

08 October 2021

Dear Parents and Students,

RE: GCSE Exams 2022

I am writing with regards to the changes to the assessment of GCSE exams in 2022, announced recently by Ofqual.

Changes to exams

Ofqual has recognised that the 2022 cohort have had their education disrupted and that exams and assessments should be adjusted to take this into account. The following changes will be made for exams in summer 2022:

- There will be optional topics and content in GCSE English literature, history and geography. When schools have more information about this from exam boards, class teachers will inform students of the details.
- Students studying GCSE or A-Level art and design will be assessed on their portfolio only.
- Exam boards will provide advanced information about the focus of the content of the exams for all GCSE and A-Level subjects (except GCSE English literature, history and geography) by **7 February 2022**.
- Formula sheets will be provided for GCSE mathematics, physics and combined science.
- Exams in a subject will be timetabled at least 10 days apart to minimise the chances of a student missing all exams in a subject. Students who unavoidably miss one or more exams in a subject (for example, due to COVID-19) will be able to achieve a grade through the special consideration process, as long as they have completed the assessment for at least one component of the qualification (whether this be an exam or coursework).

Changes to grading

Nationally, results in 2021 were higher than in 2019 (the last time that students sat exams). Ofqual want to return to the level of results that were seen in 2019 before the pandemic but recognise that this would be unfair to do immediately, and have announced the following:

“We want to get back quickly to how grading was before the pandemic, but we fully understand that students taking exams in 2022 have experienced disruption. Instead, 2022 will be a transition year to reflect that we are in a pandemic recovery period. We will aim, therefore, to reflect a point midway between 2021 and 2019 when it comes to grading. This approach will recognise the disruption experienced by students taking exams in 2022, over their course of study, and so provide a safety net for those who might otherwise just miss out on a higher grade. Results overall will be higher than in 2019, but not as high as in 2021.”

Contingency plans

We are hopeful exams will go ahead next summer as planned, however Ofqual is currently putting together contingency plans for the unlikely event that exams are cancelled in 2022. When these plans are finalised, we will write to you with further details.

In the meantime, students should continue to work hard, act on feedback from their teachers and revise content already learned, in order to give themselves the best possible chance of maximising their grades next summer.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'V. Loftus'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped 'V' at the beginning.

Mrs V Loftus
Deputy Headteacher