks. Alternatively the key boundaries may be set at unit level based on inspection of candidates' combined work for both components.

Conversion to uniform marks in GCSE (legacy) qualifications

- 25 In all GCSE specifications using uniform marks, the raw mark grade boundary for each component/unit will be converted to the equivalent UMS boundary marks based on the percentages given in the table below. The awarding organisation will select an appropriate maximum uniform mark for the subject award in light of the assessment scheme. At qualification level, the uniform mark grade boundaries are set at the same percentages of the maximum uniform mark for the qualification unless affected by tiering arrangements.

For legacy GCSE	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Percentage of available uniform marks	90	80	70	60	50	40	30	20

- 26 For all units, a raw mark of zero will convert to a uniform mark of zero. For untiered and higher-tier units, the maximum raw mark will be converted to the maximum uniform mark. For foundation tier units, the maximum raw mark will convert to the maximum uniform mark allowed for the grade range, or one below the lowest uniform mark above the targeted grades.
- 27 The subject grade awarded for those qualifications that use uniform marks will be determined by the total uniform mark. However, for some qualifications the grade range will be restricted by the tier of entry of individual units.

GCSE double award (legacy - qualification level)

- 28 For double awards, the grade range allows credit for intermediate performance according to the following table:

	A*A*	A*A	AA	AB	BB	BC	CC	CD	DD	DE	EE	EF	FF	FG	GG
Percentage of available uniform marks	90	85	80	75	70	65	60	55	50	45	40	35	30	25	20

GCSE (legacy - linear)

- 29 For linear qualifications, the key grade boundaries may be set for each component. The boundary mark for each component is scaled as necessary to reflect the weighting for that component as detailed in the specification. The resulting scaled component boundary marks are added to establish the key boundary mark for the subject as a whole. Alternatively the key boundaries may be set at subject level based on inspection of candidates' combined work for all components.
- 30 The three key grade boundaries must be dealt with in the following sequence:
- C/D
 - A/B
 - F/G
- 31 All other subject level boundaries are determined arithmetically.
- The B/C boundary is obtained by dividing the mark interval between the A/B and C/D boundaries by two. Where there is a remainder of one, the extra mark is added to the grade B interval.
 - The D/E and E/F boundaries are obtained by dividing the mark interval between the C/D and F/G boundaries by three. Where there is a remainder of one, the extra mark is added to the grade D interval. Where there is remainder of two, one extra mark is added to each of the grade D and grade E intervals.
 - The G/U boundary is the same number of marks below the F/G boundary as the E/F boundary is above the F/G boundary.
- 32 The A* boundary at subject level is provisionally set as follows:
- Where the mark width from the grade A boundary to the maximum mark is more than twice the width from A to B, A* is the same width above A as B is below A.
 - Where the mark width from the grade A boundary to the maximum is less than or equal to twice that from A to B, A* is halfway between A and the maximum, rounded down where necessary to the nearest whole number below.

- 33 In order to maintain standards for A* at subject level, it may be necessary to adjust the A* boundary. Before any changes are made to an A* boundary consideration should be given to moving one or more component boundaries at the judgemental grades (normally grade A), in order to bring the subject outcome at grade A* within tolerance. Adjustments to the A* must be agreed by the Chair of Examiners but do not need to be discussed by the whole awarding committee.

GCSE (revised - unitised) – first teaching September 2017

Non-tiered units

- 34 The three key grade boundaries must be dealt with in the following sequence for each unit:
- (i) C/D
 - (ii) A/B
 - (iii) F/G
- 35 All other boundaries are determined arithmetically.
- (i) The B/C and C*/C boundaries are obtained by dividing the mark interval between the A/B and C/D boundaries by three. Where there is a remainder of one, the extra mark is added to the grade B interval. Where there is remainder of two, one extra mark is added to each of the grade B and grade C* intervals.
 - (ii) The D/E and E/F boundaries are obtained by dividing the mark interval between the C/D and F/G boundaries by three. Where there is a remainder of one, the extra mark is added to the grade D interval. Where there is remainder of two, one extra mark is added to each of the grade D and grade E intervals.
 - (iii) The G/U boundary is the same number of marks below the F/G boundary as the E/F boundary is above the F/G boundary.
- 36 In revised unitised GCSEs, the A* boundary is provisionally set at subject level in uniform marks as follows:
- (i) The % of candidates awarded grade A* will be determined using the following formula:

Percentage of those candidates achieving at least grade A who should be awarded grade A = 7% + 0.5*(percentage of candidates awarded grade A or above)*
 - (ii) The A* boundary will be set at the uniform mark which produces a cumulative percentage outcome closest to the percentage determined by the formula stated in 36 (i).

Tiered units

- 37 The key grade boundaries must be dealt with in the following sequence for each unit:
- (i) C/D foundation tier
 - (ii) C/D higher tier
 - (iii) A/B higher tier
 - (iv) F/G foundation tier
- 38 All other boundaries are determined arithmetically:
- (i) The B/C and C*/C boundaries on the higher tier are obtained by dividing the mark interval between the A/B and C/D boundaries by three. Where there is a remainder of one, the extra mark is added to the grade B interval. Where there is remainder of two, one extra mark is added to each of the grade B and grade C* intervals.
 - (ii) The D/E boundary on the higher tier is set the same number of marks below the C/D boundary as the C*/C boundary is above the C/D boundary.
 - (iii) The E/U boundary on the higher tier is set by subtracting half the mark interval between the C/D and D/E boundaries (rounding up half marks) from the D/E boundary.
 - (iv) On the foundation tier, the D/E and E/F boundaries are obtained by dividing the mark interval between the C/D and F/G boundaries by three. Where there is a remainder of one, the extra mark is added to the grade D interval. Where there is a remainder of two, one extra mark is added to each of the grade D and grade E intervals.
 - (v) The G/U boundary on the foundation tier is the same number of marks below the F/G boundary as the E/F boundary is above the F/G boundary.
- 39 The C*/C boundary is provisionally set on the foundation tier as follows:
- (i) Where the mark width from the grade C boundary to the maximum mark is more than twice the $(C-G)/3$ calculation, then C* is set as $C+(C-G)/3$ [ignoring remainder].
 - (ii) Where the mark width from the grade C boundary to the maximum is less than or equal to twice the $(C-G)/3$ calculation, then C* is set halfway between C and the maximum, rounded down where necessary to the nearest whole number below.
 - (iii) When a review of technical and statistical evidence leads the awarders to judge that the C*/C boundary should be set at a different mark, the C*/C boundary may be adjusted. Adjustments to the C* boundary must be agreed by the Chair of Examiners but do not need to be discussed by the whole awarding committee.

- 40 In revised GCSEs, the A* boundary is provisionally set at subject level in uniform marks as follows:
- (i) The % of candidates awarded grade A* will be determined using the following formula:
- Percentage of those candidates achieving at least grade A who should be awarded grade A* = 7% + 0.5*(percentage of candidates awarded grade A or above)*
- (ii) The A* boundary is set at the uniform mark which produces a cumulative percentage outcome closest to the percentage calculated by the formula stated in 40 (i).
- 41 When a unit consists of two or more components, such as a written paper and internally assessed work, the key grade boundary marks may be determined for each component separately. The boundary mark for each component is scaled as necessary to reflect the weighting for that component as detailed in the specification, and these scaled component boundary marks are added to give unit boundary marks. These unit boundary marks will then be used as the basis for conversion to uniform marks. Alternatively the key boundaries may be set at unit level based on inspection of candidates' combined work for both components.

Conversion to uniform marks in GCSE (revised) qualifications

- 42 In all GCSE specifications using uniform marks, the raw grade boundary marks for each component/unit will be converted to the equivalent UMS boundary marks based on the percentages given in the table below. The awarding organisation will select an appropriate maximum uniform mark for the subject award in light of the assessment scheme. At qualification level, the uniform mark grade boundaries are set at the same percentages of the maximum uniform mark for the qualification unless affected by tiering arrangements.

For revised GCSE	A	B	C*	C	D	E	F	G
Percentage of available uniform marks	80	73	67	60	50	40	30	20

- 43 For all units, a raw mark of zero will convert to a uniform mark of zero. For untiered and higher-tier units, the maximum raw mark will be converted to the maximum uniform mark. For foundation tier units, the maximum raw mark will convert to the maximum uniform mark allowed for the grade range, or one below the lowest uniform mark above the targeted grades.
- 44 The subject grade awarded for those qualifications that use uniform marks will be determined by the total uniform mark. However, for some qualifications the grade range will be restricted by the tier of entry of individual units.

GCSE double award (revised - qualification level) - first teaching September 2017

- 45 For double awards, the grade range allows credit for intermediate performance according to the following table:

	AA	AB	BB	BC*	C*C*	C*C	CC	CD	DD	DE	EE	EF	FF	FG	GG
Percentage of available uniform marks	80	77	73	70	67	63	60	55	50	45	40	35	30	25	20

- 46 The A* A* boundary is provisionally set at subject level in uniform marks as follows:

- (i) The % of candidates awarded grade A*A* will be determined using the following formula:

*Percentage of those candidates achieving at least grade AA who should be awarded grade A*A* = 7% + 0.5*(percentage of candidates awarded grade AA or above)*

- (ii) The A*A* boundary is set at the uniform mark which produces a cumulative percentage outcome closest to the percentage calculated by the formula stated in 46 (i).

- 47 The A*A boundary is set at subject level by dividing the uniform mark interval between the A*A* and AA boundaries by two. Where there is a remainder of one, the extra uniform mark is added to the A*A interval.

GCSE (revised - linear) - first teaching September 2017

- 48 For linear qualifications, the key grade boundaries may be set for each component. The boundary mark for each component is scaled as necessary to reflect the weighting for that component as detailed in the specification. The resulting scaled component boundary marks are added to establish the key boundary mark for the subject as a whole. Alternatively the key boundaries may be set at subject level based on inspection of candidates' combined work for all components.

- 49 The three key grade boundaries must be dealt with in the following sequence:

- (i) C/D
(ii) A/B
(iii) F/G

All other subject level boundaries are determined arithmetically.

- (i) The B/C and C*/C boundaries are obtained by dividing the mark interval between the A/B and C/D boundaries by three. Where there is a

remainder of one, the extra mark is added to the grade B interval. Where there is remainder of two, one extra mark is added to each of the grade B and grade C* intervals.

- (ii) The D/E and E/F boundaries are obtained by dividing the mark interval between the C/D and F/G boundaries by three. Where there is a remainder of one, the extra mark is added to the grade D interval. Where there is remainder of two, one extra mark is added to each of the grade D and grade E intervals.
- (iii) The G/U boundary is the same number of marks below the F/G boundary as the E/F boundary is above the F/G boundary.

50 In revised GCSEs, the A* boundary is provisionally set at subject level as follows:

- (i) The % of candidates awarded grade A* will be determined using the following formula:

Percentage of those candidates achieving at least grade A who should be awarded grade A = 7% + 0.5*(percentage of candidates awarded grade A or above)*

- (ii) The A* boundary will be set at the mark which produces a cumulative percentage outcome closest to the percentage calculated by the formula stated in 50 (i).

Appendix 2

Arrangements for specifications or options with low entries

When determining grade boundary marks for small entry specifications or options with very few (or no) scripts in a grade boundary region, it may not be appropriate to follow the normal order of decision making as set out in Section 6. It should be noted that, in this context, small entry is defined by the distribution of marks rather than by the size of the entry. For any units, components or options with sufficient scripts available at key grade boundary ranges, the boundaries should be established in accordance with procedures in Section 6. If there are very few (or no) scripts within the area of a judgemental grade boundary, the awarding committee may determine a provisional boundary mark by considering one or more strategies included below:

- 1 Boundaries for any units/components or options with sufficient scripts available at key grade boundary ranges must be established following the procedures in Section 6. The appropriateness of applying the same boundary marks to the small entry units/components or options must then be considered by reviewing the scripts that are available.
- 2 The awarding committee may estimate key grade boundary marks by taking into account the principal examiner or moderator's recommendation and any available statistical evidence. Where scripts are available, the awarding committee should review them to check the majority fall into the correct grade range. In light of this review, the awarding committee may adjust the estimated grade boundaries, if necessary.
- 3 The awarding committee may judge it necessary to review and grade each available script individually and estimate suitable boundary marks for the unit/component.
- 4 If the awarding committee, with the principal examiner or moderator's advice, judges that the demand of an assessment is consistent with the previous series, grade boundary marks from the previous series may be carried forward.
- 5 Where the awarding committee judges there has been a change in the demand of the assessment from the previous series, the demand must be reviewed in relation to previous assessments, performance or grade descriptions and any assessment criteria, to inform the estimation of key grade boundaries. These boundaries must be confirmed by reviewing available script evidence to check it falls into the correct grade range.

Glossary

This glossary contains terms used in this code of practice relating to GCSE and GCE. It is designed to promote a common understanding of generic terms that are applicable to the qualifications covered by the code. The most broadly accepted usage has generally been taken as standard. The glossary does not attempt to be comprehensive.

Access arrangements

Arrangements that are approved in advance of an examination or assessment to allow attainment to be demonstrated by candidates with a permanent or long-term disability or learning difficulty, or temporary disability, illness, indisposition or medical condition, or a special educational need, including where the candidate's first language is not English or Irish.

Aggregation

The process of combining (by summation or other agreed procedure) the marks or other units of credit awarded through an assessment scheme.

Appeal

A process through which an awarding organisation may be challenged on the outcome of an enquiry about results or, where appropriate, other procedural decisions affecting a centre or individual candidates.

Assessment criteria

Statements that describe performances and place them in context with sufficient precision to allow valid and reliable assessment.

Assessment objective

One of a set of statements in a specification describing the focus of assessment.

Authentication

A process whereby evidence generated by a candidate for an assessment is confirmed as being generated by that candidate (or identified and confirmed as being that candidate's contribution to group work) and as being generated under the required conditions.

Awarding

The process through which candidates' grades are determined on the basis of available evidence.

Awarding organisation

An organisation recognised by the regulator for the purpose of awarding regulated qualifications.

Centre

An organisation (such as a school or college) undertaking the delivery of an assessment (and potentially other activities) to candidates on behalf of an awarding organisation.

Comparability

The extent to which the same awards reached through different routes represent the same or equivalent levels of attainment.

Component

A discrete assessable element within a qualification that is not itself formally reported.

Consortium

A group of centres and other organisations working together formally to offer a qualification.

Enquiry about result

A process through which an awarding organisation may be asked to check one or more of the steps leading to a reported result.

Examiners

Individuals with subject expertise who are responsible for marking candidates' responses. They are required to use professional judgement because of the type of mark scheme they are applying.

External assessment

A form of independent assessment in which question papers, assignments and tasks are set by the awarding organisation, taken under specified conditions (including details of supervision and duration) and marked by the awarding organisation.

General markers

Individuals who may not have subject expertise who are responsible for marking candidates' responses. They are not required to use professional judgement because of the type of mark scheme they are applying.

Internal assessment

A form of assessment in which full examination conditions do not apply. The awarding organisation will specify the controls that will apply to how work is set, the conditions under which it will be done and how it will be assessed. Controlled assessments must also comply with relevant controlled assessment regulations.

Internal standardisation

A process carried out by centres and consortia in relation to internally assessed work to ensure that, for a particular specification, all candidates are judged against the same standards across different assessors and teaching groups.

Mark scheme

A scheme detailing how credit is to be awarded in relation to a particular assessment unit or component. A mark scheme normally characterises acceptable answers to questions/tasks or parts of questions/tasks and identifies the amount of credit each attracts.

Marking review

The re-marking of candidate work, prior to the issue of results. This includes work originally marked by examiners about whom there is lingering doubt about the consistency and standard of their marking.

Moderation

The process through which internal assessment is monitored to make sure it meets required standards and through which adjustments to results are made where required to ensure results are based on the required standard.

Monitoring reports

Reports that represent the outcomes of monitoring activity by the regulator relating to awarding organisations' quality assurance arrangements or to standards of achievement in specific subjects or sectors.

Online marking

An image-based marking system, usually available online, which allows the examiner to mark specific parts of candidates' responses (known as items) or full scripts, on their computer.

Post-results review of marking

A process in which a second examiner reviews the marking of the first examiner to ensure that the authorised mark scheme has been applied reliably. The second examiner needs to see the original marks and any annotations made by the first examiner to gain a full and clear understanding of whether the mark scheme has been applied as intended.

Post-results review of moderation

A process in which a second moderator reviews the work of the first moderator to ensure that the required assessment criteria have been fairly, reliably and consistently applied. The second moderator needs to see the original marks and any annotations made by the first moderator to gain a full and clear understanding of whether the assessment criteria have been applied as intended.

Private candidate

A candidate who pursues a course of study independently but makes an entry and takes an examination at an approved examining centre. The awarding organisation will accept communications about access to scripts or enquiries about results directly from the private candidate.

Question paper/task

A form of external or internal assessment, including tests, assignments and projects.

Reasonable adjustment

An arrangement, required by current legislation, that provides disabled candidates with access to assessments.

Regulator

An organisation or department designated by government to establish and to secure compliance with national standards for qualifications.

Rubric

A set of instructions and other items of guidance provided for candidates on an assessment.

Script

A candidate's written response to the external or internal assessment.

Scrutineer

An individual responsible for checking the final drafts of all question papers and tasks.

Special consideration

Procedures that may result in an adjustment to the marks of candidates who have not been able to demonstrate attainment because of temporary illness, injury, indisposition or an unforeseen incident at the time of the examination.

Specification

The complete description – including mandatory and optional aspects – of the content, assessment arrangements and performance requirements for a qualification.

Standardisation

A process, relating to both external and internal assessment by which the awarding organisation ensures that the mark scheme or assessment criteria for a unit or component are applied consistently by examiners or moderators. For example, the process may include a meeting of examiners or moderators to consider the mark scheme or assessment criteria in detail.

Unit

The smallest part of a qualification, which is formally reported and can be separately certificated. A unit may comprise separately assessed components.

About this publication

What's it for?

This document aims to promote quality, consistency, accuracy and fairness in the assessment and awarding of GCSE and GCE qualifications and help maintain standards across specifications, both within and between awarding organisations and from year to year. Its content is in line with the regulatory conditions set out for the CCEA Awarding Organisation and it has been endorsed by the Regulator.

