

ALTERNATIVE AWARDING ARRANGEMENTS 2021

CCEA GCSE, AS AND A LEVEL QUALIFICATIONS

Introduction

This leaflet provides an overview of the alternative awarding arrangements for 2021. The Department understands that this is a worrying and anxious time for many young people and their parents. We hope this guide will provide you with some reassurance about how the alternative awarding arrangements will work in practice and that young people will receive grades that are an accurate reflection of their knowledge, understanding and skills.

Who do these arrangements apply to?

CCEA GCE

All CCEA AS and A Level candidates may be entered for AS and A Level qualifications and will be issued with Centre Determined Grades in 2021.

CCEA GCSE

At GCSE, only Year 12 students (and above) and those in Further Education or training who are completing qualifications in 2021 may be entered for CCEA GCSE qualifications and will be awarded Centre Determined Grades in 2021.

Students in Year 11 or below may **not** be entered or awarded GCSE qualifications in 2021. This is to ensure that students in Year 11 will continue to study and progress in their GCSE qualifications throughout Year 12. **Two exceptions will be permitted:**

- CCEA GCSE Mathematics where the student will be entered for CCEA GCSE Further Mathematics in 2022. This is because CCEA GCSE Mathematics is a pre-requisite for CCEA GCSE Further Mathematics.
- Early entries for CCEA GCSE Irish in Irish-medium schools and units or where the learner intends extending their learning through GCSE Gaeilge.

What will be assessed?

All CCEA GCSE, AS and A Level examinations have been cancelled.

In summer 2021, a student's grade in a subject will be based on their school or college's professional assessment of the evidenced standard at which the student is performing.

These will be known as **Centre Determined Grades**.

Schools and colleges can use evidence of students' performance against the specification from any point in the course. CCEA will provide guidance and training to support teachers in this work.

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This means students **do not** have to have completed a specified amount of content, or demonstrate skills knowledge and understanding across every area of the specification as they would normally.

Overview of the Awarding Arrangements in 2021

Students

- Students will continue with as much of their education as possible during this academic year. It is important that all students continue to engage with their learning.
- Students may take a classroom assessment – the CCEA Assessment Resource – which will be marked by the school during a specified window in April and May 2021 and may be used to inform the Centre Determined Grade.
- Results will issue to all students in Northern Ireland no later than 24 August for AS and A Levels, and 27 August for GCSEs.
- Students will have the right to appeal to their schools and colleges, and to CCEA.

Schools and Colleges

- Schools and colleges will receive the necessary guidance and training during February to April 2021 to help them to make fair and accurate judgements.
- Teachers will continue to gather evidence of the standard of each student's work during both the current period of remote learning and when students return to school.
- The range of evidence used to inform the Centre Determined Grade may be from any time during the course but must demonstrate knowledge, understanding and skills from areas students have covered within the specification.
- Evidence may include the student's performance in any non-examination assessments (practical exams, controlled assessment or coursework); other class tests and mock examinations or any other work completed (for example practice examination questions or essays).
- Schools and colleges will then use centre professional judgement to assign a grade based on each student's portfolio of evidence for each qualification.
- These grades will be subject to a process of internal moderation and standardisation within each school or college throughout May 2021.
- Schools and colleges will submit Centre Determined Grades to CCEA toward the end of May 2021.

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- CCEA will carry out an external quality assurance, which will include review of students' work, across **all schools and colleges** throughout June 2021.
- CCEA will issue results to students. We can assure you that this will not be later than the dates envisaged for exam results (24 August 2021 for AS and A Level and 27 August for GCSE) but may be earlier. As soon as a date is agreed, CCEA will advise schools, colleges and students.

Five Step Awarding Process in 2021

There will be a five step process for Qualification Awarding.

ALTERNATIVE AWARDING ARRANGEMENTS 2021 – THE FIVE STEP PROCESS



► Step 1: Guidance, Information and Readiness

CCEA will provide guidance, support and training for schools and colleges on the awarding process.

► Step 2: Evidence Gathering and Provision of an Assessment Resource

Schools will give further opportunities for students to demonstrate what they know, understand and can do against the course specification.

To support the evidence gathering process, students may take a classroom assessment – the CCEA Assessment Resource – which will be marked by the class teacher during a specified window in April and May 2021.

► Step 3: Centre Professional Judgement and Moderation

Schools and colleges will draw on a range of evidence which relates to the specification to reach centre professional judgements for each qualification.

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There is no prescribed weighting for any piece of evidence rather Centre Determined Grades are a holistic judgement of the standard at which the candidate is performing.

Initial Centre Determined Grades will be submitted to CCEA towards the end of May 2021.

► **Step 4: Review of Evidence and Award**

External review of evidence by CCEA.

Work will be reviewed from every school and college across Northern Ireland.

Where the evidence submitted does not support or justify the outcomes provided, schools and colleges will be expected to rerun their judgement and moderation processes.

► **Step 5: Post-Award Review Service**

After the issue of results, students will have the right to appeal to their schools and colleges, and to CCEA.

Links to Further information

The Department of Education has also compiled more detailed guidance and a list of answers to 'Frequently Asked Questions'; these are available on the Department's website at <https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/frequently-asked-questions-alternative-awarding-arrangements-summer-2021>

CCEA will publish detailed guidance for school and college leaders in early February.

Further information for parents and students will also be available from your school or college, as well as on the CCEA website (<https://ccea.org.uk/summer-2021>).