



Subject Updates - Accurate at 12/10/2020

Our Exams Officer, Mrs Douglas and I are reviewing daily updates from our exam boards and the DFE to ensure we are up to date with any changes to subject specifications for the Y11 and Y13 Examinations for 2021. Whilst the picture is still very unclear at this stage and many of the proposed changes are speculative and still under consultation, we have summarised the current changes for the students and added relevant website links for you if you wish to read them in full.

There are no doubt many more updates to come and we will continue to update you and support our students.

The following is a link to the AQA update page. It helpfully shows whether any changes have been made. Click on the link and it will take you directly to the full list of their qualifications:

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/qualifications>

For ease, I have highlighted the courses where changes have occurred in blue to make it easier to focus. We will update this information as we receive more updates. A copy of this letter and subsequent updates will be placed on the website in the usual place:

Key information/Exam information/Subject Updates for 2020-21.

Y13 Examined Qualifications 2020-21

AQA

Biology

Where possible, students should still carry out the required practical activities, but we recognise that this may not be possible in all situations.

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/science/as-and-a-level/biology-7401-7402/changes-for-2021>

Economics - no planned change

English Language - no planned change

English Literature - no planned change

French - no planned change

History - no planned change

Maths - no planned change

Maths Studies - no planned change

PE

The board requires evidence for **at least one** area of assessment and will accept that the level of challenge demonstrated by video evidence may not be what we would expect given the issues around playing in competitive sport at the present time so will therefore be accepting supplementary forms of evidence to support video evidence.

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/physical-education/as-and-a-level/physical-education-7582/>

Physics

Where possible, students should still carry out the required practical activities, but we recognise that this may not be possible in all situations.

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/science/as-and-a-level/physics-7407-7408/changes-for-2021>

Psychology - no planned change





OCR

Chemistry

Ofqual has confirmed students taking A Levels in Chemistry in summer 2021 should still aim to complete a minimum of 12 practical activities covering the Common Practical Assessment Criteria (CPAC).

- All assessments remain the same;
- 15% of the marks on the assessment will still test practical skills as outlined in Module 1.1 of the specification, including apparatus and techniques covered through the course of the Practical Endorsement;
- exam boards can carry out remote Practical Endorsement monitoring visits.

<https://www.ocr.org.uk/Images/596631-a-level-science-changes.pdf>

Further Maths - no planned change

Edexcel

Geography

It is confirmed that the board has removed the requirement for written statements that centres have given students the opportunity to undertake 4 days of fieldwork. Additionally, it has been agreed that the exam board will review their guidance about their expectations relating to primary data for the non-exam assessment.

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-a-levels/geography-2016/summer-2021-exam-support.html>

Y11 GCSE Examined Qualifications 2020-21

AQA

Art - For GCSE Art and Design, Art and Fine Art the students will complete Component 1 (Portfolio) only. This means that students won't need to start or complete Component 2.

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/art-and-design/gcse/art-and-design-8201-8206/changes-for-2021>

EnglishLanguage

The following changes apply to the Spoken Language endorsement of our GCSE English Language (8700) qualification and only for the 2021 exam series:

- there's no requirement for teachers to submit a sample of audio-visual recordings of Spoken Language assessments;
- the Spoken Language assessment can take place in front of a single teacher who can represent an 'audience', and;
- the Spoken Language assessment can be conducted by the teacher at any time during the course and by virtual means.

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/english/gcse/english-language-8700/changes-for-2021>

English Literature

All students will be assessed on a play by Shakespeare.

Schools and colleges can then choose two of the remaining three areas of content:

- poetry anthology;
- 19th-century novel;
- fiction/drama from the British Isles from 1914.





We have considered previous student outcomes and considering the opportunities for strong responses in the other texts, we have decided to remove the 19th Century novel (English Literature Paper 1 Section B) from the 2021 Summer examinations. In the case of our school, this means that students no longer need to prepare for The Strange Case of Jekyll and Hyde.

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/english/gcse/english-literature-8702/changes-for-2021>

French

Please note: these changes only apply to assessments being completed this academic year.

Speaking

The spoken language assessment in summer 2021 will be an endorsement reported on a 3-point scale (pass, merit and distinction) against common assessment criteria. Students' speaking skills will be assessed by teachers during the course of study and the endorsement level of pass, merit or distinction will be reported alongside the 9-1 grade.

The common assessment criteria will be published shortly by Ofqual. We'll also be publishing some further detailed guidance on a range of languages to help teachers in their assessments.

Writing

There will be more optionality in the writing components, so the 2021 Writing papers will include an additional optional question for the overlap question at both tiers (Question 4/Question 1) and for Higher tier Question 2. This is so students can answer on their preferred theme. For each optional question, the theme will be given in the introduction to the question in the question paper.

Foundation tier

There will be an additional option for Question 4 and this will be numbered in the question paper as Question 4.3. Students will need to answer one question from a choice of three.

Higher tier

- There will be an additional option for Question 1 and this will be numbered in the question paper as Question 1.3. Students will need to answer one question from a choice of three;
- there will be an additional option for Question 2 and this will be numbered in the question paper as Question 2.3. Students will need to answer one question from a choice of three.

The board will be adding an extra five minutes to the scheduled exam time at both tiers for the Writing paper in 2021.

This means that:

- the Foundation tier Writing exam will last for one hour and five minutes, and;
- the Higher tier Writing exam will last for one hour and 20 minutes.



Vocabulary

The board has reviewed all of our draft Listening and Reading papers for the 2021 exams. They will be making some changes at both tiers to reflect this. This is not finalised yet but may still include, in Listening and Reading papers, a small number of basic vocabulary items (e.g. primary colours, cognates/near cognates) not listed in the specification which will not be glossed and which students may need to understand in order to answer the questions. This is because excluding such items from the assessments is likely to increase the demand of the tasks.

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/news/changes-to-2021-exams-for-gcse-languages>

Geography

Students do not need to complete two occasions of fieldwork this year. Question 5 will be removed from Section B in 8035/3 Paper 3: Geographical applications. These are questions relating to a student's own fieldwork experience (familiar fieldwork).

Paper 3 will be worth fewer marks, and be a shorter exam. The details of this are currently being finalised. We will publish further information about the new mark total and length of exam as soon as possible.

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/geography/gcse/geography-8035/changes-for-2021>

History

For the 2021 summer series, GCSE History students will only have to answer questions on three of four studies. There will be a mixture of compulsory and optional studies.

The compulsory study will be the wider world depth study (Paper 1, Section B).

Students will also answer questions on two out of the other three optional studies:

- the period study (Paper 1, Section A);
- the thematic study (Paper 2, Section A);
- the British depth study with the historic environment (Paper 2, Section B);

In normal years, 8 marks are allocated to assessing SPaG, with 4 marks in the wider world depth study and 4 marks in the thematic study. However, the overall number of marks allocated to assessing SPaG is now 4 marks in question 4 on the optional thematic study. This will ensure that all students will be marked out of the same total number of marks, and have access to the same number of SPaG mark opportunities, regardless of the combination of optional topics chosen. SPaG marks will now only be attached to question 4 on the compulsory wider world depth study.

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/history/gcse/history-8145/changes-for-2021>

Spanish

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The common assessment criteria will be published shortly by Ofqual. We'll also be publishing some further detailed guidance on a range of languages to help teachers in their assessments.





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<https://www.aqa.org.uk/news/changes-to-2021-exams-for-gcse-languages>

All Science: Biology, Chemistry, Physics and Combined Science

Students can study the required practical activities through demonstrations and simulations if it is not possible to carry them out in person. However, we still recommend doing them in person where possible. This will make it easier for teachers to plan and deliver the practical activities. It should also still enable students to learn about the practical apparatus, techniques and processes in enough depth to demonstrate their understanding in exams.

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/science/gcse/biology-8461/changes-for-2021>

Business - no planned change





Edexcel

Drama

Component 1

Final outcomes can differ from intended pre-Covid outcomes in the portfolio.

- There will be the option of monologue and duologue for performance/design realisation, so therefore group work is not compulsory;
- there are new regulatory minimum timings in place for all performance routes;
- an audience can be a small live or virtual live streamed one, but must include the teacher;
- the designer requirements on page 15 of the issue 3 specification are suspended for 2021 and designers are to follow the Component 2 requirements on pages 36–37. NB: the same Component 1 assessment criteria (pages 27–28) is to be used for 2021 when assessing design students;
- there is a new process in place for designers who are not able to realise their designs in performance.

Component 2

Performance/design realisations will be done for one key extract only, rather than two. The total marks will therefore be out of 24 marks and this will be scaled to give a total mark of 48 as per the current qualification.

There are new regulatory minimum timings in place for all performance routes and therefore the penalty tables have been changed to reflect these new minimum timings;

- an audience can be a small live or virtual live streamed one, but must include the teacher;
- there is a new process in place for designers who are not able to realise their designs in performance;
- this component will be assessed by an examiner via recorded evidence rather than by a visiting examiner.

Component 3

- The live theatre requirement can be satisfied through live streamed, digital or recorded performances;
- we still require centres to complete a live performance statement (as per page 8 of the specification) when submitting text choices on our website, however this will be altered to reflect the changes for 2021.

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/drama-2016/summer-2021-exam-support.html>

DT

Ofqual has confirmed that the changes for the 2021 series will be accepting mockups and/or clear/detailed intentions of prototypes, and permitting demonstration of using machinery/tools/processes. As the summary of this qualification is lengthy, please follow the link below to read the details.

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/design-and-technology-2017/summer-2021-exam-support.html>





Maths - no planned change

PE

Ofqual has confirmed that the changes for the 2021 series will be a reduction to the number of activities/sports required for the practical performance by 1, and the allowance of remote video moderation. As the summary of this qualification is lengthy, please follow the link below to read the details.

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/physical-education-2016/summer-2021-exam-support.html>

WJEC

Music

Unit 1

Section A: Performing (30%) one or more pieces, which may be either solo and/or ensemble. One of the pieces performed should link to an area of study of the learner's choice.

Section B: Programme Note (5%) A programme note for one of the pieces chosen for performance, linked to an area of study.

Unit 2

Section A: Composing (35%) One composition. Learners may select one brief from a choice of four, each one linked to a different area of study or compose a free composition for which they set their own brief. There will be no requirement to submit an evaluation in 2021.

Unit 3

This unit is assessed via a listening examination. Eight questions in total, two on each of the four areas of study.

Area of study 1: Musical Forms and Devices

Area of study 2: Music for Ensemble

Area of study 3: Film Music

Area of study 4: Popular Music

<https://www.wjec.co.uk/umbraco/surface/blobstorage/download?nodeId=31674>

OCR

Computer Science

- There is no content change for summer 2021;
- teachers should still cover the full specification content for the summer 2021 examination;
- the relaxed supervision conditions for the Programming Project allow for a more flexible delivery approach, and:
- The Programming Project can be used to support learning and revision for Component 02.

<https://www.ocr.org.uk/Images/595860-gcse-computer-science-changes.pdf>

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