Joint Council for Qualifications CIC

Notice to Centres

Informing candidates of their centre-assessed marks

Effective from 1 September 2025

Produced on behalf of:

AQA Questions matter · cea Rewarding Learning · OCR Oxford Cambridge and RSA · Pearson · wjec cbac

Centres are required to write an internal appeals procedure relating to internal assessment decisions. As part of this procedure, candidates **must** be informed of the mark awarded by their centre for a centre-assessed component or unit. This applies to GCE AS, A level, GCSE and Project qualifications (**see Question 1, page 2**).

Candidates may request a review of the centre's marking prior to the marks being submitted to the awarding body. This requirement is reflected in the regulators' *Qualification Level Conditions and Requirements (Ofqual)* and *Additional Standard Conditions of Recognition (Qualifications Wales)*.

Centres should use the internal standardisation process to ensure that all teachers are confident in correctly and accurately applying the marking standard. Exemplar material and any guidance provided by the awarding body should be used. This should help to prevent marking errors.

Although many centres, for example multi-academy trusts, are likely to follow common procedures, each centre determines how a request for a review of marking is managed. The internal deadlines set for marking, internal standardisation arrangements, staffing arrangements and resources will all be influencing factors. Each subject department may be given discretion to apply the requirements in the most practical way.

Details of the written internal appeals procedure **must** be communicated, made widely available and accessible to all candidates. A suggested template for centres to use may be found at:

https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/non-examination-assessments/

Further details may be found in the JCQ document *Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments*, at the same link above.

The JCQ member awarding bodies have also produced some Frequently Asked Questions, which are set out on pages 2-6 of this document.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Where does the requirement apply?

1 Does the requirement to inform candidates of their centre marks apply to qualifications other than GCE AS, A level, GCSE and Project qualifications?

Although the requirement to inform candidates of their marks strictly applies only to GCE AS, A level, GCSE and Project qualifications, centres **must** have a written internal appeals procedure relating to internal assessment decisions in all qualifications. This is stated in the JCQ document *General Regulations for Approved Centres*. Details of this procedure **must** be communicated, made widely available and accessible to all candidates. Giving candidates access to their marks is an important part of the procedure.

The JCQ document *General Regulations for Approved Centres* may be downloaded from the JCQ website:

https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations

2 Does the requirement to inform candidates of their centre marks apply to the Spoken Language Endorsement for GCSE English Language and the Practical Skills Endorsement for the A level Sciences (Ofqual accredited qualifications only)?

Yes. Evidence may be limited but might include written records and, in the Spoken Language Endorsement, recordings if available.

3 Does the requirement to inform candidates of their centre marks apply to qualifications with more than one internally-assessed component – for example, to both components in Art & Design; and must candidates be given their marks for each internally-assessed component?

Yes, to both parts of the question. Art & Design, which is 100% internally assessed, and other subjects with more than one internally-assessed component, candidates **must** be given **all** their marks and can request a review of one or more of those marks.

The review request

4 What should a centre do if it is challenged about a candidate's mark before awarding body moderation?

In the first instance, the centre should follow its published internal appeals procedure, which **must** set out its arrangements for conducting a review of internally-assessed marks. The outcome of the review should determine the mark to be submitted to the awarding body.

The marks the centre submits to the awarding body would have been internally standardised, allowing the awarding body's moderation process to be undertaken successfully.

5 What should a centre do if it is challenged about a candidate's mark after moderation?

The internal review process **must** be completed prior to the awarding body's deadline for submitting marks. Any candidates submitting later requests for a review **must** be informed that they are out of time. Centres **must** publish and communicate clear deadlines for candidates to submit a request for a review of the centre mark before the date for submitting marks to the awarding body.

6 What materials should the centre make available to candidates so they can decide whether to proceed with a request for a review of an internal assessment?

Copies of the marked assessment materials and the mark scheme or assessment criteria should be made available, as a minimum. Additional materials may vary from subject to subject. For some marked assessment materials, such as artwork and recordings, it may be more appropriate for them to be shared under supervised conditions.

7 What constitutes 'sufficient time' for a candidate to study copies of materials and decide whether to request a review of the mark awarded by the centre?

Centres should normally allow at least five working days. This may vary depending on, for example, the subject, the size of the cohort and the number of subject teachers at the centre. Centres should provide a clear deadline to candidates which takes into account the time it will take to review any marks and submit the final marks to the awarding body by the published deadline. Candidates **must not** be allowed access to original assessment material, including artefacts, unless supervised.

8 Will an awarding body allow centre-assessed marks to be submitted after the published deadline to specifically accommodate candidates' requests for reviews of an internal assessment?

No. An awarding body **will not** allow centre-assessed marks to be submitted after the published deadline to specifically accommodate candidates' requests for a review of an internal assessment. A review **must** be completed by the deadline for the submission of marks to the awarding body.

9 Can a candidate only request a review of an internal assessment mark if an issue or issues are identified?

Candidates will need to explain on what grounds they wish to request a review of an internally-assessed mark. Centres may wish to rule out complaints regarding the quality of teaching since the review will focus on the quality of work submitted. Having reviewed the copies of materials made available, the candidate will need to explain what the issue is.

Candidates who request reviews will probably believe that the marks they have been awarded do not give them sufficient credit for meeting the published assessment criteria. They are unlikely to request a review on the grounds that their mark is not in line with the standards set by the centre. The purpose of giving candidates the assessment criteria is to enable them to evaluate whether the criteria have been correctly applied.

Candidates must understand that the moderation process conducted by the awarding body may result in a mark change, either upwards or downwards, even after an internal review. The internal review process is in place to ensure consistency of marking within the centre. Moderation by the awarding body ensures that centre marking is in line with national standards. The mark submitted to the awarding body is subject to change and should be considered provisional.

10 Can the centre charge candidates for an internal review?

This is entirely at the discretion of the centre and may potentially align with any other centre policies on charging for services, such as clerical checks or reviews of awarding body marking.

The review

11 Should the review be of the mark awarded or of the process leading to the mark being awarded?

The review should be of the mark that has been awarded, confirming whether the candidate's mark is in line with the standard set for the other candidates at the centre. The following will be reviewed:

- the candidate's work (where the evidence of this is ephemeral, for example in Drama or Music, then the recording of the work should be given to the reviewer);
- the mark sheet completed by the teacher, which usually shows the breakdown of marks per Assessment Objective (AO) or section of the mark scheme;
- information regarding any internal standardisation to check whether consistent standards were applied by the original marker to the candidate's work; and
- any comments or annotation made by the teacher during the marking process.

(Also, see Question 14)

12 Who should conduct the review of an internally-assessed mark when a candidate requests one?

The review **must** be conducted by an assessor who has appropriate competence, has had no previous involvement in the assessment of that candidate for the component in question and has no personal interest in the outcome of the review.

This could either be another teacher within the centre or a teacher from another centre.

However, the centre would need to ensure that the reviewer has declared any conflict of interest prior to undertaking the review.

It is acceptable for a teacher, who has been internally standardised, to review the work of a candidate marked by another teacher within the same centre. However, if the candidate's work was part of the centre's internal standardisation process, it would not be possible for the teacher who participated in the internal standardisation process to then review the candidate's work.

For large centres, internal standardisation arrangements could enable different sub-groups of teachers to mark, standardise and conduct any reviews in a matrix arrangement.

For small centres, where there are only a few staff, the centre may need to consider whether the candidate in question was 'in the sample' for internal standardisation and, therefore, already seen by all departmental staff. The centre may wish to consider standardising another member of staff in another department, in a related subject, to undertake reviews of marking. Alternatively, the centre could outsource reviews of marking; for example, to a teacher in another school.

13 Will outsourcing the review of an internally-assessed mark breach the confidentiality of assessment materials and candidate data?

No. Confidential assessment materials **should not** be discussed with, or sent to, any person not directly connected to the conduct of the task(s) or their assessment. However, because the reviewer is linked to the assessment process, confidentiality is not breached. Any external parties **must** comply with the centre's data protection policy regarding candidate data.

14 How should the review be conducted?

Different approaches may be equally valid, depending on the subject. However, the task of the reviewer does not vary. The reviewer will be provided with materials from the centre's internal standardisation process, conducted prior to the release of marks to candidates, along with the work under review. Centres will need to ensure they retain internal standardisation materials for this purpose. The reviewer would need to see the candidate's work, the internal assessor's mark sheet and any annotation or comments that demonstrate how or why a certain mark was awarded.

These **must** be considered within the context of the internal standardisation materials provided to ensure a consistent approach to other candidates in the centre. Where there was no internal standardisation carried out (because there was only one teacher involved in marking the component), work of other candidates in the cohort **must** be considered to ensure that judgements can be made on the consistency of standards.

The review should take place at the candidate's centre to maintain the integrity of the work and to ensure secure storage. If the review must take place remotely, then the original materials should be held at the centre, with the reviewer being provided with copies of the candidate's work.

Once the centre has informed the candidate of their mark for a centre-assessed component or unit, it **must** be made clear to the reviewer, the teacher and the candidate that no-one is permitted to alter the work.

The reviewer **must** provide a reason for upholding or changing the mark awarded by the centre. This can be a brief annotation on the record form, showing the reviewer's breakdown of marks per Assessment Objective (AO) or section.

The centre **must** inform the candidate in writing of the outcome of the review. It should also be logged and brought to the attention of the head of centre. The written record **must** be made available to the awarding body on request. The centre **must** inform the awarding body if it does not accept the outcome of a review.

Should the review raise wider concerns, for example about the centre's general application of the assessment criteria, the reviewer should discuss these with the head of department or head of centre, as required. Further advice should be sought from the awarding body if necessary.

15 If an external reviewer disagrees with the marking, is the centre obliged to accept the new mark?

The reviewer should be instructed to ensure that the candidate's mark is consistent with **the centre's marking standard** and correct any marking error.

The three types of marking error are:

- an administrative error;
- a failure to apply the marking criteria to the evidence generated by the candidate where that failure did not involve the exercise of academic judgement; or
- an unreasonable exercise of academic judgement.

If there has been a marking error, the reviewer **must** indicate where the marking error has occurred and how the mark is not in line with the standard of other candidates at the centre. The centre should determine whether any difference in marking is within any tolerances they would allow during the internal standardisation process. The head of centre will have the final decision if there is any disagreement on the mark to be submitted to the awarding body.

The centre **must** inform the awarding body if it does not accept the outcome of a review.

After the review

16 Will the awarding body ask that the reviewed work is submitted for moderation?

The awarding body will use its standard sampling system to identify candidates' work to be submitted for moderation. This may include candidates whose marks were reviewed.

17 Can candidates attempt to improve the outcome of a review by producing additional work?

No. This is **not** an opportunity for candidates to try and improve their mark after the centre's deadline for the submission of final work. The service is to specifically provide an opportunity to challenge the mark, as awarded by the centre, on work already submitted for assessment.

18 Where does the legal responsibility lie for the fairness and lawfulness of the marks and grades awarded?

The centre is responsible for following the regulations and processes set by an awarding body, including those for internal assessment. Any legal challenge made against a centre regarding a mark it has awarded as part of a qualification should be referred to the relevant awarding body.

However, if the challenge is made before moderation has taken place, the complainant would need to wait until the moderation process has been completed. The awarding body would need to be satisfied that the centre followed the correct processes. Awarding bodies are responsible for the grades and awards that they make.