



October 2021

**Re: Arrangements for GCSE and Vocational Examinations in 2022**

Dear Parents/Carers and Students

The Department for Education (DfE) have released their plans for this Year 11 cohort and have **confirmed that examinations will take place in 2022.**

There is recognition from the DfE that students nationally have experienced high levels of disruption of the past two years. Measures have therefore been put in place to make sure students have not been disadvantaged.

**Why are they bringing exams back?**

The DfE feel that exams are the best and fairest form of assessment.

The DfE and Ofqual recently ran a consultation on what adaptations should be made to the GCSE, AS and A-Level exams in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. The consultation gathered 6,725 responses with almost a quarter from students – and these responses have helped shape the approach they have taken.

**When will GCSE exams happen in 2022?**

GCSE exams will happen in May and June, as normal. The Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) will confirm the Summer exam dates shortly.

**What measures will be in place to make sure they are fair when different students have missed different amounts of time?**

Students will receive a range of adaptations to GCSE, AS and A-level exam. These adaptations seek to ensure students reach their potential following the disruption they have faced. They include:

1. There will be optional topics and content in GCSE English Literature, History and Geography.
2. If necessary, centres will be allowed to deliver practical work in GCSE Biology, Chemistry, Physics and Combined Science by demonstration.
3. Students taking GCSE Art and Design will be assessed on their portfolio only.
4. Exam boards will provide 'advance information' about the focus of the content of the exams for all GCSE subjects (except GCSE English Literature, History and Geography) for the summer 2022 exams. **This advance information will be provided by 7 February 2022 at the latest.**
5. Students will be given a formulae sheet for GCSE mathematics in summer 2022. Exam boards will provide copies of the formulae sheet for use in teaching and to ensure that students are familiar with it prior to the exams.
6. Students will be given a revised equation sheet for GCSE physics and combined science in summer 2022, covering all the equations required in the subject content. Exam boards will provide copies of the formulae sheet for use in teaching and to ensure that students are familiar with it prior to the exams.

These adjustments are designed to mitigate the impacts of the disruption that students have faced during the pandemic, without undermining the value of their qualifications and their ability to progress successfully to further study.

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While it is the Government's firm intention for exams to go ahead next year, there will also be contingency plans in place in the event they cannot. Ofqual and the DfE have launched a consultation on how this might work in 2022, building on the 2021 process. This can be found [here](#).

### **How will grades be determined by the exams regulator?**

GCSE grades are calculated using a process called comparative outcomes. In order to reflect the changes to grading processes in 2020 and 2021, the following will apply in 2022:

- 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.
- Organisations awarding Vocational and Technical Qualifications (VTQs) are expected to take account of the approach for GCSEs 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.

### **What is being done for vocational and technical qualifications in 2022?**

It is the Government's firm intention that exams and assessments for VTQs should go ahead.

[Adaptations for Vocational and Technical Qualifications](#) have also been implemented, following consultation. Colleges and schools are now being made aware of these changes by their awarding organisations.

### **When will students get their results?**

GCSE results day will be held on **Thursday 25th August 2022**. All qualifications will be awarded on this date.

### **Where can I get more information?**

<https://educationhub.blog.gov.uk/2021/09/30/exams-in-2022-everything-you-need-to-know/>

<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>

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me on [mhardman7hr5@nsix.org.uk](mailto:mhardman7hr5@nsix.org.uk).

Yours sincerely

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