

News story: Revised arrangements for GCSE computer science

Ofqual has today (8 January 2018) [announced that non-exam assessment will not count to the final 9 to 1 grade in GCSE computer science in 2018 or 2019](#). It is, however, still an important part of the course and contributes to student learning and progress, so all schools must continue to give students the opportunity within the timetable to complete the tasks.

We made the decision after analysing more than 2,500 responses to our consultation, which was launched given evidence that some of this year's tasks had been posted to online forums and collaborative programming sites, contrary to exam board rules. It is not possible to identify which students have accessed or used this information.

More than two thirds of respondents (70%) agreed that the qualification's non-exam assessment had shortcomings and most (75%) thought changes should be made. However, views on what action we should take were mixed, with no consensus either for or against our preferred option. We have today published our analysis of the consultation responses alongside our decision.

While we know that not everyone will agree with our decision, students will all have an equal chance to show their knowledge and skills in the exams. If we did not make this change and the results this summer were felt to be unfair because of undetected rule breaches, we would not be able to address the issue.

Sally Collier, Ofqual Chief Executive, said: "We are pleased that so many teachers and students took the time to respond to our consultation. A clear majority of respondents agree that there are currently shortcomings with the non-exam assessment that could unfairly advantage some students.

"While the tasks themselves will no longer contribute to students' grades, we strongly believe that learning about a high-level programming language and having the opportunity to show how it can be used to solve problems is hugely important. We believe these changes will make the qualification as fair as it can be for all students."

Editors' notes

We have not decided on the assessment arrangements for the qualification that will apply to students taking their exams from 2020 onwards. While we understand that teachers and exam boards need time to prepare for any longer-term changes we want to make sure we take the right decision for the future. We will take into account the ideas put forward during the consultation and consult on a preferred approach before we decide on arrangements for 2020 and beyond.