



General principles underpinning the delivery of WJEC assessments



Contents

Introduction	2
Section 1: Roles and Responsibilities	3
Section 2: Preparing question papers, tasks and mark schemes	7
Section 3: Standardising marking: external assessment	12
Section 4: Standardising marking and moderation: Internal assessment or non-examination assessment (NEA)	19
Section 5: Awarding, maintaining an archive and issuing results	24

Introduction

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

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

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

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

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

Section 1: Roles and Responsibilities

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

Governance

- 1.1 WJEC's executive leadership team and Board of Directors are responsible for setting in place appropriate procedures to ensure that standards are maintained in each subject examined from year to year.
- 1.2 These responsibilities are discharged through WJEC's staff and appointees, as described below. The functions described are fulfilled for each qualification specification. One person may discharge more than one role provided that the role does not produce a conflict of interest, such as that between the roles of reviser and scrutineer. WJEC provides appropriate training and support to ensure that its personnel can carry out the functions set out in this document, monitoring and evaluating our provision to make sure that it is effective and remains fit for purpose.
- 1.3 WJEC appoints a single named person to be accountable directly to our Board of Directors for ensuring the quality and standards of our qualifications (that is, the responsible officer). In doing so, WJEC guarantees to the regulators that it ensures:
 - i) all necessary action will be taken to maintain parity of standards in each subject and qualification from year to year, across different specifications and with other awarding organisations, where appropriate
 - ii) compliance with the regulators' conditions
 - iii) our participation in comparability and monitoring activities, and that such changes as this work shows to be necessary, are made.

WJEC staff

- 1.4 WJEC staff manage various stages of the examining process to ensure that:
 - i) they are carried out in accordance with WJEC's policies and procedures
 - ii) appointees and committees are provided with all necessary administrative, subject specialist and technical support
 - iii) WJEC senior management, including the responsible officer, are alerted to issues or concerns that arise during the process.

Chair of examiners

- 1.5 A chair of examiners is responsible to WJEC for maintaining standards across different specifications in a subject within a qualification and from year to year. The chair of examiners must:
- 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 principal examiners and advise on their appointment, training and reappointment
 - iii) lead the awarding process and recommend grade boundaries for each specification to WJEC
 - iv) submit, as directed by WJEC, an overall report on the awarding of the qualification.

Principal examiner

- 1.6 The principal examiner for each unit/component is responsible for the setting of the question paper/task and, in most cases, the standardising of its marking. The principal examiner must:
- i) set the questions and mark schemes for the question paper or approve those set by other examiners
 - ii) seek to ensure parity of standards across optional questions in the paper and assist the chair 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) advise on the appointment, training and reappointment, where necessary, of assistant principal examiners, team leaders and examiners for the question papers
 - v) attend the awarding meeting, advise members on how the question paper functioned and recommend preliminary mark ranges for the judgemental grade boundaries for the question paper
 - vi) submit an evaluation report on the performance of the question paper/task.

Reviser

- 1.7 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.

WJEC may appoint more than one reviser for each examination

Scrutineer

- 1.8 The scrutineer is responsible for:
- i) checking the final drafts of all question papers/tasks without reference to the mark schemes to ensure that the questions can be answered in the time allowed and that there are no errors or omissions
 - ii) working through question papers, where appropriate
 - iii) checking the mark scheme to ensure that the marks given are identical to those on the question paper
 - iv) preparing a report for the WJEC designated member of staff.

Examiners

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

General markers

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

Principal moderator

- 1.11 The principal moderator for each internally assessed unit/component is responsible for ensuring that the standards of the unit/component are maintained and are consistent with the unit specification and assessment criteria. The principal moderator must:
- 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 WJEC provides for the internal assessors
 - iv) monitor the standards of any assistant principal moderators, team leaders and moderators and advise on their appointment, training and reappointment
 - v) ensure that appropriate preparatory, follow-up and remedial work with centres is carried out
 - vi) attend the awarding meeting and advise members on how the component functioned and, where appropriate, recommend preliminary mark ranges for the judgemental grade boundaries
 - vii) submit to the chair an evaluation report on issues relating to the performance of the component.

Moderators

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

Assistant principal examiners, assistant principal moderators, and team leaders

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

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

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

Division of responsibilities

- 2.1 The personnel involved in setting question papers, tasks and mark schemes include the chair of examiners, principal examiner(s), scrutineer, reviser(s) and WJEC staff. Their responsibilities are described in Section 1.
- 2.2 The principal examiner(s) is 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
 - vi) quality assuring and signing-off the final version of the materials.

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

Preparing assessments including provisional mark schemes

- 2.3 Question papers/tasks and provisional mark schemes must be produced at the same time. WJEC will ensure that it has contingency plans in place that allow us to react swiftly in the event of question paper security being breached before an examination.

Assessment of written communication

- 2.4 Where regulatory criteria require that a proportion of marks are made available to credit the accuracy of learners' spelling, punctuation and grammar, and/or the use of specialist technology, these must be clearly identified in the mark scheme.

Revising the question papers, tasks and provisional mark schemes

- 2.5 The reviser(s) must:
- i) scrutinise the initial draft question papers/tasks and mark schemes
 - ii) check that the nature and range of responses required by the mark scheme are appropriate
 - iii) comment on individual questions and responses and the draft question paper(s) as a whole.

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

- 2.6 The initial draft question papers/tasks and mark schemes must be amended in the light of the comments and forwarded, together with the original comments of the reviser(s), to the WJEC designated member of staff for consideration by the question paper evaluation committee.

Evaluating assessments and mark schemes

- 2.7 A committee, normally chaired by the chair of examiners, must be convened to evaluate the question papers/tasks. The principal examiner responsible for the particular units/components must attend. In addition, the question paper evaluation committee should include the reviser(s) and may also include members of the subject community who have recent and relevant teaching or examining experience. Where there is more than one specification in a subject within a particular qualification, membership of the committee should overlap (chair of examiners and at least one other member). Where the question paper/task is to be offered through the medium of Welsh, at least one member of the committee should normally have the necessary expertise to advise on Welsh-medium issues.
- 2.8 The committee must be serviced by a member of staff from WJEC, who will provide administrative and technical support and guidance and ensure that WJEC's policies are observed to ensure compliance with regulations.
- 2.9 When the draft question papers/tasks and provisional mark schemes are submitted to the committee, they must 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.
- 2.10 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 year where these have not been taken.
- 2.11 Where there is more than one specification in a subject within a particular qualification type, the chair of examiners must seek to ensure that the question papers/tasks set for the different specifications make comparable demands on candidates.

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

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

Rubrics

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

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

Mark schemes

- xv) include general instructions on marking
- xvi) are clear and designed so that they can be easily and consistently applied
- xvii) allocate marks commensurate with the demands of questions/tasks
- xviii) include the mark allocation for each question/task and part of a question/sub-task, with a more detailed breakdown where necessary
- xix) include marking instructions for those questions where extended written answers are expected and the quality of written communication used by candidates will be assessed
- xx) include an indication of the nature and range of responses, appropriate to the subject, likely to be worthy of credit
- xxi) state the acceptable responses to each question/task, or part thereof, with detail that allows marking in a standardised manner
- xxii) allocate credit for what candidates know, understand and can do.

Equipment or materials

- xxiii) required for any externally assessed test or task set by WJEC, 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

- 2.13 WJEC ensures that it has appropriate arrangements in place to evaluate those question papers/tasks and mark schemes that have been extensively rewritten at the original question paper evaluation committee meeting.
- 2.14 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 WJEC.

- 2.15 The report will be sent to the principal examiner, who must then approve any necessary changes to the question papers/tasks and provisional mark schemes.
- 2.16 The final draft question papers/tasks and provisional mark schemes must be submitted for final approval to the WJEC designated member of staff. Where the external assessment is to be offered through the medium of Welsh, the final Welsh-medium draft will be checked by a Welsh-medium specialist who will advise the WJEC designated member of staff on its approval.
- 2.17 WJEC staff will alert appropriate senior management if they believe that a breach of its policy has occurred. Senior management will act decisively and promptly to maintain quality and standards.

Section 3: Standardising marking: external assessment

This section sets out the processes WJEC has in place to ensure that candidates' examination papers are marked consistently and accurately to an agreed standard.

This section applies to traditional and online marking. 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.

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 is designed to ensure 100 per cent accuracy from the outset. Appropriate quality control systems are used to confirm the accuracy of computer-marked items.

Division of responsibilities

- 3.1 The personnel involved in the standardisation of marking include subject officer(s) and the following examiners: the chair of examiners, principal examiner(s), assistant principal examiners and team leaders, where appointed, and examiners. Details of their responsibilities are given in Section 1.
- 3.2 A principal examiner is responsible for the professional judgements underpinning the process of standardisation for one or more specified units/components. A WJEC subject officer is responsible for supervising and guiding the standardisation process and ensuring that all steps in the process are followed.

General markers

- 3.3 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, are trained, supervised and monitored to ensure that they are marking accurately and consistently.
- 3.4 The procedures used to train and monitor general markers are as rigorous as those set out for examiners. These procedures are fully documented.

Marking candidates' work

- 3.5 Candidates' work deriving from externally assessed units/components are 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.

- 3.6 Examiners and general markers will normally mark candidates' work from a number of different centres, subject to their total load being manageable. They are required to declare any personal interest in a centre before marking. They will not normally mark candidates' work from any centre in which they have a personal interest unless marking anonymised items online. If an examiner or general marker recognises a candidate's work, they are instructed not to mark it and seek guidance from WJEC regarding what action to take. In the case of sole examiners or general markers where this requirement cannot be applied, WJEC ensures that this marking is scrutinised.
- 3.7 One principal examiner is responsible for each unit/component. Where candidate numbers are small, a principal examiner may be responsible for more than one unit/component and mark all of the work. Under such circumstances the principal examiner has recourse to a second opinion, as does any examiner who is the sole marker of a unit or component. This is normally provided by the chair of examiners.
- 3.8 In the interests of reliable marking and to reduce the scope for variability, WJEC ensures that marking is undertaken by the minimum possible number of examiners. In arriving at this minimum number, WJEC ensures that the amount of marking allocated to examiners takes account of:
- i) the nature of the unit/component being assessed
 - ii) 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.

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

- 3.9 Where there are Welsh-medium items, the allocation of these items to examiners ensures that standardisation and monitoring of marking can be undertaken even when the supervising examiner is not able to mark scripts in the medium of Welsh. This is achieved by allocating both Welsh-medium and English-medium scripts to Welsh-medium examiners.
- 3.10 Where the number of examiners required demonstrably exceeds that which a principal examiner could reasonably oversee unaided, WJEC establishes a team structure. The number of teams is carefully considered and kept to the minimum needed to secure reliable and consistent marking. The relationships between and the functions of examiners with responsibility for supervising others are clearly documented by WJEC thus ensuring efficient monitoring and management of marking takes place.

Team membership and training

- 3.11 Examiners must have relevant experience in the subject area where this is appropriate. Marking teams normally include a balance between new examiners and examiners with prior marking experience. Where team leaders are appointed, they will normally have examined for at least two years in the same or a related subject. The same requirement applies to principal examiners, whose responsibilities are detailed in Section 1.
- 3.12 New examiners receive appropriate training to enable them to carry out their duties. This training depends on whether they are:
- i) first-time examiners, who need training on all aspects of the examining process relevant to their role before marking items
 - ii) new to WJEC and require training specific to WJEC's procedures
 - iii) new to the particular unit/component or specification and require training specific to that unit/component or specification.

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

First-hand marking

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

The standardisation process

- 3.14 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 should be used to maintain the quality of marking during the marking period.
- 3.15 All examiners are expected to have studied and provisionally marked an agreed range of items before standardisation.
- 3.16 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, WJEC ensures that the integrity of the marking process is maintained.

Securing consistent application of the mark scheme

- 3.17 WJEC ensures 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, WJEC ensures that coordination of all assistant principal examiners and team leaders takes place to ensure consistency of practice.

- 3.18 The process of helping to secure the consistent application of the mark scheme includes:
- i) an administrative briefing from a WJEC officer that includes reference to these principles, WJEC's 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 chairs' 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.
- 3.19 Where changes are made to the original mark scheme, the revised mark scheme is agreed and authorised by the principal examiner. A WJEC officer is 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 are prepared.

Initial sampling to ensure consistent application of the mark scheme

- 3.20 Immediately after standardisation examiners must mark a sample of items (which may include the re-marking of those marked provisionally before standardisation) 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.

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

- 3.21 Following standardisation, senior examiners 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 is kept of the marks awarded by both examiners and of the feedback given to the initial examiner.
- 3.22 Examiners must 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 must 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 should an examiner be allowed to proceed. Examiners who do not display sufficient care, accuracy or consistency when applying the mark scheme at this stage are not permitted to continue marking and their items are reallocated.

Monitoring marking and taking corrective action

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

Traditionally marked scripts

- 3.24 The marking of all examiners who have been cleared by their senior examiners continues to be monitored by a senior examiner and, if necessary, the appropriate corrective action taken. The monitoring includes further sampling of sufficient scale, range and frequency to demonstrate that confidence can be placed in the monitoring process. Marks from this sampling process are 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.
- 3.25 A review of the entire marking process is undertaken to decide if any adjustments should be made to the marks of individual examiners. The review involves a WJEC subject officer, principal examiners and, where appointed, team leaders. The subject 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 Welsh-medium and English-medium scripts, the marks for scripts in both languages are changed.
- 3.26 Adjustments to the marks of individual examiners are only 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, where appropriate.
- 3.27 Where the review shows that examiner inaccuracies have occurred, positive or negative adjustments of appropriate size are made across the relevant range of marks. To be fair to candidates, WJEC ensures that adjustments do not change the rank order of marks given by the examiner, unless the examiner has been demonstrably inconsistent.

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

Online marked items

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

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

- i) removing the examiner from marking an item or items and the re-marking of those items already marked
- ii) removing the examiner from the entire marking process and the re-marking of all items marked to date.

Checking marking

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

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

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

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

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

- 3.35 After the re-marking by senior examiners of those candidates' work identified as indicated in paragraphs 4.34 and 4.35, the revised mark will replace the original mark and the result will be automatically recalculated.
- 3.36 For examinations offered through the medium of Welsh, the procedures for marking review also allows for the review, as appropriate, of the work of Welsh-medium candidates.

Supervising externally assessed set assignments

- 3.37 WJEC specifies the conditions under which externally set assignments must be undertaken. These conditions facilitate the supervision and authentication of candidates' work by the centre.
- 3.38 WJEC requires 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.
- 3.39 WJEC requires 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 is required to present a written declaration that the candidate's assignment was conducted under the required conditions.

Retaining evidence

- 3.40 WJEC ensures that candidates' work is available for reference during the awarding meeting. All work is retained for a sufficient period of time thereafter to allow for the possibility of reviews of marking enquiries or appeals.

Section 4: Standardising marking and moderation: Internal assessment or non-examination assessment (NEA)

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

- * the systems for setting, authenticating, supervising and assessing this internally assessed/NEA 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.

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

Division of responsibilities

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

Instructions, training and guidance for internal assessors

- 4.4 WJEC provides centres with clear administrative instructions, including details of how to record, transcribe and check individual candidates' marks.

Setting internally assessed tasks

- 4.5 Where internally assessed/NEA tasks are set by WJEC, the tasks and marking criteria receive appropriate quality checks and ensure that adherence is given to the relevant principles of paragraph 3.12.
- 4.6 Where the specification allows centres/candidates to devise tasks, WJEC sets down parameters and guidance for task-setting and publishes detailed assessment criteria.

- 4.7 Where the specification requires candidates to produce extended written material in English or Welsh, the marks awarded will take into account the quality of written communication as defined by the appropriate qualification-type criteria.
- 4.8 Whenever a new or significantly revised specification is introduced that involves new internally assessed tasks, WJEC takes steps to ensure that the tasks and mark schemes that centres devise are of an appropriate standard and conform to the requirements of the specification.

Supervising internal assessment

- 4.9 WJEC specifies the conditions under which internally assessed/NEA work can be undertaken. These specified conditions facilitate the supervision and authentication of candidates' work by teachers and internal assessors. 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, WJEC requires that sufficient work takes place under direct supervision to allow the internal assessors concerned to authenticate each candidate's work with confidence. WJEC ensures that moderators apply its guidelines relating to word limits.
- 4.10 WJEC specifies the degree to which candidates are allowed to redraft their work prior to it being marked by the internal assessor.

Authentication of candidates' work

- 4.11 WJEC requires internal assessors 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. Internal assessors are required to take account of any assistance when assessing candidates' work.
- 4.12 WJEC requires internal assessors 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.
- 4.13 WJEC requires 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 and/or NEA.
- 4.14 WJEC 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.

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

Assessment and standardisation within centres

- 4.16 WJEC requires internal assessors to show clearly how credit has been assigned in relation to the criteria defined in the specification. Internal assessments must indicate where quality of written communication will be assessed, where this is appropriate.
- 4.17 Where the regulators have agreed that the nature of the subject requires credit to be allocated for the skills displayed by candidates in redrafting and refining work, internal assessors are given explicit parameters defining the limits within which they may give feedback to candidates.
- 4.18 WJEC requires centres to standardise assessments across different assessors and teaching groups. This is to ensure that for a particular unit/component all candidates in the centre have been judged against the same standards. If centres accept entries from private candidates, the centre should standardise the work of private candidates alongside the work of internal candidates’

Moderating assessments submitted by centres

- 4.19 To ensure that standards are aligned within and across centres, WJEC moderates the marks submitted by each centre against the specified assessment criteria.
- 4.20 WJEC adjusts the marks submitted by centres as necessary to bring each centre’s judgements into line with the required standard. Remedial action is taken where there is evidence of standards being applied inconsistently, or of other departures from specification requirements.
- 4.21 WJEC provides centres with details of the moderation procedures that apply to a specification, amplifying as necessary the account printed in the specification itself. The documentation confirms the WJEC's right to act as it judges necessary to align standards. In particular, arrangements are specified for:
- i) requesting, as necessary, at appropriate stages during and at the end of the course, samples of specific internal assessments and associated assessment criteria to indicate how credit has been assigned
 - ii) drawing samples of marked, internally standardised candidates’ work, to cover the full range of units and to represent adequately the range of attainment in the centre
 - iii) sampling the judgements made by all internal assessors where there is evidence that this is necessary to guarantee confidence in the internal assessment process
 - iv) requesting additional samples or all relevant work from all candidates, if necessary
 - v) establishing whether a centre’s marks require adjustment, determining the nature of any required adjustment and making the necessary changes
 - vi) giving centres details of, and reasons for, any significant adjustments made.

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

Methods of moderation

- 4.24 WJEC uses moderation methods that are reliable and valid for the subject area concerned. For assessments offered through the medium of Welsh, the moderation methods ensure reliable and valid moderation of Welsh-medium internally assessed work. For internal assessment that leads to written outcomes, moderators inspect samples of candidates' written work.
- 4.25 For assessments from which no written outcome arises, WJEC takes all necessary steps to ensure consistency of standards. This includes reviewing samples of candidates' actual work wherever possible, for example by visit or by post.

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

- 4.26 WJEC provides 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.
- 4.27 WJEC arranges 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 takes place to ensure consistency of practice. All standardisation includes 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.
- 4.28 All principal moderators and, where appointed, assistant principal moderators and team leaders undertake first-hand moderation of centres' assessments in each examination series.

- 4.29 The standards applied by each moderator are checked by a more senior moderator, who repeats the assessment of candidates' work on a specified sample. For assessments offered through the medium of Welsh, the allocation of candidate work to each moderator must allow the checking of the work of Welsh-medium moderators by senior moderators.
- 4.30 Senior moderators are required to complete a report 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.
- 4.31 Where candidates' moderated work or evidence of that work cannot, for logistical reasons, be posted or inspected at a meeting, the senior moderator must normally accompany the moderator on at least one visit to a centre (normally a centre specified by the senior moderator or WJEC) to check the moderator's judgements.
- 4.32 Moderators are provided with clear administrative instructions, including details of how to record, transcribe and check moderated marks. Checks are made of the accuracy with which moderators record and transcribe marks.

Reusing marks

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

Dealing with unsatisfactory practice

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

Section 5: Awarding, maintaining an archive and issuing results

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

- *making sure the responsibilities of those involved are clearly defined**
- *making sure the membership of the awarding committee is clearly defined**
- *making sure the pre-awarding procedures are clearly defined**
- *setting out the process for determining grade boundaries**
- *maintaining an archive of candidates' work at key grade boundaries**
- *issuing results on agreed dates.**

Awarding committee composition

- 5.1 The awarding committee is chaired by the chair of examiners and includes the principal examiner(s) and principal moderator(s). Details of their responsibilities are given in Section 1. In exceptional circumstances where a senior examiner or moderator is unable to participate in an award, the awarding organisation officer will, where possible, ensure that an examiner or moderator of nearest seniority for the specification under consideration participates instead. WJEC staff advise the committee and direct its procedures. Where necessary the committee may include others with particular expertise.
- 5.2 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 Welsh, there must be a single awarding committee or an overlap of membership (chair of examiners and at least one other member) across the committees responsible.
- 5.3 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.
- 5.4 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 are referred to the awarding committee for approval. A sample of candidates' work at the proposed boundary marks are made available to the awarding committee for reference.

Responsibility of the awarding committee

- 5.5 The awarding committee is responsible for:
- i) checking that the required standards are brought to bear in each component/unit and in the qualification as a whole
 - ii) assisting the chair of examiners in arriving at recommended boundary marks for each key grade in the qualification.

- 5.6 The objectives of the awarding committee are to maintain grade standards over time, and to align grade standards across awarding organisations, where appropriate, 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 aligned across awarding organisations.
- 5.7 The awarding committee is required to make boundary recommendations which must be made in the light of available aggregated subject outcomes.

Prior to the award

- 5.8 WJEC ensures that:
- i) sufficient marks are on its system to inform the awarding committee's grading decisions
 - ii) appropriate ranges of candidates' work (marked scripts and/or internally assessed material) are available for the award
 - iii) it identifies, on the basis of preliminary calculation of outcomes, where problems of consistency and comparability may arise.
- 5.9 Preliminary ranges of marks at the key grade boundaries for each component/unit are proposed.

The award

- 5.10 Candidates' work is selected for consideration by the awarding committee, covering the expected range for each key grade boundary, based on the available statistical and technical data, and informed by the proposed preliminary ranges of marks.
- 5.11 WJEC provides the awarding committee with procedures which are used to conduct the award.
- 5.12 Where appropriate, the following are used 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) principals' 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

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

Quantitative evidence

- iii) subject-level expectations, when available
- iv) information on candidates' performance in at least two previous equivalent series, where available
- v) details of changes in entry patterns, choices of options and prior attainment, where available
- vi) information about the relationship between component/unit level data and whole-subject performance, where available
- vii) technical information, including mark distributions relating to the question papers/tasks and individual questions for the current and previous series, where available
- viii) Item-level statistics.

Instructions from the regulators

- ix) any written instruction from the regulators specifying particular evidence that must inform the awarding process for a particular series.
- x) relevant evidence from the regulators' monitoring and comparability reports.

- 5.13 Awarders will consider candidates' work in the expected range for each key boundary, ensuring that a sufficient amount of candidates' work is inspected.
- 5.14 A single mark for the grade boundary is recommended by the chair of examiners according to the appropriate procedure.

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

- i) The chair of examiners identifies whether the consensus of awarders' opinion is that the recommended boundary fairly represents a grade boundary performance. If so this mark is confirmed as the grade boundary. (It is not necessary to identify limiting marks in this scenario.)
- ii) If consensus to set the boundary at the recommended boundary has not been reached, the scrutiny range is extended in whatever direction necessary and a recommended boundary established following the procedure outlined below.

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

- i) First, working down from the top of the range, the chair of examiners identifies the lowest mark for which there is consensus that the quality of work is worthy of the higher grade of the boundary pair. This forms the upper limiting mark
 - ii) Next, working up from the bottom of the range, the chair of examiners identifies the highest mark for which there is consensus that the quality of work is not worthy of the higher grade. The mark above this forms the lower limiting mark
 - iii) The chair of examiners then weighs all the available evidence – quantitative and qualitative – and recommends a single mark for the grade boundary, which normally will lie within the range including the two limiting marks. The choice of recommended grade boundary is such that dependent subject-level outcomes are consistent with the evidence of relevant technical and statistical data.
- 5.15 In all awards, where there are a number of different routes to a subject grade (including replacement papers where there has been a security breach), the chair of examiners ensures that the standards of the awards for grades derived from each route are comparable. Where a component/unit is shared between different specifications or options, the same grade boundaries are used.
- 5.16 When the boundary marks for an internally assessed component/unit have been pre-set, the grade distribution for the component/unit – together with data on previous distributions and any changes in the entry pattern – is reported to the awarders.
- 5.17 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 WJEC subject 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 for reference, should this be necessary¹. Regardless, the grade distribution for the component/unit will be reported to the awarders.

¹ It is not compulsory for awarders to consider work on these components at boundaries which are being carried forward, whether in the face-to-face scenario or at an e-award.

- 5.18 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 pre-set and which are not being carried forward are determined according to the procedures set out in paragraphs 5.8–5.14.
- 5.19 For units that are entirely composed of multiple-choice questions, the chair of examiners and principal examiner are provided with item-level analyses, including facility and discrimination indices, and the correct answer to each item. A documented, valid methodology is used to generate grade boundary recommendations, which are ultimately endorsed by the chair of examiners.
- 5.20 Other arrangements may apply to specifications or options with small entries to avoid distortions caused by atypical mark distributions.

After the award

- 5.21 The chair of examiners' recommendations are reviewed by the responsible officer to ensure that grades awarded represent continuity and parity of standards over time, between awarding organisations and across specifications, where appropriate. In this review, the following evidence is 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 and any generated subsequent to the award.
- 5.22 Should the chair of examiners' recommendations be deemed to need reconsideration by the responsible officer, wherever possible, the chair of examiners will be engaged in this process and consulted before any change is finalised.
- 5.23 Where a final boundary mark is proposed that lies outside the range over which candidates' work was considered at the award, the chair of examiners will be consulted and the regulators must be informed where regulations require it.
- 5.24 Responsibility for setting the final grade boundary rests with the responsible officer. If the responsible officer selects a final grade boundary that is not supported by the chair of examiners, the regulators will be informed before the decision is finalised and provided with an evidence-based justification.
- 5.25 Upon receipt of such information the regulators will inform the responsible officer of any dissatisfaction with the justification and proposed decision, giving their reasons. In such instances, the responsible officer will be required to reconsider and to provide the regulators with a further report on the final decision.
- 5.26 The chair of examiners will be advised of the reasons for any changes to the recommended grade boundaries as soon as possible, and in any event before the publication of results.

Maintaining an archive

- 5.27 While a specification remains in use, WJEC maintains a full archive containing candidates' work at the final mark selected for each key grade boundary covering each series for at least the last five series, including at least two summer series. In addition, WJEC retains equivalent evidence from the first examination of the specification to guide the work of examiners and awarders.
- 5.28 WJEC must supply material in accordance with the requirements of the regulators who maintain their own archives.

Issue of results

- 5.29 WJEC issues results for each series of examinations on the agreed dates.
- 5.30 WJEC ensures that all available work from candidates is marked and/or moderated before results are issued. In the event of any difficulty, WJEC will notify the regulators in good time of the nature of the difficulty and the action taken to resolve it.