

CONSULTATION DECISIONS

Proposed changes to the assessment of GCSEs, AS and A levels in 2021

Proposals to modify the assessment requirements for some GCSEs, AS and A levels in response to disruption to education caused by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic

Contents

Introduction	3
Summary of decisions	3
Details	4
<i>Fairness.....</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Volume of content</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Changes to the arrangements for the assessment of GCSE history, GCSE ancient history and GCSE geography</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>GCSE English literature</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Fieldwork</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Optional questions</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Different approaches in GCSEs, AS and A levels</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>Exam paper length and format.....</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>Changes to the summer 2021 exam timetable</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>Overall impact of the changes.....</i>	<i>9</i>
Implementation timescales	11
Equalities impact assessment	12
Regulatory impact assessment	13
Appendix A – Subject Decisions Tables	14

Introduction

The Secretary of State for Education wrote to Ofqual on 18 June 2020¹ to set out the government's broad policy objectives for exams and assessments in 2020/1 in the context of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic in which students' education has been disrupted. He said that students taking exams or assessments next year should be able to move on to the next stage of their education or employment and that the overall standard and rigour of examinations and assessments should be maintained wherever possible.

On 2 July we published a consultation seeking views on proposed changes to the way some GCSEs, AS and A levels we regulate should be examined in summer 2021 and to the arrangements for non-exam assessments undertaken by students who will be taking exams next summer.

The consultation closed on 16 July, by which time we had received 28,972 responses. A [full summary and analysis of the responses](#) has been published at the same time as this decision document.

We have indicated in this decision document which of our decisions relate to which question from our consultation, so that it is easy to cross reference between the documents. The numbering of the questions in the analysis goes from 1 to 207 with questions 1 to 13 being considered in the main analysis together with the analysis of responses to the Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) and Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA). Questions 14 to 207 relate to each of the qualifications in each of the subjects and [the analysis of these can be found in an annex to the consultation document](#). By selecting particular subjects at the start of the survey, respondents could answer only questions of interest to them.

Summary of decisions

We have decided to implement the majority of the proposals we set out in the consultation document. In summary, these decisions mean that for summer 2021 exam boards:

- should change how they assess content in GCSE geography, history and ancient history, as we proposed in our consultation
- should change how they assess GCSE English literature, to allow for some choice in the content to be covered. The government, which is responsible for the content of GCSEs, AS and A levels, has decided to allow for this change in light of the responses to the consultation
- should not, unless to accommodate subject specific decisions, make greater use of optional questions in exams
- should remove the requirement for centres to make a declaration to them confirming they provided all students with the opportunity to undertake a mandated number of days of fieldwork in GCSE, AS and A level geography. The non-exam assessment should be retained at A level but the exam boards should

1

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/896860/Letter_from_the_Secretary_of_State_for_Education_-_180620.pdf

consider how they can be flexible in their requirements for the non-exam assessment to use primary data. We proposed this change for GCSE geography only in the consultation. We have extended this to AS and A level in light of responses to the consultation

- should remove the requirement for centres to make a declaration to them confirming they provided all students with the opportunity to undertake a mandated number of days of fieldwork in GCSE, AS and A level geology and AS and A level environmental science. We have made this decision in light of responses to the consultation
- should adjust the observational activity requirements for GCSE astronomy which would allow students to observe rather than carry out the activities themselves. We have made this decision in light of responses to the consultation
- will not be required to change the length, number or format of the exam papers, except as necessary to accommodate specific changes to the exam and assessment arrangements
- should, for GCSEs in modern foreign languages report the assessment of spoken language as an endorsement alongside the 9 to 1 grade
- should allow for a range of adjustments to the assessment arrangements in a number of subjects to accommodate potential public health requirements, for example, GCSE food preparation and nutrition, GCSE, AS and A level music and GCSE physical education

Appendix A summarises the decisions taken for each subject at each level (GCSE, AS and A level).

Details

Fairness

Many responses to the consultation raised concerns about the fairness of any exam and assessment arrangements in 2021, as some students have been better supported than others by their schools and colleges and their home environment to continue with their education while schools and colleges were largely closed. Some students have been better motivated than others to engage with the teaching and learning that was available. Concerns have been raised about the difficulties of particular groups of students, including those who have no home access to the internet or to a computer, who have caring responsibilities, who are most vulnerable to COVID-19 and students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) who have not received their usual support. These concerns are explored in more detail in the EIA section of this document and [analysis of responses](#).

We received a number of suggestions about how the exams and assessment arrangements should be changed to reflect the different levels of educational engagement by students while they were not in schools or colleges, including that the qualifications should be assessed in full or part by teachers. However none of the suggestions would allow for students' different experiences, while maintaining a common standard for all. We believe that whatever changes are made to the way the qualifications are examined and assessed, students whose education has been less disrupted will be better prepared for the exams and assessments and this will be

reflected in their performance. As we noted in our consultation, the Secretary of State has asked us to advise him in the coming months how we might ensure students' outcomes are protected through our approach to grading next year, as we did to protect the interests of students who took the reformed qualifications for the first time. Our approach – using statistical predictions to guide the first awards of reformed qualifications – worked well to protect the interests of students taking the reformed qualifications and we will consider its use next year. We did not consult on proposals for grading in summer 2021, but we will provide further information in due course.

Volume of content

The government is responsible for the content of GCSEs, AS and A levels. The Secretary of State explained in his letter to Ofqual of 18 June that the government was not minded to specify changes to subject content that forms the foundation of GCSEs, AS and A level qualifications.

Many of the responses to the consultation raised concerns about the volume of content that remains to be taught before exams and assessments are taken next year and the pressure that this will place on teachers and students.

Others were concerned that if students did not cover the usual content, their progression onto higher level qualifications would be less successful. Some also argued that if content was reduced, students who had effectively engaged with their education while schools and colleges were closed would be demotivated.

We explain below the decisions we have taken in relation to the sampling of content. While official Department for Education (DfE) content is not being reduced, across the suite of exams sampling arrangements and the introduction of centre guided optionality in certain subjects with a high volume of content will release teaching time and support students and their centres.

Changes to the arrangements for the assessment of GCSE history, GCSE ancient history and GCSE geography

We invited views on our proposals that centres should have a choice of topics on which their students would answer questions for GCSE ancient history and GCSE history exams (Questions 16,17,18,133,134 and 135).

There was a high level of support for this proposal (86% in history and 76% in ancient history).

We also invited views on our proposal that students should not be required to take part in, or be assessed on, their own fieldwork in GCSE geography, because of the potential difficulties of undertaking fieldwork within public health safeguards (Questions 121 and 122).

76% of respondents supported this proposal, with all respondent groups showing a similarly high level of agreement.

Those who did not agree with the proposals argued that fieldwork should not be removed on any count as key geographical skills would be lost to the detriment of the integrity of the qualification. They were also concerned that it would devalue fieldwork in the longer term.

We have decided to require the exam boards to change how they assess content in GCSE history, ancient history and geography, in line with our proposals.

GCSE English literature

We invited views in the consultation on our proposal that there should be no change to the assessment arrangements in this subject (Questions 99 and 100). There was stronger disagreement (48%) than agreement (38%) with this proposal with respondents arguing for optionality in coverage of subject content, (for optional content and/or optional questions). Many respondents expressed significant concern about being able to cover all of the required subject content in the time available and highlighted the difficulties for students in trying to get to grips with complex literary texts remotely. Many teachers referred to the way that English literature and English language were often taught together and how a change to one would support the delivery of the other.

The government has agreed that there can, for 2021 only, be a choice of topics on which students are required to answer questions in their exams. We have therefore decided to allow exam boards to change the way they assess GCSE English literature in summer 2021 so that centres will have the option to focus on particular texts. All students will be assessed on a play by Shakespeare² and on 2 of the remaining 3 areas of content: poetry; 19th century novel; or fiction/drama from the British Isles from 1914.

Fieldwork

We invited views in the consultation on our proposal to remove the GCSE geography fieldwork requirement, whereby students must undertake fieldwork away from the classroom and the school grounds on at least 2 occasions (Questions 121 and 122). These proposals were widely welcomed by teachers (although many expressed regret at the need for the change), but they were opposed by the relevant subject associations. We proposed that the requirement to undertake such fieldwork should be removed for 2021 and that the 2021 GCSE geography exams should not include questions that focussed on the fieldwork that students were assumed to have undertaken.

The reasons for the support this proposal received included the practical difficulties of arranging fieldwork in the context of public health safeguards and that any disruption to classroom time (including in other subjects) will be unwelcome. The subject associations opposed the change because fieldwork is so important to the study of geography.

A number of respondents argued strongly for a similar adjustment to be made at AS and A level geography. For AS, students must undertake 2 days of fieldwork and for A level 4 days. A level geography also requires students to undertake a non-exam assessment (worth 20%) that can draw on students' fieldwork experience to complete the required independent investigation.

² Exam boards may extend this core in their specifications.

We invited views in the consultation on our proposal to retain the fieldwork requirement but permit greater flexibility in how fieldwork is undertaken in 2021 (Questions 123, 124, 135 and 126). We did so because of the importance of fieldwork to the subject and because we believed AS and A level students would be able to undertake their fieldwork on a more independent basis than GCSE students within any public health restrictions.

Respondents were generally opposed to our proposal, arguing for parity with GCSE geography and emphasising that the same public health restrictions apply.

We have considered the concerns raised and decided to remove the requirement for centres to make a declaration to the exam board confirming they provided all students with the opportunity to undertake a mandated number of days of fieldwork in GCSE, AS and A level geography. In addition, we have decided that GCSE and AS exam questions should not relate to students' own fieldwork experiences. Students will have to undertake the non-exam assessment at A level but we will expect the exam boards to be flexible in their requirements for the use of primary data and, at all levels, to emphasise to centres that they should complete as much fieldwork as possible, including by remote or virtual means.

In light of the responses to the consultation, we have decided to make similar adjustments to the fieldwork requirements for GCSE, AS and A level geology and AS and A level environmental science as those we proposed for GCSE geography.

We have also decided to permit the observational activity requirements for GCSE astronomy to be met by demonstration and/or simulations in the same way as proposed for practical activities in the GCSE science subjects.

Optional questions

We invited views in the consultation on our proposal that the 2021 exams should not include more optional questions than usual (Question 1).

Nearly half (47%) of respondents to the consultation disagreed or strongly disagreed with this proposal. Thirty seven per cent agreed or strongly agreed.

We explained in the consultation the difficulties with question level optionality (as opposed to questions on optional content) and summarised research that indicates how more question choice would most disadvantage the students who are already likely to perform less well in 2021.

While some respondents agreed with our analysis of the use of question level optionality, many argued in support of its use. In most cases the arguments focussed on introducing a choice of topics on which students will be examined, in line with our proposal for GCSE history and ancient history, rather than providing optional questions on the same content areas.

We continue to believe that, in light of the evidence that question level optionality would further disadvantage students who are already most likely to be most disadvantaged by the disruption to their education, exam boards should not make greater use of this approach than usual in 2021.

The DfE, which is responsible for subject level content, has decided to allow a choice of topics on which students will be examined in 2021 for GCSE history, ancient history and English literature. We will not require exam boards to make greater use of questions on optional content in exams in summer 2021 in other subjects.

Different approaches in GCSEs, AS and A levels

A number of respondents to the consultation expressed concern that we had not proposed more extensive changes to A levels, and that we had not mirrored those proposed for a GCSE to the corresponding A level in that subject. A few also argued for changes to AS qualifications, although others pointed out that as these are qualifications normally taught over just one year no teaching time had, in fact, yet been lost for the 2021 AS cohort.

We suggested in the consultation that A level students could be expected to be more effective independent learners who would be more motivated to keep on top of or catch up with their studies, taking advantage of the free time that is usually found in an A level student's timetable. However, some respondents pointed out that A level students are typically only a little older than GCSE students and that some A level students will have not have had access to the internet during school and college closures that would have enabled them to continue with, for example, research for the A level history non-exam assessment.

Changes to A levels of the type being sought in the responses to the consultation would, in the main, require changes to the published subject content requirements determined by DfE. In his letter, the Secretary of State noted the importance of A levels (and to a lesser extent AS) for successful transition to higher and further education. We have proposed changes to A levels where necessary to accommodate possible public health restrictions. We are not proposing changes that would impact on subject content coverage, other than those identified above. We have, however, decided to make some additional changes to subjects that involve non-exam assessment and fieldwork, including to some A levels, as detailed above.

Exam paper length and format

We proposed that the exam boards should not generally change the length or format of their exam papers, except as necessary to accommodate other agreed changes to the exam and assessment requirements (Questions 3-6).

Thirty-nine per cent of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that the number of exams taken for each subject in 2021 should be the same as usual. Forty-nine per cent of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed.

However, while many respondents argued for fewer exams, most respondents, 74%, strongly agreed or agreed that the exams in 2021 should not be longer than usual and 16% strongly disagreed or disagreed.

We received a range of responses to these proposals. Some argued for shorter and/or fewer papers and others for different question styles such as multiple choice questions and fewer extended response questions. Others shared our concern that if the 2021 exam papers are not in the familiar format, teachers and students would need to familiarise themselves with the changes. Past papers would be of less use for preparation and time that would otherwise be used for teaching would be diverted to considering the new exam formats.

We considered in the consultation the particular potential impact on disabled students and students with special educational needs of new exam formats. Many who responded shared our concern.

We were not persuaded by the arguments put forward in support of changes to exam formats; we will not require the exam boards to change the length, number or format of the exam papers, except as necessary to accommodate specific changes to the exam and assessment arrangements.

Changes to the summer 2021 exam timetable

We invited views in the consultation on the suggestion that the GCSE, AS and A level exams could start later in the summer term to allow for more teaching and revision, helping catch up following school closures.

While there was support for delaying the exams, to allow more time for teaching, a number of risks and issues were highlighted in the responses, including concerns about the likely impact on the dates by which results could then be published. The key decision for Ofqual on the timetable is whether to change our rules to allow the exams boards to offer exams in July 2021 as well as in May and June. However, changes to the exam timetable are not for Ofqual alone. We will work with DfE, the exam boards, colleagues in Wales and Northern Ireland, and higher education to undertake a further analysis of the options, the risks and the mitigations, before taking a decision.

Overall impact of the changes

We believe that, overall, the changes will reduce the pressure on teachers and students in the next academic year. Individually, some of the changes are quite modest but we have considered their cumulative impact.

For example, a student taking a common combination of GCSEs in English language, English literature, mathematics, combined science, history, art and design and religious studies will experience a variety of changes to their qualifications.

- English language – reduced assessment anxiety for students and time for the teacher will be freed up by the removal of the requirement to record the spoken language assessment
- English literature – centre level choice of topics for students to be examined on will reduce the volume of content a student will need to cover and on which they will be examined
- combined science – the option to deliver the practical content by demonstration (or by remote means in case of further lockdowns) will allow adherence to public health requirements and enable teachers to make best use of teaching time
- history – centre level choice of topics will reduce the volume of content a student will need to cover and on which they will be examined.
- art and design – the removal of the externally set task, so assessment is by portfolio only, will reduce the amount of assessment a student undertakes and the disruption this could cause to their other subjects, allow teachers to make best use of teaching time and reduce pressure on the use of specialist resources

A student taking another typical combination of GCSEs in English language, English literature, mathematics, combined science, design and technology, geography and French would experience a slightly different variety of changes to their qualifications.

- English language, English literature, combined science, as above.

- geography – the removal of the requirement to undertake fieldwork and to answer exam questions relating to their own fieldwork will allow adherence to public health requirements and allow teachers to make best use of teaching time
- design and technology – there is no longer a requirement for the production of a full prototype which will allow teachers to make the best use of teaching time
- French – replacing the formal spoken language assessment with a less formal assessment of spoken language skills will reduce pressures on teaching time and reduce anxiety for some students

Implementation timescales

Following the publication of these decisions, we will now consult with the exam boards on the changes to our regulatory framework necessary to implement these decisions.

Equalities impact assessment

We assessed the potential impact of the proposals on students who share different protected characteristics before we consulted and we invited views on our assessment. We received a wide range of responses that are [summarised in the analysis document](#). Many of the comments focussed on the differential impact of school and college closures on students' progress and likely performance in the exams and assessments next year. Students who it was suggested might be most disadvantaged included those:

- without access to the internet or computers at home or to specialist equipment – mainly from students from lower socio-economic backgrounds
- with caring responsibilities – responses suggested this could disproportionately affect female students
- with special educational needs and disabilities – who might have been without their usual support while working at home and who might have found the change to their normal ways of working and lifestyle particularly unsettling

In terms of the subject specific proposals, some respondents suggested the proposed changes to non-exam assessments could disengage some students who might find those aspects of their courses most enjoyable, such as fieldwork. Students whose opportunities to travel or to engage in wider cultural activities in their home lives were highlighted as being potentially most disadvantaged by proposed changes of this type.

Students who might have been directly affected by COVID-19 and those who are shielding and who might continue to shield, either for their own protection or for that of their families, were identified as being particularly disadvantaged in terms of their ability fully to participate in their teaching and learning and to undertake exams and assessments next year. Disabled students and students from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups were highlighted as being disproportionately affected in this way.

A range of mitigations were suggested, including the greater use of teacher marked assessments and reductions in subject content, as considered above.

While we understand the range of concerns raised, if there are to continue to be national qualifications, assessed to a common standard, it is difficult to identify mitigations that would reduce the disadvantage caused to particular groups by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

Regulatory impact assessment

We sought views in the consultation on our initial regulatory impact assessment. Again, we received a rich range of responses. Many of the comments focussed on the impact of a changed exam timetable, ranging from concerns from students and parents and carers about holiday and wedding plans (and associated cancellation costs) to the availability and willingness of teachers to mark exams in what would normally be the summer holidays. We will take these views into account as we consider, with other interested parties, options for the 2021 exam timetable.

Many of the comments were focussed on the costs to schools and colleges of making up for lost teaching and learning time. Some of the comments were more focussed on specific aspects of our proposals, for example that exam boards should be permitted to allow more teacher marking and to moderate in different ways, for example using digital portfolios. Many respondents assumed that if something was permitted then this is what would be delivered, even if the preferred and normal approach remained viable. However, the proposals are intended to be more flexible and accommodating of public health safeguards, not to displace established ways of working if these remain possible and preferable.

While many respondents had argued for different styles of exam and assessment, in this section the costs to schools and colleges and to students themselves of familiarising themselves with the new arrangements and of preparing to take the new style of exams and assessments were highlighted. Similarly, while many argued in favour of more teacher assessment, in this section the costs and burden on teachers of teacher assessment and/or more teacher marking were highlighted.

Appendix A – Subject Decisions Tables

Summary of decisions for each GCSE subject

GCSE subject	Decision
Ancient history	Choice of topics on which students have to answer questions, giving centres choice over the content that must be taught.
Art and design	Assessment to be portfolio only. Permit ³ exam boards to carry out moderation by photographic and/or digital portfolio.
Astronomy	Allow the exam board to modify the requirements for the observational activities to allow students to observe rather than carry out the activities themselves.
Biblical Hebrew	No change to assessment arrangements.
Biology	Permit observation of demonstrations and/or simulations to cover required apparatus and techniques.
Business	No change to assessment arrangements.
Chemistry	Permit observation of demonstrations and/or simulations to cover required apparatus and techniques.
Citizenship studies	Require exam boards to provide guidance on citizenship action in context of public health restrictions.
Classical civilisation	No change to assessment arrangements.
Classical Greek	No change to assessment arrangements.
Combined science	Permit observation of demonstrations and/or simulations to cover required apparatus and techniques.
Computer science	Permit programming project to be undertaken in unsupervised time.
Dance	<p>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/physical relationship to other dancers’. Exam board to provide clarification about their requirements. Requirement to submit complete an unedited audio-visual recording of the performed dances from the perspective of the audience.</p> <p>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 evidence⁴ to illustrate the intended final piece, the choreographic intent and how that was developed. Alternative evidence may include audio-visual</p>

³ Wherever there is reference to ‘permit’, it does not mean that there is a requirement.

⁴ This replaces ‘portfolio of evidence’ to provide additional clarity about permitting exam boards to accept other evidence if students are unable to produce and submit a complete and unedited recording of their final performance.

GCSE subject	Decision
	<p>recordings of complete performance/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/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.</p> <p>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.</p>
<p>Design and technology</p>	<p>Permit exam boards to accept mock-ups and/or clear and detailed intentions of prototypes. Exam boards to provide clarification about their requirements.</p> <p>Permit demonstration of using machinery/tools/processes.</p>
<p>Drama</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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 evidence⁴ 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/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.</p> <p>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/costumes. For designers, permit alternative</p>

GCSE subject	Decision
	<p>evidence⁴ that may include prototype of product/original photographs, drawings or annotated sketches of designs /annotated scripts/video or written account/physical demonstrations. Exam boards to provide clarification about their requirements.</p> <p>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.</p>
Economics	No change to assessment arrangements.
Electronics	No change to assessment arrangements.
Engineering	<p>Permit exam board to accept clear and detailed intentions of prototypes. Exam board to provide clarification about their requirements.</p> <p>Permit students to watch a demonstration of using machinery/tools/processes.</p>
English language	<p>No requirement for teachers to submit sample of audio-visual recordings of spoken language assessment for exam board monitoring.</p> <p>Spoken language assessment permitted to take place before a single teacher who can represent an 'audience'.</p> <p>Spoken language assessment may be conducted by the teacher at any time during the course and by virtual means.</p>
English literature	<p>Choice of topics on which students have to answer questions, giving centres choice over the content that must be taught.</p> <p>A minimum common core⁵ (play by Shakespeare) that all students will be assessed on.</p> <p>Centre level content choices for students to answer questions on 2 of the 3 remaining content areas: poetry; 19th century novel; fiction/drama from British Isles from 1914.</p>
Film studies	<p>Permit exam boards to accept a prototype/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 may include original and non-original photographs, images, drawings or sketches with annotations to illustrate intentions/storyboards/screenplay/shooting script. Exam board to provide clarification about their requirements.</p>

⁵ Exam boards may add to this core if they wish.

GCSE subject	Decision
Food preparation and nutrition	Remove NEA1 and permit an earlier release of NEA2. To reduce the requirements for NEA2 to 2 dishes to be completed within 3 hours ⁶ to allow for students to use complex processes such as baking, lamination, making ice-cream and to accommodate public health restrictions.
Geography	Remove requirements for (i) written statement that centres have given students the opportunity to undertake 2 days of fieldwork and (ii) students to answer questions in the exam relating to their own fieldwork experience.
Geology	Remove requirement for written statement that centres have given students the opportunity to undertake 2 days of geological fieldwork.
History	Permit choice of content topics beyond a core identified for each specification that all students will be assessed on, giving centres a choice over the content that must be taught.
Latin	No change to assessment arrangements.
Maths	No change to assessment arrangements.
Media studies	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/television screenplay/shooting script/radio script and directions. Exam boards to provide clarification about their requirements.
Modern foreign languages	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 ⁷ 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.
Music	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

⁶ This is different to the 2 hour proposal on which we consulted.

⁷ Details of the arrangements for the endorsement are being worked on and will be published in due course but in time for teaching from September 2020. To be clear, the expectations are that the speaking skills should be assessed but in an integrated way that supports classroom practice, that is no formal assessment settings and arrangements other than where that is preferred and organised by the centre. The focus is on reducing the disruption within a centre and to the teaching time for MFL and other subjects that is caused by the formal speaking exam. There is no intention to replace one formal assessment with another that places burden on teachers and centres and takes students away from the classroom.

GCSE subject	Decision
	<p>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.</p> <p>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: The student does not have to perform their own composition(s). The recording(s) may be computer generated.</p> <p>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.</p>
Physical education	<p>Permit exam boards to reduce requirement to 2 activities and allow both to be individual.</p> <p>Permit remote moderation using videoed evidence for all activities.</p> <p>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.</p>
Physical education (short course)	<p>Permit exam boards to reduce requirement to 1 individual activity.</p> <p>Permit remote moderation using videoed evidence for all activities.</p> <p>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.</p>
Physics	<p>Permit observation of demonstrations and/or simulations to cover required apparatus and techniques.</p>
Psychology	<p>No change to assessment arrangements.</p>
Religious studies	<p>No change to assessment arrangements.</p>
Religious studies (short course)	<p>No change to assessment arrangements.</p>
Sociology	<p>No change to assessment arrangements.</p>
Statistics	<p>No change to assessment arrangements.</p>

Summary of decisions for each GCE AS and A level subject

GCE AS and A level subject	Decision
Accounting AS and A level	No change to assessment arrangements.
Ancient history AS and A level	No change to assessment arrangements.
Art and design AS and A level	Assessment to be portfolio only. Permit exam boards to carry out moderation by photographic and/or digital portfolio.
Biblical Hebrew A level	No change to assessment arrangements.
Biology AS	Permit observation of demonstrations and/or simulations of practical activities to cover required apparatus and techniques.
Biology A level	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.
Business AS and A level	No change to assessment arrangements.
Chemistry AS	Permit observation of demonstrations and/or simulations of practical activities to cover required apparatus and techniques.
Chemistry A level	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.
Classical civilisation AS and A level	No change to assessment arrangements.
Classical Greek AS and A level	No change to assessment arrangements.
Computer science AS	No change to assessment arrangements.
Computer science A level	No change to assessment arrangements.
Dance AS	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. Requirement to submit complete and unedited audio-visual recording of the performed dances from the perspective of the audience.

GCE AS and A level subject	Decision
	<p>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 evidence⁴ for the choreographed dance to illustrate the choreographic intent and how that was developed. Alternative evidence may include 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/video diary. Exam board to provide clarification on their requirements.</p> <p>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.</p>
<p>Dance A level</p>	<p>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. Requirement to submit complete and unedited audio-visual recording of the performed dances from the perspective of the audience.</p> <p>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 task⁸. Permit exam boards to accept alternative evidence⁴ to illustrate the intended final piece, the choreographic intent and how that was developed. Alternative evidence may include audio-visual recordings of complete performance/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/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.</p> <p>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.</p>
<p>Design and technology AS</p>	<p>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/processes.</p>
<p>Design and technology A level</p>	<p>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/processes.</p>

⁸This is different to the proposal to reduce the number of dancers required to 2 to 5 on which we consulted.

GCE AS and A level subject	Decision
<p>Drama and theatre AS</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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/each student's individual contribution. For performance, permit audio-visual recording of acting performance alone without need for fully designed set/lighting/costumes. For directors and designers, permit alternative evidence⁴ that may include prototype of product(s)/original photographs, drawings or annotated sketches of designs /annotated scripts/video or written account/physical demonstrations. Exam boards to provide clarification on their requirements.</p> <p>Both NEA components: 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 (a) different text(s) – no change to written exams.</p>
<p>Drama and theatre A level</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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 evidence⁴ 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/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.</p> <p>Text Based Performance: Require each student to participate as either a performer, director or designer in a text based performance</p>

GCE AS and A level subject	Decision
	<p>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/each student's individual contribution. For performance, permit audio-visual recording of acting performance alone without need for fully designed set/lighting/costumes. For directors and designers, permit alternative evidence⁴ that may include prototype of product(s)/original photographs, drawings or annotated sketches of designs /annotated scripts/video or written account/physical demonstrations. Exam boards to provide clarification about their requirements.</p> <p>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 (a) different text(s) – no changes to coverage in written exams.</p>
Economics AS and A level	No change to assessment arrangements.
Electronics AS and A level	No change to assessment arrangements.
English language AS	No change to assessment arrangements.
English language A level	No change to assessment arrangements.
English language and literature AS	No change to assessment arrangements.
English language and literature A level	No change to assessment arrangements.
English literature AS	No change to assessment arrangements.
English literature A level	No change to assessment arrangements.
Environmental science AS and A level	<p>Permit observation of demonstrations and simulations of practical activities to cover required skills and techniques.</p> <p>Remove requirement for written statement that centres have given students the opportunity to undertake 2 days of fieldwork (AS) or 4 days (A level).</p>

GCE AS and A level subject	Decision
Film studies AS	Permit exam boards to accept a prototype/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/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/storyboards/screenplay/shooting script. Exam boards to provide clarification about their requirements.
Film studies A level	Permit exam boards to accept a prototype/mock-up, with supporting evidence as necessary, of a short film or to produce a screenplay for a short film accompanied by a prototype/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/storyboards/screenplay/shooting script. Exam boards to provide clarification about their requirements.
Further maths AS and A level	No change to assessment arrangements.
Geography AS	Remove requirements for (i) written statement that centres have given students the opportunity to undertake 2 days of fieldwork and (ii) 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.
Geography A level	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.
Geology AS	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.
Geology A level	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.
History AS	No change to assessment arrangements.
History	No change to assessment arrangements.

GCE AS and A level subject	Decision
A level	
History of art AS and A level	No change to assessment arrangements.
Latin AS and A level	No change to assessment arrangements.
Law AS and A level	No change to assessment arrangements.
Maths AS and A level	No change to assessment arrangements.
Media studies AS	Permit exam boards to accept a prototype/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/television screenplay/shooting script/radio script and directions. Exam boards to provide clarification about their requirements.
Media studies A level	Permit exam boards to accept prototypes/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/television screenplay/shooting script/radio script and directions. Exam boards to provide clarification about their requirements.
Modern foreign languages AS and A level	No change to assessment arrangements.
Modern foreign languages (listening, reading, writing) A level	No change to assessment arrangements.
Music AS	<p>Performance Assessment: 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.</p> <p>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: The student does not have to perform their own composition(s). The recording(s) may be computer generated.</p> <p>Both NEA components: Permit both NEA components to be marked by the teacher and moderated by the exam board or to be</p>

GCE AS and A level subject	Decision
	<p>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.</p>
<p>Music A level</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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: The student does not have to perform their own composition(s). The recording(s) may be computer generated.</p> <p>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.</p>
<p>Music technology AS</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>
<p>Music technology A level</p>	<p>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</p>

GCE AS and A level subject	Decision
	<p>suitable for students to demonstrate their ability to edit and produce audio recordings. Exam board to provide clarification about their requirements.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>
Philosophy AS and A level	No change to assessment arrangements.
Physical education AS and A level	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.
Physics AS	Permit observation of demonstrations and/or simulations of practical activities to cover required apparatus and techniques.
Physics A level	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.
Politics AS and A level	No change to assessment arrangements.
Psychology AS and A level	No change to assessment arrangements.
Religious studies AS and A level	No change to assessment arrangements.
Sociology AS and A level	No change to assessment arrangements.
Statistics AS and A level	No change to assessment arrangements.



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