

Statement from Qualifications Wales – Qualifications 2020 – Friday 20th March

I am writing to update you on our approach to grading this summer.

Following the Welsh Government decision to cancel exams for summer 2020, we are working with WJEC to establish the fairest way to issue grades for GCSE, A level and Skills Challenge Certificate qualifications. We understand this is a very difficult time for learners, education professionals, parents and anyone else affected by serious and rapid public health developments and a situation which is beyond their control.

People have many questions about how this will work in practice. Although we will not have all the answers until we have carefully worked through the detail and analysis, we can give an indication of our approach.

Grades for GCSE and A level qualifications in 2020 will be calculated using a range of evidence. They will be based on a combination of factors which may include marks for work completed to date, for example AS results for A level grades, and standardised teacher assessed grades.

Teacher assessed grades will be based on what teachers would expect a learner to achieve at the end of the course. They need to represent a fair, reasonable and carefully considered judgement of the most likely grade that might be achieved in normal circumstances. This is a professional judgement based on the combined assessment information held for that learner and will be a holistic judgement rather than focusing on a single source of evidence like mock examinations.

Given the clear importance of GCSE, A level and Skills Challenge Certificate results for progress in education, work and life, we are prioritising these qualifications. We are not planning to issue grades for AS Levels or for unit assessments taken by Year 10 learners in the same way. For those learners, we are looking at a variety of options, including the opportunity to sit exams in subsequent exam series. We will share more detail on those plans as soon as we can.

We are still considering the fairest way to issue grades for learners who are studying qualifications other than GCSEs and A Levels. Most vocational qualifications are offered across the UK, so we are working with fellow regulators, exam boards and governments across the UK to ensure consistency. We will share more detail on those plans as soon as we can.

An important part of our efforts to coordinate activities will be to agree the dates on which results will be released.

We are working hard to provide greater clarity, as quickly as possible, and will continue to give regular updates.

I appreciate this is an unsettling period and would like to thank you for your ongoing understanding at this very difficult time.

Yours sincerely

Philip Blaker

Chief Executive Qualifications Wales