

Information for students and parents

DfE and Ofqual guidance relating to qualifications in 2022

At the end of last week, the DfE and Ofqual published more detailed guidance for schools and colleges relating to qualifications being certified in 2022. They have already made adaptations to account for the impact of Covid-19, and will closely monitor the situation in schools and colleges. These are summarised here:

<https://educationhub.blog.gov.uk/2021/11/11/exams-in-2022-everything-you-need-to-know/>

More detailed information about the specific guidance for A levels, AS levels and GCSEs including arrangements for non-exam assessment is available here (for the second and third link, the decisions are available below the downloadable outcome):

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

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/arrangements-for-non-exam-assessment-for-qualifications-in-2022>

If there's a significant increase in disruption and/or a tightening of public health restrictions, they'll introduce extra measures as a last resort.

If there is widespread and significant disruption to teaching and learning, advance information will be published sooner to help schools and colleges to focus their remaining teaching time.

What if exams can't go ahead at all?

In the unlikely event that exams are not able to go ahead as planned, grades provided by schools and colleges will be used. Detailed information on how grades would be determined, and guidance on how to use the evidence collected to determine those grades, along with details about quality assurance and appeals, will only be published if exams are cancelled.

We are required to tell students that their performance in assessments (specifically mock exams, but also selected class assessments as necessary and notified) would be used as part of the evidence to determine a TAG if exams are cancelled.

Students should be aware that any grade used to indicate the level at which the student has performed is not a TAG.

If you are absent for any mock exams and/or assessments, you will more than likely not be able to sit the very same paper. Please do all you can to ensure that you are present. We will make arrangements in exceptional circumstances, but there will be a delay in conducting the assessment due to the need to review and make any necessary amendments the assessment taken at the scheduled time.

In the meantime, the full decisions and detailed guidance on what schools need to do for now are on the Ofqual website. They've also published open letters to schools, students and private candidates. The Joint Council for Qualifications has also published some frequently asked questions for the Summer 2022 Contingency plans.

Students can access an open letter that has been written to them from Dr Jo Saxton, Chief Regulator for Ofqual:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/open-letters-arrangements-for-gcses-as-and-a-levels-in-2022/letter-to-students>

There is an Instagram video embedded in the letter via the link above but also available here:

<https://www.instagram.com/p/CUc3FOZLKpN/>

The pandemic has been tough for students and you've had to dig deep to keep going with your education, including those of you who will be taking exams and assessments next summer.

We hope you'll be reassured to know we're here to make sure that whatever you're studying - whether that's GCSE maths, A level art or a diploma in travel and tourism - the end result will reflect your work.

Summary of the guidance for schools

DfE/Ofqual guidance	Extra info / actions
For the exams due to be taken in summer 2022, grade boundaries will be set so that more students than was the case before the pandemic receive higher grades.	The results released next summer will be based on assessment standards that are a mid-way point between 2019 and 2021.
Where possible, centres' existing assessment plans should be used.	We will continue with our existing assessment plan – November-December and March for Y11 and January for Year 13.
Assessment of NEA should continue.	
For mock exams, students should not know the questions in the assessment beforehand.	
For mock exams, students should work independently and without assistance (other than as required for a reasonable adjustment).	
For mock exams, students should not have access to books or revision notes and the assessment should be timed and supervised.	The mock exams will be conducted in line with JCQ requirements and their rules will be adhered to.
During their assessments, students taking GCSEs in maths, combined science and physics should have access to the formulae and equation sheets that they will have in the summer exams, where assessments are taking place after these sheets are published. Students taking art and design qualifications should complete their non-exam assessments – no additional assessments are needed.	These will be made available after they are published.
Wherever possible, a centre must either assess all of its students who are taking a particular qualification using the same material at the same time or using different materials at different times.	A student missing a mock exam may mean a different assessment needs to be taken.
Students must be told before they take each assessment that their performance in it would be used as part of the evidence to determine a TAG if exams are cancelled.	See above.
Students should be told which parts of the subject content will be covered by the assessment, but they should not be told the questions in advance or be able to predict the questions from information given to them.	Teachers will observe this approach.
Teachers setting assessments after the advance information for the summer 2022 exams has been published, should take that advance information into account when deciding how to assess their students. They should make their students aware of the fact that they have done so prior to their assessments.	These will be made available after they are published.
Students should not re-sit assessments.	
The same reasonable adjustments that will be made for disabled students taking exams in the summer should, where possible, be applied to the assessments.	Mock exams will be taken with full access arrangements in line with assessed and evidenced need.
If a teacher is satisfied that a student's performance in one or more of the assessments was affected by an event that was outside of the student's control at the time of, or immediately before, the assessment, such as illness or family bereavement, the teacher should adjust their marking of the assessment.	We will respond to information that is shared with us and that we hold and teachers will be given further guidance as necessary.

Where significant disruption to education means assessments cannot be completed for all or some of their students in line with this guidance, centres should take reasonable steps to collect evidence of each student's knowledge and understanding in ways that align as far as possible with this guidance.	
Teachers should mark the assessments in line with published exam board mark schemes and guidance where appropriate.	
Centres should support teachers to mark work for the same qualification to the same standard.	Standardisation activities will be encouraged and led by subject leaders or accessed using links across the Trust and/or city.
Students should be provided with feedback, which could include marks or comments.	Students will be told their marks and provided with feedback.
Teachers may tell the student the grade at which their performance in the assessment indicates they have performed. They should also be clear that the marking and grading have not been quality assured (except for in the cases that it has!).	There will be some cross-centre (across WeST secondary schools) moderation of marking in some subject areas.
Teachers must make it clear to their students that any grade used to indicate the level at which the student has performed is not a TAG.	
The original student work must be retained by the centre. Students may be given copies if this would help support their learning.	We must retain the original student work and provide copies for students if it would help their learning.