

07 October 2020

Dear parent/ carers,

You may be aware from information in the media about recent changes to the GCSE, BTEC and OCR Nationals specifications for students sitting their exams in May/June 2021. Due to the lost curriculum time, teachers were consulted nationally and as a result of that process, Ofqual agreed that aspects of some courses could be omitted/amended so as not to unfairly disadvantage the students who had lost a significant amount of in lesson learning time.

Amendments vary between subjects and in some subjects, there are no amendments at all. We are also unsure, unfortunately, if any further changes to each subjects' assessments arrangements will occur.

It is important to bring to your attention that whilst the Summer 2020 exams had a Centre Assessed Grade Awarded, this was done based on the evidence we had in school for each student using a combination of mock exam grades, internal assessments, practical's, class work, homework etc. Without any evidence of a student working at a given grade, it is impossible for that grade to be awarded, regardless of their target grades. Whilst it is highly unlikely that this will occur again, it is more important than ever that we have substantial evidence of your child's progress and attainment at each subject, without which a grade cannot be awarded if we were asked to do so. Therefore we ask for you to reinforce to your child that he/she achieves their full potential in all classwork, homework and mock exam provision and to ensure they are fully prepared for GCSE exams to be held in Summer 2021 and any other eventuality.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ms Summers', written in a cursive style.

Ms Summers

Deputy Head Teacher

Changes to the assessment of GCSE's in 2021

Please see below for the KS4 subjects and any changes that have been made to date, to courses. We will keep you informed of any further changes.

Board	Subject	Specification changes
AQA	Triple Science	Biology/ Chemistry and Physics- Students are permitted to observe demonstrations and/or simulations to cover required apparatus and techniques, instead of completing the required practical's themselves although they should have the knowledge and understanding of all of them.
AQA	Combined Science	Students are permitted to observe demonstrations and/or simulations to cover required apparatus and techniques, instead of completing the required practical's themselves although they should have the knowledge and understanding of all of them.
AQA	Citizenship	Citizenship in action unit to be completed to include stages 1-3, however, stage 4 will be removed. Students will largely use secondary data to inform their research and no primary data collection will take place in person.
AQA	Drama	Changes will only impact component 3 (texts in practice), students are now required to identify two extracts from a text but only need to perform one monologue for a minimum of 1.5 minutes or a group performance for a minimum of 2 minutes. This is now internally assessed and marked by the teacher rather than a visiting examiner and will then be moderated by the exam board.
AQA	English Literature	Students must complete questions on a Shakespeare text and unseen poetry and students will sit exams on a modern text and 19th century novel. That will mean they answer questions on 'An Inspector Calls' and 'A Christmas Carol'. The poetry anthology will therefore be omitted.
AQA	French & German	Students will not be required for assessments to use words outside of vocabulary lists. The spoken language assessment will now be completed in the presence of a teacher from the school and also assessed by them. This will be completed during the course of the study. The writing assessment will now include an extra optional question in the exam.
AQA	Geography	Fieldwork requirement has been removed. Students no longer need to attend a fieldwork visit or write about the fieldwork enquiry in the exam.
OCR	Art and Design	Assessment to be portfolio only, there will be no final exam component. Schools will provide photographic evidence of portfolio work to the exam board.
OCR	Computer Science	Students are allowed to complete the programming project unsupervised as homework if required.
OCR	Creative iMedia	Awaiting confirmation on 23 rd October

OCR	Enterprise and Marketing	Awaiting confirmation on 23 rd October
OCR	Food preparation and nutrition	Students will no longer need to study the Food Preparation and Nutrition Unit (NEA1) Section C Food Science which will be removed from the exam. The requirements for NEA2 has been reduced to 2 dishes and is to be completed within 3 hours (providing an additional 1 hour for completion).
OCR	Music	<p>Music GCSE Music (9-1) J536</p> <p>The minimum duration for performances and compositions will be significantly reduced. More details are provided below:</p> <p>Performance Assessment: Require students to perform 1 or more pieces of music with a combined duration of at least 1.5 minutes (if all solo performance) or 2 minutes (if including performance as part of an ensemble).</p> <p>There will be no requirement to perform as part of an ensemble.</p> <p>Students will be required to submit complete and unedited recording of the live performance and, where available, the score or lead sheet for that performance.</p> <p>Composition Assessment: Requires students to compose 1 or more pieces of music with a combined duration of at least 2 minutes. Compositions may be in response to an exam board set brief and/or be freely composed, with no requirement to do both. Exam boards to provide clarification about their requirements for students who compose more than 1 piece. Requirement to submit complete recording of each composition with a score, lead sheet or written account of the composition, produced by the student. NB: The student does not have to perform their own composition(s). The recording(s) may be computer generated.</p> <p>Both NEA components: Permit both NEA components to be marked by the teacher and moderated by the exam board or to be marked directly by the exam board. Exam boards to provide clarification about their requirements.</p> <p>There will be no change to the written paper Listening and Appraising.</p>
OCR	PE	Students will only be assessed on 2 activities instead of 3.
OCR	Religious Studies	No change to assessment arrangements
Pearson	History	Students will no longer be required to study the Anglo-Norman Unit.
Pearson	Business Studies	No change to assessment arrangements
Pearson	English Language	The recorded speaking assessment will need to take place but will not be required to be recorded for the exam board. The spoken assessment will be held by the teacher during the course and the teacher can represent the 'audience.'
Pearson	Maths	No change to assessment arrangements
Pearson	Statistics	No change to assessment arrangements
Pearson	BTEC Sport	Awaiting confirmation on 23 rd October

Pearson	BTEC Health and Social Care	Awaiting confirmation on 23 rd October
WJEC	Media Studies	The media product created by the student can be a prototype rather than the completed piece of work. This will allow annotations for explanation/ supporting evidence such as sketches and directions to be included to show what the final article was planned to look like.
VTCT	Hairdressing and Beauty Therapy	Awaiting confirmation on 23 rd October