

# Awarding of GCSE, AS, A Level and Vocational grades Summer 2021

Presentation for students,  
parents & guardians  
(09/03/21)



# Context

In December, 2020, the Secretary of State for Education announced that exams would not take place in the summer and that grades would be awarded by schools.

A consultation on the awarding of grades to GCSE, AS and A Level students (and a separate consultation for vocational qualifications) took place between the 15th and 29th of January. 52% of respondents to this were students.

The outcome of the consultation is that:

- Students will receive grades awarded and determined by teachers, with pupils only assessed on what they have been taught
- Teachers will be able to draw on a range of evidence when determining grades, including the optional use of questions provided by exam boards, as well as mock exams, coursework, or other work completed as part of a pupil's course, such as essays or in-class tests.
- No algorithm will be used.

# Assessment and evidence

Teachers need to assess their students' performance - based only on what has been taught

Teachers can use evidence of a student's performance from throughout the course

Schools should use a broad range of evidence for each student, for each subject studied

Grades should be determined as late in the academic year as possible, and not confined to a defined window, to enable teaching to continue for as long as possible.

There is no requirement for the assessment of a minimum proportion of content.

Students should continue to work on their non-exam assessment (NEA), including for Project qualifications.

The deadline for submitting Centre Assessed Grades to exam boards is 18/06

# Quality assurance

Internal QA arrangements will include consideration of the centre's profile of results in previous years as a guide to help them to check that their judgements are not unduly harsh or lenient.

Exam boards will put in place arrangements for external QA to check each centre's internal QA process and, to review the evidence for one or more subjects. Sampling should be both random, and risk-based.

Internal QA should include:

- Agreement about the approach to assessment
- Internal standardisation arrangements, so that all teachers in a centre making judgements in a subject did so in a consistent way

# Our consultation and decision process

We have carefully considered:

- what is best for our students
- the guidance from the DfE, Ofqual and exam boards
- what other schools and colleges are doing
- how a range of assessment could support 'our' learners
- the available time-frame
- how school closures and remote (online) learning might have affected some learners
- what is fair, and what is right... in the circumstances
- how our processes will stand up to external QA and moderation

# Spring & summer assessment schedule

Students taking final-year courses will undertake a range of assessments between 15/03 and 21/05 that will be included in a portfolio of evidence and will contribute towards their final, Centre Assessed Grades (CAG)

No single piece of assessment will be used to determine the CAG

Spring / summer assessment will be specific to each subject and may include:

- In-class assessments (between 20 and 35 minutes in duration)
- Substantive assessments (mock-style papers)
- Practical assessments
- (other) Non-exam assessments (NEA) - eg: coursework / controlled assessment

# Faculty / Subject examples (GCSE)

Maths

Substantive  
Assessments

In-class  
assessments

Additional data

PE

NEA  
(40%)

Substantive  
Assessments

Additional data

Art

All  
portfolio  
based

Additional data

# Faculty / Subject examples (A-Level and BTEC L3)

Biology

Substantive  
Assessments

In-class  
assessments

Additional data

Geography

NEA  
(20%)

Substantive  
Assessments

In-class assessments

Additional data

BTEC Psychology

Teacher  
assessed  
coursework  
(subject to  
standards  
verification)

Additional data

## Additional data may include...

- Exam Week 1 - October 2019
- Exam Week 1 - October 2020
- Pieces of work that have been assessed by your teachers (eg: essays, homework tasks, in-class (and remote) tests, end of topic tests, mock assessments, projects, presentations, submitted classwork etc.)

Heads of subject, heads of faculty and their line managers will agree on the specific information that will be included when calculating a CAG, and this will be published to students in due course.

# Timeline

Week beginning	Notes
08/03	All pupils return to school (Covid-19 testing onsite)
15/03	Students continue with lessons (and NEAs) as normal with opportunity for some <b>in-class assessments</b>
22/03	
29/03	
05/04 → 18/04	Easter Holidays - Revision (in school)
19/04	Professional Learning Day (Monday 19/04) - Practical assessments scheduled

26/04	Additional English paper + overflow practical assessments
03/05	Substantive Assessments - Final year courses only  - May bank holiday (03/05)
10/05	
17/05	
24/05	Internal marking deadline - Catch-up assessments + Construction Practical Assessment
31/05	May Half Term Holiday
07/06	Internal / External moderation
14/06	CAG deadline - 18/06

# Further details

Unless previously planned, assessment should not take place in the week beginning 08/03

In-class assessments should be no longer than 35 minutes and no shorter than 20 minutes. This allows students with 25% extra time to complete tasks in class

Heads of faculty and subject leaders should consider the length and number of substantive assessments required, within the context

Grades must be awarded based on what a student has achieved, not what they could have achieved

Y11 will return from 07/06 for transition activities, including bridging courses, employability sessions, social and sporting events

# Summary

Assessment schedules will be published to students on Tuesday, 09/03/21

Topic lists will be published to students (by teachers) a minimum of 1 week in advance

Students with access arrangements will continue to receive this support

Students can be told their raw score or a percentage, not a grade. They can receive feedback. Copies of marked assessments can be made for students upon request

Substantive assessments will take place in the school hall

Exam boards will publish support materials, it is likely that some faculties will use these

Assessments will form part of an 'assessment profile' for a student.

# Additional considerations

**These are exceptional circumstances...**

Heads of Faculty, Subject Leaders and school management are working hard to produce procedural documentation that will provide transparency on the processes undertaken to agree; weighting of assessment tasks and; final CAGs. Please be patient. We need to get this right.

# Next Steps

- Teachers will produce **in-class assessments** and topic lists, giving a minimum of 1 week's (advance) notice
- Teachers will produce materials and topic lists for **substantive assessments** before Easter Holidays
- The school will publish schedules for: In-class assessments (09/03/21), Practical Assessments and Substantive assessments (26/03/21)
- Students will have an opportunity to inform the school of any extenuating circumstances or make requests for special consideration (before 21/05)
- The school will publish procedural documentation at the earliest possible opportunity - we are still awaiting further guidance from exam boards on a number of points

# Values

Support

Challenge

Respect

Responsibility

Relationships

Resilience

