

Update on Exams in 2022

Dear Parents and Carers

You may have heard that at the end of last week the Government made a number of announcements about exams. Although some of these are still being consulted on, I thought it would be helpful to give you an update on what we know so far.

Firstly, they have confirmed that **GCSE results day** will be **Thursday 25th August**.

Secondly, they have announced that, assuming public exams go ahead, in response to the disruption that learners have faced (and may continue to face), exam boards will make a number of adjustments:

1. There will be some **reduction in the number of topics assessed in GCSE English Literature, History and Geography**. We can now confirm the following:
 - In **English Literature**, learners will be assessed on the Unseen Poetry, Power and Conflict Poetry Anthology, an Inspector Calls and Macbeth. Learners should still retain their notes on all areas (just in case there is a further change of plan).
 - In **History**, learners will just answer on 3 topics: Medicine, Germany, and the Cold War.
 - In **Geography**, we are expecting OCR to make some changes to the structure of the exams for Geography, but nothing will be confirmed until February and even then Geography content is unlikely to be revealed in advance. Current thinking is that learners will have to answer questions in Exam Paper 1 & 2 on units; (2.)Changing Climate, (3.)Distinctive Landscapes, (5.)Urban Futures, (6.)Dynamic Development and (7.) The UK in the 21st century. They will then have to answer one of the other three units, so either (1.)Global Hazards, or(4.)Sustaining Ecosystems, or (8.)Resource Reliance.
2. In **Art**, assessment will be on learners' portfolios only (rather than a timed exam)
3. In **GCSE Maths**, learners will be provided with a formula sheet.
4. In **GCSE Physics** (and the Physics element of Combined Science), learners will be provided with an equation sheet.
5. In all subjects (apart from English Literature, History and Geography), learners will be given **advance information about the content of the exams** by 7th Feb 2022. We are not yet sure how much detail they will provide but we are pleased that this will allow us to focus our revision to some extent.

Thirdly, the Government has said that, assuming public exams go ahead, the **grade boundaries** would be set at a midpoint between 2019 and 2021, which would result in higher grades than 2019 but not as high as 2020. We are pleased that they have decided not to go back to 2019 levels, given all the disruption there has been.

The Government has also started planning **contingency arrangements** to be used in the event of public exams being cancelled. Although still in the consultation phase, the draft arrangements are very similar to those they put in place for 2021. In brief, this would require schools to provide exam boards with 'Centre-Assessed Grades' (CAGs). Schools would be required to follow detailed

instructions on how to determine these grades. They would be based on common assessments taken by all learners, which would then undergo extensive moderation and standardisation, including work being sent to the exam boards for checking. These assessments would assess learners on what they have been taught and would need to be taken under controlled conditions (i.e. timed and supervised). The Government is currently recommending that all schools do some common assessments this term and next term which may then be used to help determine these CAGs. Departments would make clear which assessments would be potentially contributing to the CAGs. **In the event of public exams being cancelled, it is likely that learners' Autumn and Spring mocks would be used to help determine their Centre Assessed Grades.** Teachers will be making clear to learners which topics will be covered in these assessments and how they can prepare for them.

I hope this provides you with a useful update on what we know so far. We have been really impressed with the positive start that learners have made to the year. We very much hope that there will be far less disruption this year but it is reassuring that the Government has recognized that it can't be 'business as usual' this summer. The adjustments that have already been confirmed will mean that we can be more focused in our preparations. It is also helpful to know what the contingency arrangements might be, so that we can ensure that we provide suitable opportunities for learners to demonstrate what they have learnt so they can be rewarded for their hard work.

I will continue to keep you updated as we receive more information and as we formulate our response. In the meantime, I want to stress that we will do all that we can to ensure that learners are supported throughout the year and are properly prepared for their assessments, whatever form they may finally take.

Yours sincerely

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