



**Kieran McGrane - Headteacher**

The Crescent Callerton Lane Ponteland Newcastle upon Tyne NE20 9EG

Tel: 01661 824711 E-mail: [phs@ponthigh.org.uk](mailto:phs@ponthigh.org.uk) Website: [www.ponhigh.org.uk](http://www.ponhigh.org.uk) Twitter: @PontHigh

## Exams update for 2022 summer series

Key points from the recent Ofqual update

### Adaptations

- There will be optional topics and content in GCSE English literature, history, ancient history and geography
- If necessary, schools will be allowed to deliver practical work in GCSE biology, chemistry, physics, combined science, geology and astronomy, AS level biology, chemistry, physics and geology, and AS and A level environmental science by demonstration.
- Schools will be allowed to assess the Common Practical Assessment Criteria (CPAC) across the minimum number of practical activities required to enable students to demonstrate their competence in A level biology, chemistry, physics and geology.
- Students taking GCSE, AS and A level art and design will be assessed on their portfolio only.
- Exam boards will provide advanced information about the focus of the content of exams for all GCSE, AS and A level subjects except GCSE English literature, history, ancient history and geography by **7 February 2022** at the latest. This could be released earlier 'if circumstances require'.
- Students will be given a formulae sheet for GCSE mathematics and a revised equation sheet for GCSE physics and combined science.

### Grading

- 2022 will be a 'transition year' to reflect the fact that we are in a pandemic recovery period and students' education has been disrupted.
- Ofqual will therefore aim for grades in 2022 to reflect a midway point between 2021 and 2019. This means that results overall next year will be higher than in 2019 but not as high as in 2020.
- Exam boards will use data as a starting point, to align their standards in a subject. But the grade boundaries for each specification will be set by the senior examiners after they have reviewed the work produced by students.
- Grades for students sitting exams in autumn 2021 will be aligned with grading in summer 2021.
- When predicting grades for UCAS this year, Ofqual recommends that teachers use the 2019 standard as the basis, but that they give borderline students the benefit of any doubt.
- Organisations awarding VTQs are expected to take account of the approach for GCSEs and A levels when setting standards in their own qualifications.
- In 2023, Ofqual aims to return to results that are in line with those in pre-pandemic years.

### Results days

Results for exams next year will return to their normal format, with AS and A levels being released on **18 August**, and GCSEs on **25 August**.



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### **Contingency plans**

- The government has launched a two-week consultation on what contingency arrangements should be put in place if GCSE, AS and A level exams cannot go ahead as planned in 2022.
- The government's proposal is essentially a tweaked Teacher Assessed Grades (TAG) process, with tighter guidance on the evidence on which TAGs would be based. Specific suggestions include:
  - planned assessment points from which to gather evidence (e.g. once in each of the late autumn, spring and early summer terms)
  - the use, at these assessment points, of approaches which replicate exam board papers and exam conditions
- It is likely that the government will produce guidance on this process, once the consultation is complete and the final approach is agreed.