

CONSULTATION

Arrangements for non-exam assessment and fieldwork requirements for students entering qualifications in 2022

Covering GCSEs, AS and A level qualifications

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Proposals at a glance

We are consulting on the arrangements for non-exam assessment (NEA) and fieldwork activities in some GCSE, AS and A level subjects that will be undertaken by students taking exams in summer 2022. We are making our proposal in the context of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

We are seeking views on our proposal that we carry forward changes agreed for summer 2021 for some subjects to take account of any public health restrictions relating to coronavirus (COVID-19) that might be in place during the next academic year.

This consultation covers:

- non-exam assessments in dance, design and technology, drama (and theatre), film studies, food preparation and nutrition, media studies, music, music technology, and physical education (PE)
- fieldwork activities in geography, geology and environmental science
- assessment of speaking skills in GCSE modern foreign languages (MFL)
- assessment of spoken language in GCSE English language

We are seeking views specifically on arrangements for the GCSE, AS and A level subjects set out above, and would invite respondents to confine responses to this consultation to those subjects only.

We are not seeking views on other subjects at this time, although we recognise that students, teachers and exam boards may have views about them. Further information and, where necessary, consultations on any proposed changes to other GCSE, AS and/or A levels will follow.

We will read all responses to this consultation, but will not include in our analysis any responses about subjects that are not the focus of this consultation.

Audience

This consultation is open to anyone who wishes to respond. It will be of most interest to:

- students who will be taking GCSE, AS or A level exams in summer 2022
- teachers of those qualifications
- exam boards

Consultation arrangements

Duration

This consultation will be open from 11am on Friday 14 May and will end on Friday 28 May at 11.45pm.

Respond

Please respond to this consultation by [completing the online survey on our consultation page](#).

For information on how we will use and manage your data, please see Annex A: Your data.

Introduction

Government policy is that exams and assessments will go ahead in summer 2022.

Together with DfE, we are considering the arrangements for assessments and examinations in 2022 in the context of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. There is some uncertainty about the extent of any public health restrictions that will be in place during the next academic year. We understand that teachers and students want as much certainty as possible, as soon as possible, about the assessment arrangements for students entering the qualifications in summer 2022. Following this consultation, we will be able to provide some certainty.

Last year, following [a public consultation](#), we implemented a range of changes to the way some of the GCSEs, AS and A levels that we regulate were to be assessed in the academic year 2020 to 2021. This was in response to disruption caused by COVID-19.

The changes we introduced were made to:

- free up teaching time and, in some instances, reduce what needed to be taught
- take account of public health restrictions that could have had an impact on the way the assessments could be conducted

We are now consulting on the extent to which the 2020 to 2021 changes to non-exam assessment (NEA) in certain subjects and fieldwork requirements should be carried forward to 2021 to 2022.

We recognise that students, teachers and the exam boards need as much information about next year's assessment and exam arrangements as possible, to prepare for the next academic year. Consultations on any other proposed changes to GCSE, AS or A levels will follow.

Consultation details

We are seeking views on whether the arrangements put in place for NEA and fieldwork activities in specific subjects for 2021 should be carried forward for 2022.

For 2021, we introduced a range of measures for subjects for which we believed there could be particular challenges in completing the normal NEA and fieldwork requirements. In many cases, those changes gave exam boards the option to put in place alternative assessment arrangements to allow teachers to decide how best to support their students, given their facilities and any public health restrictions in place at the time.

The extent to which public health restrictions will continue, or might need to be re-introduced or strengthened, in the next academic year is not yet certain. However, some subject requirements, particularly those that require group activities or the use of specific pieces of equipment, could be more difficult for students to undertake and for teachers to supervise if restrictions such as social distancing continue.

Non-exam assessment and fieldwork

In many subjects, preparation and work for NEA takes place in the summer term of the first year of the course of study. This preparation and work will be happening this term for students who will be taking their exams in 2022. We believe it is necessary to consult on arrangements for those subjects now in order to provide certainty for students, teachers and exam boards in June.

This also applies to fieldwork activities in qualifications, such as geography, that have to be taken over a mandated number of occasions and outside of school or college premises. These activities might be difficult to arrange due to public health restrictions. While some activities might be possible on school or college premises, this will vary from place to place. We recognise that fieldwork is an important feature of these qualifications and we encourage centres to engage with fieldwork wherever possible. However, we do not believe it is appropriate to retain mandatory requirements in the current circumstances.

We are, therefore, proposing to carry forward the majority of changes and permissions for flexibility relating to non-exam assessment that we put in place for 2021. This proposal relates to subjects where we believe a decision is needed before the end of the current academic year.

These changes, which were designed to respond to the impact that the pandemic was having on teaching and on assessment in these subjects, meant, for example:

- permitting greater flexibility in the evidence presented for design and technology and physical education (PE) qualifications
- relaxing requirements for group work in dance, drama and theatre, and music qualifications
- permitting demonstrations of the use of machinery, tools and processes in design and technology and engineering qualifications
- reducing the requirements for GCSE food preparation and nutrition to 1 task in order to enable students to progress with their work under public health restrictions

- lifting the mandatory requirement for a number of days of fieldwork outside of the school premises in geography, geology and environmental science qualifications

GCSE English language

We propose to carry forward the arrangements for GCSE English language spoken language assessments, where we removed the requirement for teachers to record a sample of their students taking their spoken language assessments. We are aware that teachers may conduct these assessments at any point during the course and, therefore, they will need certainty about whether recordings are required and the potential impact public health restrictions might have on making such recordings.

GCSE modern foreign languages

For qualifications awarded in 2021, we made 2 changes to the assessment of GCSE modern foreign languages (MFL) qualifications: in relation to the use of vocabulary in assessments and the assessment of spoken language.

Use of vocabulary in assessments

We propose to carry forward to summer 2022 the changes we made in respect of the use of vocabulary. These changes allow awarding organisations greater flexibility by removing the specific requirement that exists in other years for the assessments to use vocabulary that is not on the vocabulary lists.

We believe that a decision on this is necessary at this time to enable exam boards to prepare examination materials.

The assessment of spoken language

For 2021, we removed the assessment of spoken language from the calculation of the overall qualification result (the 9 to 1 grade). Instead we put in place flexible requirements for the assessment of spoken language by teachers against common criteria. The teacher's assessment of spoken language in 2021 will be marked on a 3-point scale – pass, merit, distinction (or not classified). The results will be reported separately alongside the 9 to 1 grade when results and certificates are issued.

In our consultation on the arrangements for students taking exams in 2021, teachers' responses to our proposed MFL changes expressed concern that students' achievements in oral skills would not count towards the final grade and that they would therefore wish to see a return the usual arrangements as soon as possible.

We agree that it is preferable to revert to the assessment of spoken language as part of the overall qualification grade as soon as possible. We currently anticipate that it will be possible to conduct speaking assessments in the normal way in 2022.

Therefore, it will be reasonable to require exam boards to make separate speaking assessments available in 2022.

However, it is not possible to predict the course of the pandemic over the next year. It remains possible that public health restrictions will mean it is not practicable to conduct speaking assessments in the normal way.

In the circumstances, although we do not currently think it is appropriate to carry forward to 2022 the endorsement arrangements we put in place for spoken language assessment in 2021, we recognise that it might become necessary to do so.

We propose that:

- spoken language for GCSE MFL qualifications in 2022 will be assessed in the normal way so long as this remains practicable (other than the proposal outlined for the use of vocabulary)
- if it is not practicable to assess spoken language in the normal way in 2022, spoken language will be assessed by teachers using the endorsement approach set out in the [2021 Subject Level Conditions for GCSE MFL qualifications](#)
- we will make a final decision whether or not it is practicable to assess spoken language in the normal way no later than 31 January 2022

In the interim, we will continue to make available the common criteria for the assessment of spoken language which were first published with the 2021 Subject Level Conditions. We encourage teachers to use the criteria during the course of study. This will ensure teachers are well prepared if it becomes necessary to assess spoken language in accordance with those criteria.

Proposals for GCSE subjects

In this section, we summarise the arrangements we put in place for specified GCSE subjects in 2021 that we now propose to carry forward. For the avoidance of doubt, we propose that these changes should only apply to students who will be awarded the qualifications in summer 2022.

GCSE dance

GCSE dance: decision for 2021

Performance assessment

Require each student to perform 1 or more dances with a combined duration of at least 1.5 minutes (if all solo performance) or 2 minutes (if including performance as part of a group).

No requirement for students to perform as part of a group.

Solo only performances should be designed to assess the full range of content expectations, with the exception of 'sensitivity to other dancers' and 'physical relationship to other dancers'.

Exam board to provide clarification about their requirements.

Requirement to submit complete and unedited audio-visual recording of the performed dances from the perspective of the audience.

Choreography assessment

Require each student to choreograph either a complete solo dance of at least 1.5 minutes in duration or a complete group dance of at least 2 minutes in duration, in response to an exam board set brief.

Permit exam board to accept alternative evidence to illustrate the intended final piece, the choreographic intent and how that was developed.

Alternative evidence may include:

- audio-visual recordings of complete performance
- audio-visual recordings of physical demonstration of key motifs with explanation of how they inform final piece
- original and non-original photographs, images, drawings or sketches with annotations to illustrate intentions
- written accounts

- a video diary.

There is no requirement for the student to perform the choreographed dance or any physical demonstration of key motifs.

Exam board to provide clarification about their requirements.

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 board to provide clarification about their requirements.

GCSE dance: proposal for 2022

Carry forward in full for 2022.

GCSE design and technology

GCSE design and technology: decision for 2021

Permit exam boards to accept mock-ups and/or clear and detailed intentions of prototypes. Exam boards to provide clarification about their requirements.

Permit demonstration of using machinery, tools and/or processes.

GCSE design and technology: proposal for 2022

Carry forward in full for 2022.

GCSE drama

GCSE drama: decision for 2021

Permit live performance statement to be satisfied through streamed or recorded performances.

Require exam boards to permit students to analyse and evaluate the work of others based on live theatre and/or streamed or recorded performances.

Devised performance

Require each student to participate as either a performer or designer in a devised performance of at least 1.5 minutes (for monologue), and/or 2 minutes (for duologue or group).

Permit exam boards to accept alternative evidence to illustrate the intended final piece, the student's contribution to the creation and development of ideas, and their analysis and evaluation of their own work, as appropriate to the task.

Alternative evidence may include:

- audio-visual recordings of complete performance
- audio-visual recordings of physical demonstrations of key aspects with explanation of how they inform final piece
- original and non-original photographs, images, drawings or sketches with annotations to illustrate intentions for performance or design
- scripts
- written accounts
- a video diary

Exam boards to provide clarification about their requirements.

Text based performance

Require each student to participate as either a performer or designer in a text based performance of at least 1.5 minutes (for monologue), and/or 2 minutes (for duologue or group).

Require students to evidence their application of theatrical skills to realise artistic intentions, contribution to the creation and development of ideas, and analysis and evaluation of their own work, as appropriate to the task.

Permit evidence to include either a complete and unedited audio-visual recording of the text based performance and/or presentation of each discrete aspect/each student's individual contribution.

For performance, permit audio-visual recording of acting performance alone without need for fully designed set, lighting, or costumes.

For designers, permit alternative evidence that may include:

- prototype of relevant products
- original photographs, drawings or annotated sketches of designs
- annotated scripts
- videos or written accounts
- physical demonstrations

Exam boards to provide clarification about their requirements.

Both NEA components

Permit participation in a monologue for both the devised performance and text based performance.

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.

Where permitted changes to non-exam assessments affect usual coverage, permit exam boards to assess 1 complete and substantial performance text and 1 key extract from a second contrasting performance text - no change to coverage in written exams.

GCSE drama: proposal for 2022

Carry forward in full for 2022.

GCSE engineering

GCSE engineering: decision for 2021

Permit exam board to accept clear and detailed intentions of prototypes. Exam board to provide clarification about their requirements.

Permit students to watch a demonstration of using machinery, tools and/or processes.

GCSE engineering: proposal for 2022

Carry forward in full for 2022.

GCSE English language

GCSE English language: decision for 2021

No requirement for teachers to submit sample of audio-visual recordings of spoken language assessment for exam board monitoring.

Spoken language assessment permitted to take place before a single teacher who can represent an 'audience'. Spoken language assessment may be conducted by the teacher at any time during the course and by virtual means. These 2 points do not require a change to our Conditions and Requirements but have been included here for clarity.

GCSE English language: proposal for 2022

Carry forward in full for 2022.

GCSE film studies

GCSE film studies: decision for 2021

Permit exam boards to accept a prototype or mock-up, with supporting evidence as necessary, of an extract from a genre-based film or to produce an extract from a genre-based screenplay with shooting script, both in response to an exam board set brief, with evaluative analysis of own work.

Supporting evidence for a prototype or mock-up of an extract from a genre-based film may include:

- original and non-original photographs, images, drawings or sketches with annotations to illustrate intentions
- storyboards
- a screenplay
- a shooting script

Exam board to provide clarification about their requirements.

GCSE film studies: proposal for 2022

Carry forward in full for 2022.

GCSE food preparation and nutrition

GCSE food preparation and nutrition: decision for 2021

Remove NEA1 and permit an earlier release of NEA2. As a consequence, students might not be able to demonstrate all of the skills and techniques listed in the subject content.

To reduce the requirements for NEA2 to 2 dishes to be completed within 3 hours to allow for students to use complex processes such as baking, lamination, making ice-cream and to accommodate public health restrictions.

GCSE food preparation and nutrition: proposal for 2022

Carry forward in full for 2022.

GCSE geography

GCSE geography: decision for 2021

Remove requirements for:

- written statement that centres have given students the opportunity to undertake 2 occasions of fieldwork
- students to answer questions in the exam relating to their own fieldwork experience

GCSE geography: proposal for 2022

Carry forward in full for 2022.

GCSE geology

GCSE geology: decision for 2021

Remove requirement for written statement that centres have given students the opportunity to undertake 2 days of geological fieldwork.

GCSE geology: proposal for 2022

Carry forward in full for 2022.

GCSE media studies

GCSE media studies: decision for 2021

Permit exam boards to accept a prototype or mock-up, with supporting evidence as necessary, of an individual media production (single product) in response to an exam board set brief.

Supporting evidence may include:

- original and non-original photographs, images, drawings or sketches with annotations to illustrate intentions
- storyboards
- a television screenplay
- a shooting script
- a radio script and directions

Exam boards to provide clarification about their requirements.

GCSE media studies: proposal for 2022

Carry forward in full for 2022.

GCSE modern foreign languages (MFL)

GCSE MFL: decision for 2021

Remove requirement for assessments to use words outside of vocabulary lists and permit glossing where necessary whilst maintaining level of knowledge and accuracy needed for the highest grades.

Make the spoken language assessment an endorsement reported on a 3-point scale (pass, merit and distinction) against common assessment criteria. To be assessed by teachers during the course of study.

Permit exam boards to include an additional optional question in the writing assessment which would enable students to focus on fewer themes in their writing. This point does not require a change to our Conditions and Requirements, but has been included here for clarity.

GCSE MFL: proposal for 2022

Partial carry forward for 2022, as follows:

- remove requirement for assessments to use words outside of vocabulary lists and permit glossing where necessary whilst maintaining level of knowledge and accuracy needed for the highest grades
- permit exam boards to include an additional optional question in the writing assessment which would enable students to focus on fewer themes in their writing

GCSE music

GCSE music: decision for 2021

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).

No requirement to perform as part of an ensemble.

Requirement to submit complete and unedited recording of the live performance and, where available, the score or lead sheet for that performance.

Composition assessment

Require 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: Students do not have to perform their own compositions. The recordings may be computer generated.

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.

GCSE music: proposal for 2022

Carry forward in full for 2022.

GCSE physical education

GCSE physical education: decision for 2021

Permit exam boards to reduce requirement to 2 activities and allow both to be individual.

Permit remote moderation using videoed evidence for all activities.

Permit exam boards to explore relaxation of the requirements for provision of evidence for example, type and quality of videoed evidence and the evidence of participation in competitive sport.

GCSE physical education: proposal for 2022

Carry forward in full for 2022.

GCSE physical education (short course)

GCSE physical education (short course): decision for 2021

Permit exam boards to reduce requirement to 1 individual activity.

Permit remote moderation using videoed evidence for all activities.

Permit exam boards to explore relaxation of the requirements for provision of evidence for example, type and quality of videoed evidence and the evidence of participation in competitive sport.

GCSE physical education (short course): proposal for 2022

Carry forward in full for 2022.

Proposals for GCE AS and A level subjects

In this section, we summarise the arrangements we put in place for specified GCE AS and A level subjects in 2021 that we now propose to carry forward. For the avoidance of doubt, we propose that these changes should only apply to students who will be awarded the qualifications in summer 2022.

GCE AS dance

GCE AS dance: decision for 2021

Performance assessment

Require students to perform a solo dance that they have choreographed of between 1.5 to 3 minutes in duration, and a second dance either as a solo of between 1.5 to 3 minutes or as a group (up to 3 dancers) of between 2 to 3 minutes, in response to an exam board set task.

As a consequence, students might not be able to demonstrate the expected features relating to other dancers and performance as part of an ensemble where not performing as part of a group.

Requirement to submit complete and unedited audio-visual recording of the performed dances from the perspective of the audience.

Choreography assessment

Require students to choreograph a solo dance of between 1.5 to 3 minutes in duration, in response to an exam board set task.

Permit exam boards to accept a programme note or alternative evidence for the choreographed dance to illustrate the choreographic intent and how that was developed.

Alternative evidence may include:

- audio-visual recordings of complete performance
- audio-visual recordings of physical demonstration of key motifs with explanation of how they inform final piece
- original and non-original photographs, images, drawings or sketches with annotations to illustrate intentions
- written accounts
- a video diary

Exam board to provide clarification on their requirements.

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 board to provide clarification about their requirements.

GCE AS dance: proposal for 2022

Carry forward in full for 2022.

Currently only 1 exam board offers this GCE AS qualification in dance. The last certification for that qualification is summer 2021. We have included it here for completeness and because the regulatory requirements sit alongside those for GCE A level.

GCE A level dance

GCE A level dance: decision for 2021

Performance assessment

Require students to perform a solo dance of between 1.5 to 3 minutes in duration, and a second dance either as a solo of between 1.5 to 4 minutes or as a group (up to 4 dancers) of between 2 to 4 minutes, in response to an exam board set task.

As a consequence, students might not be able to demonstrate the expected features in the subject content relating to other dancers and performance as part of an ensemble where not performing as part of a group.

Requirement to submit complete and unedited audio-visual recording of the performed dances from the perspective of the audience.

Choreography assessment

Require students to choreograph a dance for 1 to 5 dancers of between 2 to 4 minutes in duration, in response to an exam board set task.

As a consequence, students might not be able to demonstrate the subject content expectations to choreograph a dance for more than 1 dancer, or to develop ideas in communication with other dancers as part of the choreography assessment.

Permit exam boards to accept alternative evidence to illustrate the intended final piece, the choreographic intent and how that was developed.

Alternative evidence may include:

- audio-visual recordings of complete performance

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- audio-visual recordings of physical demonstration of key motifs with explanation of how they inform final piece
- original and non-original photographs, images, drawings or sketches with annotations to illustrate intentions
- written accounts
- a video diary

No requirement for the student to perform the choreographed dance or physical demonstration of key motifs.

Exam board to provide clarification about their requirements.

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 board to provide clarification about their requirements.

GCE A level dance: proposal for 2022

Carry forward in full for 2022.

GCE AS and A level design and technology

GCE AS and A level design and technology: decision for 2021

Permit mock-ups and/or clear and detailed intentions of prototypes.

Exam boards to provide clarification about their requirements.

Permit demonstration of using machinery, tools and/or processes.

GCE AS and A level design and technology: proposal for 2022

Carry forward in full for 2022.

GCE AS drama and theatre

GCE AS drama and theatre: decision for 2021

Permit live performance statement to be satisfied through streamed or recorded performances.

Require exam boards to permit students to analyse and evaluate the work of others based on live theatre and/or streamed or recorded performances.

Text based performance

Require students to participate as either a performer, director or designer in a text based performance of at least 1.5 minutes (for monologue), and/or 3 minutes (for duologue or group).

Requirement for student to evidence their application of theatrical skills to realise artistic intentions, contribution to the creation and development of ideas, and analysis and evaluation of their own work, as appropriate to the task.

Permit evidence to include a complete and unedited audio-visual recording of the text based performance and/or presentation of each discrete aspect or each student's individual contribution.

For performance, permit audio-visual recording of acting performance alone without need for fully designed set, lighting, or costumes.

For directors and designers, permit alternative evidence that may include:

- prototype of relevant products
- original photographs, drawings or annotated sketches of designs
- annotated scripts
- video or written accounts
- physical demonstrations

Permit the NEA component 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.

Where permitted changes to non-exam assessments affect usual coverage, permit exam boards to assess 1 complete and substantial performance text and 1 or more key extracts from different texts – no change to written exams.

GCE AS drama and theatre: proposal for 2022

Carry forward in full for 2022.

GCE A level drama and theatre

GCE A level drama and theatre: decision for 2021

Permit live performance statement to be satisfied through streamed or recorded performances.

Require exam boards to permit students to analyse and evaluate the work of others based on live theatre and/or streamed or recorded performances.

Devised performance

Require each student to participate as either a performer, director or designer in a devised performance of at least 1.5 minutes (for monologue), and/or 3 minutes (for duologue or group).

Permit exam boards to accept alternative evidence to illustrate the intended final piece, the student's contribution to the creation and development of ideas, and their analysis and evaluation of their own work, as appropriate to the task.

Alternative evidence may include:

- audio-visual recordings of complete performance
- audio-visual recordings of physical demonstrations of key aspects with explanation of how they inform final piece
- original and non-original photographs, images, drawings or sketches with annotations to illustrate intentions for performance or design
- scripts
- written accounts
- video diary

Exam boards to provide clarification about their requirements.

Text based performance

Require each student to participate as either a performer, director or designer in a text based performance of at least 1.5 minutes (for monologue), and/or 3 minutes (for duologue or group).

Requirement for student to evidence their application of theatrical skills to realise artistic intentions, contribution to the creation and development of ideas, and analysis and evaluation of their own work, as appropriate to the task.

Permit evidence to include a complete and unedited audio-visual recording of the text based performance and/or presentation of each discrete aspect or each student's individual contribution.

For performance, permit audio-visual recording of acting performance alone without need for fully designed set, lighting, or costumes.

For directors and designers, permit alternative evidence that may include:

- prototype of relevant products
- original photographs, drawings or annotated sketches of designs
- annotated scripts

- video or written accounts
- physical demonstrations

Exam boards to provide clarification about their requirements.

Both NEA components

Permit participation in a monologue for both the devised performance and text based performance.

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.

Where permitted changes to the non-exam assessments affect usual coverage, permit exam boards to assess 2 complete and substantial performance texts and 1 or more key extracts from different texts – no changes to coverage in written exams.

GCE A level drama and theatre: proposal for 2022

Carry forward in full for 2022.

GCE AS and A level environmental science

GCE AS and A level environmental science: decision for 2021

Permit observation of demonstrations and simulations of practical activities to cover required skills and techniques.

Remove requirement for written statement that centres have given students the opportunity to undertake 2 days of fieldwork (AS) or 4 days (A level).

GCE AS and A level environmental science: proposal for 2022

Partial carry forward for 2022, as follows:

Remove requirement for written statement that centres have given students the opportunity to undertake 2 days of fieldwork (AS) or 4 days (A level).

Currently only 1 exam board offers a GCE AS qualification in environmental science. The last certification for that qualification is summer 2021. We have included it here for completeness and because the regulatory requirements sit alongside those for GCE A level.

GCE AS film studies

GCE AS film studies: decision for 2021

Permit exam boards to accept a prototype or mock-up, with supporting evidence as necessary, of an extract from a film or to produce an extract from a screenplay accompanied by a prototype or mock-up, with supporting evidence as necessary, of a digitally photographed storyboard, both in response to an exam board set brief, with evaluative analysis of own work.

Supporting evidence may include original and non-original photographs, images, drawings or sketches with annotations to illustrate intentions.

Additional supporting evidence for a prototype or mock-up of an extract from a film may include:

- storyboards
- screenplay
- a shooting script

Exam boards to provide clarification about their requirements.

GCE AS film studies: proposal for 2022

Carry forward in full for 2022.

GCE A level film studies

GCE A level film studies: decision for 2021

Permit exam boards to accept a prototype or mock-up, with supporting evidence as necessary, of a short film or to produce a screenplay for a short film accompanied by a prototype or mock-up, with supporting evidence as necessary, of a digitally photographed storyboard, both in response to an exam board set brief, with evaluative analysis of own work.

Supporting evidence may include original and non-original photographs, images, drawings or sketches with annotations to illustrate intentions.

Additional supporting evidence for a prototype or mock-up of a short film may include:

- storyboards
- screenplay
- a shooting script

Exam boards to provide clarification about their requirements.

GCE A level film studies: proposal for 2022

Carry forward in full for 2022.

GCE AS geography

GCE AS geography: decision for 2021

Remove requirements:

- for written statement that centres have given students the opportunity to undertake 2 days of fieldwork
- to answer questions in the exam relating to their own fieldwork experience

Retain unfamiliar fieldwork questions in the exams but not require them to cover both human and physical geography.

GCE AS geography: proposal for 2022

Carry forward in full for 2022.

GCE A level geography

GCE A level geography: decision for 2021

Remove requirement for written statement that centres have given students the opportunity to undertake 4 days of fieldwork.

Exam boards to review their guidance about their expectations relating to primary data for the non-exam assessment.

GCE A level geography: proposal for 2022

Carry forward in full for 2022.

GCE AS geology

GCE AS geology: decision for 2021

Permit observation of demonstrations and/or simulations of fieldwork and practical activities to cover required apparatus and techniques.

Remove the requirement for written statement that centres have given students the opportunity to undertake 2 mandatory days of fieldwork.

GCE AS geology: proposal for 2022

Partial carry forward for 2022, as follows:

Remove the requirement for written statement that centres have given students the opportunity to undertake 2 mandatory days of fieldwork.

GCE A level geology

GCE A level geology: decisions for 2021

Change the requirements for the Practical Endorsement to allow assessment of the Common Practical Assessment Criteria (CPAC) across the minimum number of practical activities required to demonstrate competence.

Permit exam boards to monitor centres' application of CPAC by remote means.

Remove the requirement for written statement that centres have given students the opportunity to undertake 4 mandatory days of fieldwork.

GCE A level geology: proposal for 2022

Partial carry forward for 2022, as follows:

Remove the requirement for written statement that centres have given students the opportunity to undertake 4 mandatory days of fieldwork

GCE AS media studies

GCE AS media studies: decision for 2021

Permit exam boards to accept a prototype or mock-up, with supporting evidence as necessary, of an individual media production (single product) in response to an exam board set brief.

Supporting evidence may include:

- original and non-original photographs, images, drawings or sketches with annotations to illustrate intentions
- storyboards
- a television screenplay
- a shooting script

- a radio script and directions

Exam boards to provide clarification about their requirements.

GCE AS media studies: proposal for 2022

Carry forward in full for 2022.

GCE A level media studies

GCE A level media studies: decision for 2021

Permit exam boards to accept prototypes or mock-ups, with supporting evidence as necessary, of an individual cross-media production in response to an exam board set brief.

Supporting evidence may include:

- original and non-original photographs, images, drawings or sketches with annotations to illustrate intentions
- storyboards
- a television screenplay
- a shooting script
- a radio script and directions

Exam boards to provide clarification about their requirements.

GCE A level media studies: proposal for 2022

Carry forward in full for 2022.

GCE AS music

GCE AS music: decisions for 2021

Require students to perform 1 or more pieces of music with a combined minimum duration of at least 2.5 minutes.

Requirement to submit complete and unedited recording of the live performance and, where available, the score or lead sheet for that performance.

Composition assessment

Require students to compose 1 or more pieces of music with a combined duration of at least 2.5 minutes.

Compositions may be in response to an exam board set brief and/or freely composed.

Requirement to submit complete recording of each composition with a score, lead sheet or written account of the composition, produced by the student.

NB: Students do not have to perform their own compositions. The recordings may be computer generated.

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.

Permit the exam board to review the period in which the performance assessment can be undertaken, within the year of certification.

Exam boards to provide clarification about their requirements.

GCE AS music: proposals for 2022

Carry forward in full for 2022.

GCE A level music

GCE A level music: decision for 2021

Performance assessment

Require students to perform 1 or more pieces of music with a combined minimum duration of at least 2.5 minutes (25% weighting), at least 3 minutes (30% weighting), or at least 3.5 minutes (35% weighting).

Requirement to submit complete and unedited recording of the live performance and, where available, the score or lead sheet for that performance.

Composition assessment

Require students to compose 1 or more pieces of music with a combined duration of at least 2 minutes (25% weighing), 1 or more pieces of music with a combined duration of at least 3 minutes (30% weighting), or 2 or more pieces with a combined duration of at least 4 minutes (35% weighting).

Compositions may be in response to an exam board set brief and/or freely composed.

Requirement to submit complete recording of each composition with a score, lead sheet or written account of the composition, produced by the student.

NB: Students do not have to perform their own compositions. The recordings may be computer generated.

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.

Permit the exam board to review the period in which the performance assessment can be undertaken, within the year of certification.

Exam boards to provide clarification about their requirements.

GCE A level music: proposal for 2022

Carry forward in full for 2022.

GCE AS music technology

GCE AS music technology: decision for 2021

Recording assessment

Require students to edit and produce an audio recording with a duration of at least 1.5 minutes, in response to an exam board set task.

Require exam board to provide sample recordings or to approve centre-selected sample recordings that are suitable for students to demonstrate their ability to edit and produce audio recordings.

Exam board to provide clarification about their requirements.

Composition assessment

Require students to produce a technology-based composition with a duration of at least 1.5 minutes, in response to an exam board set task.

Require exam board to ensure that where composition briefs have scope for live capture, students will not be disadvantaged if they complete the task using synthesised sounds only.

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 board to provide clarification about their requirements.

GCE AS music technology: proposal for 2022

Carry forward in full for 2022.

GCE A level music technology

GCE A level music technology: decision for 2021

Recording assessment

Require students to edit and produce an audio recording with a duration of at least 2 minutes, in response to an exam board set task.

Require exam board to provide sample recordings or to approve centre-selected sample recordings that are suitable for students to demonstrate their ability to edit and produce audio recordings.

Exam board to provide clarification about their requirements.

Composition assessment

Require students to produce a technology-based composition with a duration of at least 2 minutes, in response to an exam board set task.

Require exam board to ensure that where composition briefs have scope for live capture, students will not be disadvantaged if they complete the task using synthesised sounds only.

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 board to provide clarification about their requirements.

GCE A level music technology: proposal for 2022

Carry forward in full for 2022.

GCE AS and A level physical education

GCE AS and A level physical education: decision for 2021

Permit remote moderation using videoed evidence for all activities.

Permit exam boards to explore relaxation of the requirements for provision of evidence e.g. type and quality of videoed evidence and the evidence of participation in competitive sport.

GCE AS and A level physical education: proposal for 2022

Carry forward in full for 2022.

Question 1

To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal to carry forward specific assessment arrangements for 2021 into 2022 for each GCSE and GCE subject in the section above?

Question 2

Do you have any comments on our proposed approach to carrying forward specific assessment arrangements for 2021 into 2022 for each GCSE and GCE subject in the section above?

When you respond using the questionnaire you will be invited to answer questions 1 and 2 in respect of individual GCSE and GCE subjects, with the exception of GCSE MFL. The specific questions for GCSE MFL are as follows:

Question 3

To what extent do you agree or disagree that for GCSE MFL we should carry forward the arrangements for 2021 into 2022 in relation to the inclusion of additional optional questions for the writing tasks and avoiding the use of unfamiliar vocabulary?

Question 4

To what extent do you agree or disagree that for GCSE MFL, so long as it remains practicable to do so, students should take formal speaking assessments in 2022?

Question 5

To what extent do you agree or disagree that for GCSE MFL, if it is not practicable to complete formal speaking assessments in 2022, spoken language should be assessed by teachers, using the common criteria for the endorsement approach set in respect of the assessment of spoken language in 2021?

Question 6

To what extent do you agree or disagree that for GCSE MFL, Ofqual should make a final decision whether or not it is practicable for spoken language to be assessed by formal speaking assessments?

Question 7

To what extent do you agree or disagree that for GCSE MFL, Ofqual should make the final decision no later than 31 January 2022?

Question 8

Do you have any comments on our proposed approach to the assessment arrangements for GCSE MFL in 2022?

Next steps

We will consider responses to this consultation before we decide on the arrangements for non-exam assessment and fieldwork requirements for students entering qualifications in summer 2022. We will then consult with the exam boards on the regulatory requirements we will need to put in place to give effect to our decisions.

Future considerations

This consultation specifically focuses on subjects where preparation and work for non-exam assessment and fieldwork activities is taking place this term for students who will be taking their exams in 2022. However, we recognise there are other activities about which students, teachers and exam boards might have questions. For example, in relation to the expectations for the externally set task in art and design or practical work in subjects such as the sciences, environmental science and astronomy.

We are currently hopeful that, with further lifting of public health restrictions, it will be possible for students to complete work as usual during the next academic year. Therefore, we do not propose to carry forward the 2021 arrangements for these subjects at this point in time to avoid possible negative effects on teaching and learning.

Arrangements for non-exam assessment and fieldwork requirements for students entering qualifications in 2022

We are keeping this situation under review and will provide more information about, and where necessary consult on, further arrangements for 2022 in due course.

Additionally, in GCSE ancient history, history and English literature, the government agreed that, for 2021 only, there could be a reduction in the amount of content that would be assessed. Content coverage (curriculum) is the responsibility of the DfE. Arrangements in these subjects will be considered as part of the wider policy decisions for the 2022 exams.

Equality impact assessment

As Ofqual is a public body, we must comply with the public sector equality duty in section 149(1) of the Equality Act 2010. We set out more information about our duties in Annex B. In developing these proposals, we have considered the likely impact on persons who share particular protected characteristics.

We are required to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it

We have considered whether any of our proposals might impact (positively or negatively) on students who share particular protected characteristics.¹

All students who were preparing to take GCSEs, AS and A levels next year will have been affected by the public health restrictions put in place in response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Most will have been directly affected by the closure of schools and colleges. Students who were studying independently, for example because they are home educated, might have been less directly affected by these closures, but they will, nevertheless, have been affected by changes to routine aspects of their lives.

There is no doubt that the disruption to some students' education will have been more severe than others, particularly where public health restrictions have prevented or otherwise impacted on practical activities that form part of the qualifications they are studying. Some students will have had the opportunity to – and chosen to – engage in a full programme of remote learning facilitated by their school or college. Others will have not had such a full opportunity or will have chosen not to take it. Some students might not have been able to take up the opportunities that were available to them.

¹ For the purposes of the public sector equality duty, the 'protected characteristics' are: disability, race, age, religion or belief, pregnancy or maternity, sex, sexual orientation, and gender reassignment.

Those students whose education might have been and will continue to be most badly disrupted include:

- students with caring responsibilities
- those whose homes are not conducive to study or carrying out subject-specific practical activities
- students without access to the internet or a computer, including where subject specific specialist software or other equipment might be needed
- students with SEND who have not been able to access their normal learning support and/or who might be particularly vulnerable to coronavirus (COVID-19)
- students from Gypsy and Traveller communities
- students from BAME communities whose families might have been affected by coronavirus (COVID-19) or who themselves felt particularly vulnerable to the virus
- students whose first language is not English
- students in lower socio-economic groups who might not have been able to access relevant equipment, for example, musical instruments or ongoing instrumental tuition

We are proposing to carry forward into 2022 changes to the arrangements for some exam and non-exam assessment and fieldwork activities that were already agreed for 2021. We are not proposing new or different arrangements.

In response to our consultation last year, respondents commented that these proposals could impact on students who prefer practical elements of courses, and concerns were expressed about removing these in favour of exam performance only. However, the majority of these arrangements are permissive and enable teachers to take a more flexible approach to the evidence and requirements that are usually in place for these subjects. This should allow, for example, teachers to take into account students' individual circumstances, including those exacerbated by the pandemic, to ensure that non-exam assessment work can still be completed.

While we can bring about some adjustments to the way students are assessed and examined, as proposed in this consultation, it will always be the case that students who have been better prepared for the exams and assessments will likely perform better than others.

We have not identified any aspects of our proposed changes to the way GCSEs, AS or A levels are assessed in 2021 that would have a negative impact on students who share particular protected characteristics.

Question 9

Are there other potential equality impacts that we have not explored?

Question 10

If yes, what are they?

Question 11

We would welcome your views on how any potential negative impacts on particular groups of students could be mitigated.

Regulatory impact assessment

We are proposing to carry forward into 2022 the changes to the arrangements for some exam and non-exam assessment and fieldwork activities that were already agreed for 2021. Our aim in doing this is to help schools and colleges manage any on-going public health restrictions and to make the assessments more accessible to students, while ensuring the qualifications remain valid and meaningful.

We developed these proposals for 2021 with input from the exam boards and subject associations with the aim of putting in place arrangements that are both appropriate and manageable. In response to our consultation last year, teachers commented on the difficulties caused by the public health restrictions, highlighting that more staff, more space and more equipment (to reduce the sharing of materials and equipment) would likely be required in subjects such as food preparation and nutrition, music, drama, and PE. They told us it would be burdensome to start non-exam assessment work again where requirements were changing, and that time would be needed to prepare and submit digital evidence. We hope that making these decisions now to carry forward arrangements that were put in place last year, will address some of these difficulties and minimise burden on centres.

We anticipate that schools and colleges will experience some, but limited, burden from these proposals. They will need to take time to understand subject by subject the implications of the changes proposed and re-plan teaching and exam preparation in light of those changes. However, given that this proposal is not about further changes but about carrying forward changes that were put in place last summer, we would hope that there will not be significant additional burden as teachers, and exam boards, will already be familiar with and will have taken steps to address them. Some

of the changes, as outlined above, are intended to reduce burden on centres and to enable more time for teaching.

The exam boards have already updated the information they provide about these assessment arrangements to help teachers and students understand any changed arrangements and to prepare appropriately. In many cases this information should still be relevant if the changes for 2021 are carried forward into 2022. In the case of GCSE MFL, GCSE and AS geography and AS and A level music technology, where the changes for 2021 impacted on the design of the exam papers and the nature of non-exam assessment, exam boards will need to produce new assessment material for 2022. This would impose a cost on them.

We believe that students should not experience additional costs from the proposed changes and would welcome views on this.

Question 12

Are there additional activities associated with changing the exam and assessment arrangements for students taking the qualifications in summer 2022 that we have not identified above?

Question 13

If yes, what are they?

Question 14

What additional costs do you expect you would incur if the proposed changes to the exam and assessment arrangements were carried forward for summer 2022?

Question 15

We would welcome your views on any suggestions for alternative approaches that could reduce burden and costs.

Annex A: Your data

The identity of the data controller and contact details of our Data Protection Officer

This Privacy Notice is provided by The Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual). The relevant data protection regime that applies to our processing is the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 ('Data Protection Laws'). We ask that you read this Privacy Notice carefully as it contains important information about our processing of consultation responses and your rights.

How to contact us

If you have any questions about this Privacy Notice, how we handle your personal data, or want to exercise any of your rights, please contact:

Data Protection Officer at dp.requests@ofqual.gov.uk.

Our legal basis for processing your personal data

Where you provide personal data for this consultation, we are relying upon the public task basis as set out in Article 6 (1) (e) of UK GDPR to process personal data which allows processing of personal data when this is necessary for the performance of our public tasks. We will consult where there is a statutory duty to consult or where there is a legitimate expectation that a process of consultation will take place.

Where you provide special category data, we process sensitive personal data such as ethnicity and disability, we rely on Article 9(2) (g) of UK GDPR as processing is necessary for reasons of substantial public interest.

Why we are collecting your personal data?

As part of this consultation process, you are not required to provide your name or any personal information that will identify you. However, we are aware that some respondents would like to provide contact information. If you or your organisation are happy to provide personal data, with regard to this consultation, please complete the details where stated. We would like to hear as many views as possible and ensure that we are reaching as many people as possible. In order for us to monitor this, understand views of different groups and take steps to reach specific groups, we sometimes ask for sensitive data such as ethnicity and disability to understand the reach of this consultation and views of specific groups. You do not have to provide this information and it is entirely optional.

Where you have requested that your response or any part remains confidential, we will not include your details in any published list of respondents, however, we may quote from the response anonymously in order to illustrate the kind of feedback we have received.

Please note that information in response to this consultation may be subject to release to the public or other parties in accordance with access to information law, primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA). We have obligations to disclose information to particular recipients including members of the public in certain circumstances. Your explanation of your reasons for requesting confidentiality for all or part of your response would help us balance requests for disclosure against any obligation of confidentiality. If we receive a request for the information that you have provided in your response to this consultation, we will take full account of your reasons for requesting confidentiality of your response and assess this in accordance with applicable data protection rules.

Members of the public are entitled to ask for information we hold under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. On such occasions, we will usually anonymise responses, or ask for consent from those who have responded, but please be aware that we cannot guarantee confidentiality.

If you choose 'No' in response to the question asking if you would like anything in your response to be kept confidential, we will be able to release the content of your response to the public, but we won't make your personal name and private contact details publicly available.

How we will use your response

We will use your response to help us shape our policies and regulatory activity. If you provide your personal details, we may contact you in relation to your response. We will analyse all responses and produce reports of consultation responses. In the course of analysis, we will, where possible, avoid using your name and contact details. We will only process the body of your response but we are aware that in some cases, this may contain information that could identify you.

Sharing your response

We may share your response, in full, with The Department for Education (DfE) and The Institute for Apprenticeships & Technical Education (IFATE) where the consultation is part of work involving those organisations. We may need to share responses with them to ensure that our approach aligns with the wider process. Where possible, if we share a response, we will not include any personal data (if you have provided any). Where we have received a response to the consultation from an

organisation, we will provide the DfE and IFATE with the name of the organisation that has provided the response, although we will consider requests for confidentiality.

Where we share data, we ensure that adequate safeguards are in place to ensure that your rights and freedoms are not affected.

We use Citizen Space to collect consultation responses and they act as our data processor. You can view [Citizen Space's privacy notice](#) on their website.

Your response will also be shared internally within Ofqual in order to analyse the responses and shape our policies and regulatory activity. In some cases, we will use third parties to do specific things on our behalf such as analyse the responses and store our data. Where we do so, we will ensure that your personal data is kept safe and secure. They cannot do anything with your personal data unless we instruct them to do it. They will not share your information with any organisation apart from us. They will hold it securely and retain it for the period we instruct them.

We use third party software to produce analysis reports, which may require hosting of data outside the UK, specifically the US. Please note that limited personal information is shared. All personal contact information is removed during this process. Where we transfer any personal data outside the UK, we make sure that appropriate safeguards are in place to ensure that the personal data is protected and kept secure.

Following the end of the consultation, [we will publish an analysis of responses on our website](#). We will not include personal details in the responses that we publish.

We may also publish an annex to the analysis listing all organisations that responded, but will not include personal names or other contact details.

How long will we keep your personal data

For this consultation, Ofqual will keep your personal data (if provided) for a period of 2 years after the close of the consultation.

Your data

Your personal data:

- will not be sent outside of the UK unless there are appropriate safeguards in place to protect your personal data
- will not be used for any automated decision making
- will be kept secure

We implement appropriate technical and organisational measures in order to protect your personal data against accidental or unlawful destruction, accidental loss or alteration, unauthorised disclosure or access and any other unlawful forms of processing.

Your rights, e.g. access, rectification, erasure

As a data subject, you have the legal right to:

- access personal data relating to you
- have all or some of your data deleted or corrected
- prevent your personal data being processed in some circumstances
- ask us to stop using your data, but keep it on record

If you would like to exercise your rights, please contact us using the details set out above.

We will respond to any rights that you exercise within a month of receiving your request, unless the request is particularly complex, in which case we will respond within 3 months.

Please note that exceptions apply to some of these rights which we will apply in accordance with the law.

You also have the right to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner (ICO) if you think we are not handling your data fairly or in accordance with the law. You can contact the ICO at, or telephone 0303 123 1113. ICO, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF.

If there is any part of your response that you wish to remain confidential, please indicate so in your response.

Annex B – Ofqual’s role, objectives and duties

The Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009

Ofqual has five statutory objectives, set out in the Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009;

- 1) **The qualification standards objective**, which is to secure that the qualifications we regulate:
 - a) give a reliable indication of knowledge, skills and understanding; and b) indicate:
 - i) a consistent level of attainment (including over time) between comparable regulated qualifications; and
 - ii) a consistent level of attainment (but not over time) between qualifications we regulate and comparable qualifications (including those awarded outside of the UK) that we do not regulate
- 2) **The assessment standards objective**, which is to promote the development and implementation of regulated assessment arrangements which:
 - a) give a reliable indication of achievement, and
 - b) indicate a consistent level of attainment (including over time) between comparable assessments
- 3) **The public confidence objective**, which is to promote public confidence in regulated qualifications and regulated assessment arrangements
- 4) **The awareness objective**, which is to promote awareness and understanding of:
 - a) the range of regulated qualifications available,
 - b) the benefits of regulated qualifications to Students, employers and institutions within the higher education sector, and
 - c) the benefits of recognition to bodies awarding or authenticating qualifications
- 5) **The efficiency objective**, which is to secure that regulated qualifications are provided efficiently, and that any relevant sums payable to a body awarding or authenticating a qualification represent value for money.

We must therefore regulate so that qualifications properly differentiate between Students who have demonstrated that they have the knowledge, skills and understanding required to attain the qualification and those who have not.

We also have a duty under the Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 to have regard to the reasonable requirements of relevant Students, including

those with special educational needs and disabilities, of employers and of the higher education sector, and to aspects of government policy when so directed by the Secretary of State.

The Equality Act 2010

As a public body, we are subject to the public sector equality duty. This duty requires us to have due regard to the need to:

- a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited under the Equality Act 2010
- b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it

The awarding organisations that design, deliver and award qualifications are required by the Equality Act, among other things, to make reasonable adjustments for disabled people taking their qualifications, except where we have specified that such adjustments should not be made.

When we decide whether such adjustments should not be made, we must have regard to:

- a) the need to minimise the extent to which disabled persons are disadvantaged in attaining the qualification because of their disabilities
- b) the need to secure that the qualification gives a reliable indication of the knowledge, skills and understanding of a person upon whom it is conferred
- c) the need to maintain public confidence in the qualification

We are subject to a number of duties and we must aim to achieve a number of objectives. These different duties and objectives can, sometimes conflict with each other. For example, if we regulate to secure that a qualification gives a reliable indication of a Student's knowledge, skills and understanding, a Student who has not been able to demonstrate the required knowledge, skills and/or understanding will not be awarded the qualification.

A person may find it more difficult, or impossible, to demonstrate the required knowledge, skills and/or understanding because they have a protected characteristic. This could put them at a disadvantage relative to others who have been awarded the qualification.

It is not always possible for us to regulate so that qualifications give a reliable indication of knowledge, skills and understanding and advance equality between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. We must review

all the available evidence and actively consider all the available options before coming to a final, justifiable decision.

Qualifications cannot mitigate inequalities or unfairness in the education system or in society more widely that might affect, for example, Students' preparedness to take the qualification and the assessments within it. While a wide range of factors can have an impact on a Student's ability to achieve a particular assessment, our influence is limited to the qualification design and assessment.

We require awarding bodies to design qualifications that give a reliable indication of the knowledge, skills and understanding of the Students that take them. We also require awarding organisations to avoid, where possible, features of a qualification that could, without justification, make a qualification more difficult for a Student to achieve because they have a particular protected characteristic. We require awarding organisations to monitor whether any features of their qualifications have this effect.

In setting our proposed requirements, we want to understand the possible impacts of the proposals on Students who share a protected characteristic. The protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnerships
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

With respect to the public sector equality duty under section 149 of the Equality Act, we are not required to have due regard to impacts on those who are married or in a civil partnership.



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