

Non-exam assessment proposals receive strong support



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Changes made to some GCSE, AS and A level qualifications this year will continue in 2022.

We have decided to carry forward some of the changes to non-exam assessment and fieldwork agreed for 2021 for students entering qualifications in summer 2022.

There was strong support for these proposals, as the Analysis of consultation responses: Arrangements for non-exam assessment and fieldwork requirements for students entering qualifications in 2022 shows. This was particularly the case for respondents who work in schools and colleges. For most subjects, 70% to 92% of respondents supported the proposals for GCSE subjects, and between 60% to 89% for GCE AS and A levels.

Of those who responded, 9 out of 10 said they could not identify any impact that would affect students because of their protected characteristics.

Simon Lebus, Ofqual Interim Chief Regulator, said:

“I am pleased there was such broad support for the proposed approach to non-exam assessment next year.

“These decisions provide certainty for school and college leaders, teachers and students if they cannot undertake assessments as normal, and now students can forge ahead.”

The changes mean that we will allow adjustments to the assessment and evidence requirements for non-exam assessment in a range of subjects including dance, design and technology, food preparation and nutrition, music and

physical education. In the main, we are giving exam boards the opportunity to allow teachers to decide how to support and assess their students, in light of any public health restrictions.

We have also decided to remove the requirement for schools and colleges to confirm that they have given students the opportunity to carry out a specified number of fieldwork activities in geography, geology and environmental science qualifications. Schools can, of course, organise fieldwork for their students and we recognise the benefits of doing so – fieldwork is an important part of these qualifications. But we know from consultation responses that the pandemic will make it difficult, or impossible, for some centres to organise off-site fieldwork. In GCSE and AS geography, students will still be required to answer questions on fieldwork more generally, rather than fieldwork they have done themselves. At A level, geography students will continue to undertake an independent investigation but exam boards will be flexible in their requirements for use of primary data.

As for other decisions outlined in Decisions on arrangements for non-exam assessment and fieldwork requirements for students entering qualifications in 2022:

for GCSE English language, we will not require teachers to submit an audio-visual recording of a sample of students undertaking their spoken language assessments

for GCSEs in modern foreign languages (MFL), teachers and students should prepare for spoken language in 2022 to be assessed in the normal way, through formal speaking tests - if it becomes clear that the speaking test cannot take place because of the public health situation, we will implement contingency arrangements using the assessment criteria published for 2021 and a qualification endorsement approach

we have also removed the requirement for exam boards to use vocabulary outside of that included on their vocabulary lists for GCSE MFL

This consultation, which was open from 14 to 28 May, attracted 2,663 responses.

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