



13th October 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

We are writing following the outcome to the recent consultation regarding changes to GCSE examinations. We wanted to share this information directly with you as it will have an impact on your child as they complete their GCSE courses at the end of this academic year.

In summary, the consultation decisions 'are designed to mitigate the impacts of the disruption that students have faced during the pandemic without undermining the value of their qualifications and their ability to progress successfully to further study'.

Alongside changes to assessments, there has also been information on the approach to grading of exams and the timing of results days next summer. Further outline details are provided below:

Subject specific adaptations

In some GCSE subjects students will have a choice of topics to answer questions on during the exam. This allows students to choose topics that they are most familiar with, as learning in some topics may have been affected by the pandemic.

There will also be changes to the arrangements for practical activities in the Sciences and assessment in Art and Design to reduce the amount of time needed to fulfil the requirements of the assessment.

Advance information

To support student revision, advance information will be provided by exam boards about the focus of content to be assessed in summer 2022. This will be communicated by 7th February, in advance of the exams, and apply to the majority of subjects. The advance information provided will vary by subject to reflect their different characteristics.

Support materials

The exam boards will provide support materials which can be taken into the following exams:

- GCSE Mathematics (a formulae sheet)
- GCSE Physics and GCSE Combined Science exams (an equation sheet).

Summer 2022 grading

Ofqual has confirmed the approach to grading for summer 2022. The approach is intended to get back to the pre-pandemic standard. 2022 will be a 'transition year' that recognises disruption and provides a safety net for students who might otherwise just miss out on a higher grade. The aim is for 2022 to 'reflect a midway point between 2021 and 2019' with the 'aim to return to results that are in line with those in pre-pandemic years' in 2023.

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GCSE Results day

For summer 2022, this will be Thursday 25th August.

The full response to the consultation and the decisions for Summer 2022 can be found [here](#).

As we have learnt over the past 18 months, the current plans may be subject to change depending on the continued impact of the pandemic over the coming months. In response to this potential risk, Ofqual and the DfE have announced a further [consultation](#) on contingency plans in the event that exams do not go ahead; in short this is to have a similar system to 2021 and use 'Teacher Assessed Grades'. We would encourage you and your child to have a look at this consultation and to have your say in shaping any amended plans.

We have discussed these changes with your child in assembly, and they have had the opportunity for further discussion with their Form Tutor and teachers. The purpose of these outcomes is to support your child by introducing mitigating measures to address the issues they have faced over the last 18 months, in a fair and equitable way. We know that changes such as these may cause uncertainty for our students and in response to this, our overriding message to students is to continue to focus on their studies and prepare fully for each assessment opportunity provided to them. We will continue to work with them to provide additional revision and intervention sessions to ensure they are fully prepared for their examinations in the summer, in whatever form they take.

As more information becomes available we will share it with you and your child to ensure you are kept fully up to date. In the meantime, if you have any questions about the contents of this letter, or anything else regarding examinations please do not hesitate to contact me at Keith.Briggs@Bentonpark.net.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Keith Briggs
Deputy Headteacher

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