



30th September 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

Yesterday the Department for Education released the long-awaited document detailing any changes to the GCSE exams for the class of 2022. Whilst this is very welcome, it does leave some questions around certain subjects that school leaders across the country are still pushing to resolve. Once we have further updates, we will share with you and your children.

The full paper can be found by following this link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/proposed-changes-to-the-assessment-of-gcses-as-and-a-levels-in-2022/outcome/decisions-proposed-changes-to-the-assessment-of-gcses-as-and-a-levels-in-2022>

Below I have included a summary of the key points.

Adaptations

- There will be optional topics and content in GCSE English literature, history, ancient history and geography.
- If necessary, centres will be allowed to deliver practical work in GCSE biology, chemistry, physics, combined science, geology and astronomy, AS level biology, chemistry, physics and geology, and AS and A level environmental science by demonstration.
- Centres will be allowed to assess the Common Practical Assessment Criteria (CPAC) across the minimum number of practical activities required to enable students to demonstrate their competence in A level biology, chemistry, physics and geology.
- Students taking GCSE, AS and A level art and design will be assessed on their portfolio only.
- Exam boards will provide advanced information about the focus of the content of exams for all GCSE, AS and A level subjects except GCSE English literature, history, ancient history and geography by 7 February 2022 at the latest. This could be released earlier 'if circumstances require'.
- Students will be given a formulae sheet for GCSE mathematics and a revised equation sheet for GCSE physics and combined science.

Grading

- 2022 will be a 'transition year' to reflect the fact that we are in a pandemic recovery period and students' education has been disrupted.
- Ofqual will therefore aim for grades in 2022 to reflect a midway point between 2021 and 2019. This means that results overall next year will be higher than in 2019 but not as high as in 2020.

- Exam boards will use data as a starting point, to align their standards in a subject. But the grade boundaries for each specification will be set by the senior examiners after they have reviewed the work produced by students.
- Grades for students sitting exams in autumn 2021 will be aligned with grading in summer 2021.
- When predicting grades for UCAS this year, Ofqual recommends that teachers use the 2019 standard as the basis, but that they give borderline students the benefit of any doubt.
- Organisations awarding VTQs are expected to take account of the approach for GCSEs and A levels when setting standards in their own qualifications.
- In 2023, Ofqual aims to return to results that are in line with those in pre-pandemic years.

Results days

Results for exams next year will return to their normal format, with GCSEs on 25 August. VTQs used to progress in a similar way will be issued on or before the same days, and other VTQ results will continue to be issued throughout the year.

Best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Phil Arnold', written over a light grey grid background.

Phil Arnold
Principal