



ALL Briefing No. 28

Date : February 2021

Theme: Outcomes of OFQUAL / DfE Consultation on how GCSE, AS and A-level grades should be awarded in Summer 2021

Background: A consultation (See Briefing 27) was carried out in January 2021. The rationale for proposing changes to traditional exams was this: *Given students' education has been disrupted by the pandemic, their interests will be best served if they engage fully with their education for the remainder of the academic year, if they are taught for as long as possible and if they cover as much of the curriculum as possible.*

Key messages: These arrangements apply to the award of grades in 2021 only.

Abbreviated quotations from the article (25 February 2021) from OfQUAL Chief Regulator explaining the arrangements for 2021 to students
(You = the student; We = OfQUAL)

For GCSEs, AS and A levels, teachers will assess the standard at which you are performing based only on what you have been taught ... Teachers' judgements should be based on a range of evidence relating to the subject content that your teachers have delivered, either in the classroom or via remote learning.

Teachers will be able to use evidence about your performance gathered throughout your course to inform their judgement. This might include work that you have already completed, mock exam results, homework or in-class tests. Your teachers may also use questions from exam boards, largely based on past papers, to help assess you, but this won't be compulsory. Reasonable adjustments should be taken into account if you have a disability.

.... Teachers will tell you which pieces of work will count towards your grade, before your grade is submitted to the exam board.

... We will not set any requirements about the minimum amount of content that should be taught or assessed, but we will ask the head of your school or college to confirm that you have been taught enough content so that you can progress to the next stage of your education...

For ... GCSE modern foreign languages ... your school or college should submit a

separate grade ... for the spoken language ... based on work that you have completed.

If you are a private candidate studying independently, you will need to work with a school or college, or another exam centre, to provide evidence in line with the sort of evidence that other students will produce.

Exam boards will provide a package of support materials to schools, colleges and other exam centres, including questions and mark schemes. They will also give your teachers advice about choosing topics, marking, and making grading judgements. Wherever possible, the exam boards will base this material on questions that have appeared in past exam papers.

These support materials will be made available publicly at a date to be agreed. Use of these exam board support materials is not compulsory. They are there to help your teachers and they are part of the range of evidence your teachers could use to determine your grade.

Exam boards will put in place quality assurance arrangements to make sure consistent judgements are being made and your head teacher or principal will sign off all grades. Exam boards will also ask your school or college to confirm that they have followed the correct procedure for determining grades.

We will hold a short technical consultation so that we can put the necessary regulations in place to deliver these arrangements. We will do this quickly so that exam boards can confirm their guidance and the materials they will make available to your teachers as soon as possible.

Reference :

The full article :

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/how-qualifications-will-be-awarded-in-2021>

The consultation document is here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/consultation-on-how-gcse-as-and-a-level-grades-should-be-awarded-in-summer-2021/how-gcse-as-and-a-level-grades-should-be-awarded-in-summer-2021-html>

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