

Ofqual update on examinations

Since the Secretary of State announced that the 2020 exam series in England would be cancelled to help fight the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19), Ofqual has developed a process which will fairly recognise students' work and make sure that they get their grades in time to progress. Ofqual has today set out how GCSEs, AS and A levels will be awarded this summer and published further guidance for education staff, students, parents and carers.

For this summer's awards, schools and colleges are being asked to provide centre assessment grades for their students. These should be objective and carefully considered judgements of the grades schools and colleges believe their students would have been most likely to achieve if they had sat their exams and should take into account the full range of available evidence.

Guidance from Ofqual on how qualifications will be graded and awarded in summer 2020 can be found here:

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/gcses-as-and-a-level-awarding-summer-2020>

Ofqual has published a message to students to reassure them that they, and exam boards, will do everything they can to make sure that, as far as possible, grades are fair and that students are not disadvantaged because of this unprecedented situation. This letter is printed below:

A message for all GCSE, AS and A level students this summer

3 April 2020

I understand how unsettling the past weeks have been for you, since the announcement that exams have been cancelled this summer, and that you are urgently waiting for news. I wanted to let you know what we are doing to provide you with grades. Our overriding aim in this is to be fair to students this summer and to make sure you are not disadvantaged in your progress to sixth form, college, university, apprenticeships, training or work because of these unprecedented conditions.

How will grades be calculated?

Your school or college will be asked to send exam boards two pieces of information for each of your subjects, based on what they know about your work and achievements:

- the grade they believe you were most likely to get if teaching, learning and exams had happened as planned
- within each subject, the order of students at your school or college, by performance, for each grade. This information will be used to standardise judgements – allowing fine tuning of the standard applied across schools and colleges.

Your school or college will consider a range of things like your classwork and homework; your results in assignments and any mock exams; any non-exam assessment or coursework you might have done; and your general progress during your course.

This information will allow us, with exam boards, to standardise grades across schools and colleges, to make sure that, as far as possible, results are fair and that students are not advantaged or disadvantaged because their schools or colleges are more generous or harsh than others when making those judgements. That means the final grade you get could be different from the one your school or college sends to the exam board.

Do I need to complete any new work for my school/college to submit a grade?

Your school or college is not required to set additional mock exams or homework for your centre assessment grade, and you won't be disadvantaged if you were not set, or were unable to complete, any work given out after schools were closed.

Can I see the grades my school/college submits for me?

No, this information will be confidential. Please don't ask your teachers, or anyone else at your school or college, to tell you the grades they will be sending to the exam boards or where they have placed you in the order of students; they will not be allowed to share this with you.

When will I get my results?

We're working hard to get results out as soon as is possible – results won't be delayed after the dates they were expected in August, and ideally they will be issued a little earlier, so you can have the certainty you need.

Can I take my exams another time?

We are working with exam boards to offer additional exams in the autumn term as soon as it is possible to do so. We'll let you know about these in the coming weeks.

Please be reassured that the grades you get this summer will look exactly the same as in previous years, and they will have equal status with universities, colleges and employers, to help you move forward in your lives as planned.

Sally Collier

Chief Regulator, Ofqual