

Ofqual publishes initial decisions on GCSE and A level grading proposals for 2020

Our [consultation on the exceptional arrangements we have put in place for awarding GCSEs, AS and A levels this summer](#) closed on 29 April. We are grateful for the 12,500 plus responses we have received from teachers, teacher representative groups and unions, university or higher education institutions, parents, carers and students; we are taking these into account when finalising our plans.

To give students, schools and colleges certainty at the earliest opportunity, we have prioritised our [analysis and decisions on 2 proposals about who should receive a calculated grade](#).

Calculated grades for students in year 10 and below

In line with our consultation proposal, we have decided that students entered for exams in year 10 and below will be eligible to receive calculated grades this summer. This follows the majority of responses received, which indicate that the progression of some students would be disrupted if they were not awarded a grade this summer, and to exclude them would have an unfair impact. Amongst the responses we received were concerns about the potential impact of excluding early entrants on disabled students or those with special educational needs, who might wish to spread their GCSE exams over different years.

Private candidates

There was broad support for our proposal to only allow exam boards to issue results for private candidates for whom the Head of Centre is confident they can submit a centre assessment grade and include them in the centre's rank order. The majority of respondents considered this necessary for the fairness and integrity of the approach. Most of those who disagreed were students who are private candidates themselves and their parents or carers.

We have worked with exam boards to explore options for private candidates to receive grades this summer. Last week, the boards set out new guidance, and we [published an update to our Information document](#), about the alternative sources of evidence a school or college might consider where it does not have sufficient evidence about a student's attainment to submit a centre assessment grade and rank order information. It also confirms that some students may transfer to another centre ahead of the grading process if the centre where they had registered decides it cannot submit a centre assessment grade. In this case, some other centres may be able to work with private candidates who need a grade this summer in order to progress. So that the grading process is fair, the Head of Centre must have the same level of confidence in the grade and rank order position as for all other students

when providing information to the exam board.

We said in our consultation decision document that we could not identify any reliable way to calculate grades for private candidates who could not be included within a centre's cohort of students. No workable possibilities were advanced by respondents to the consultation and we have decided that private candidates can be included only through centres.

We are continuing to analyse consultation responses on our other proposals for awarding GCSEs, AS/A levels, Extended Project Qualification and Advanced Extension Award in maths this summer; we will publish final decisions later in May.

Separately, our [consultation on arrangements for awarding vocational, technical and other general qualifications](#), including proposals for early entrants and private candidates in these qualifications, remains open until Friday 8 May.