

Dear Students and Parent(s) / Guardian(s),

### **(I) GCSE Contingency Arrangements**

Ofqual has published guidance relating to the arrangements for collecting evidence for GCSE and A-level grades to be used if the normal exams planned for summer 2022 are cancelled and Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGs) are required. Guidance for IGCSEs will be published if these examinations are cancelled. We intend to follow similar guidelines and there is expected to be a requirement to submit a complete set of past papers, which may be done during mock exams or subsequently. The FAQs at the end of this letter apply specifically to GCSE (and A-level) subjects.

First of all, we want to emphasise that the examination boards, UK Government and regulatory authorities, and ourselves, are all committed to running examinations if we can do so safely. Considerable planning has already taken place to enable this to happen such as spacing examinations in the same subject out by 10 days or more so that students would be able to take at least one examination in a subject and the vaccination programme currently in place. Some adjustments have also been made to the examinations themselves to mitigate any learning loss and teachers will discuss these with students directly. The guidance that has been published is only in the eventuality that these examinations cannot take place.

Secondly, we want to assure you that teachers will do everything they can to ensure that any alternative process is carried out fairly and clearly. We have had experience over the last two years of similar systems, the process run by both Colleges previously has been scrutinised and the examination boards have been satisfied that we have done so fairly, without bias and reached grades that have been evidenced.

Thirdly, the assessments that students sit and teachers normally carry out as part of the teaching and learning process can be used as evidence. Students will have been aware of this previously from the experience of the last two years. The guidance published now asks teachers to take certain steps to ensure that, should it be needed, the evidence can be used fairly to justify grades. Most of this was in place already based on our experiences and in preparing for this “if needed” scenario. The information below is provided to help understand this process.

**Important in this is that any assessment opportunities from now on will be identified to you if they are ones that may be used to contribute to a final TAG.**

If you study subjects which include non-exam assessment (NEA), also known as coursework, teachers will support students, wherever possible, to complete that assessment in line with [arrangements announced by Ofqual for 2022](#) and the timescales set by exam boards, so that

these may contribute to any TAGs should they become necessary. Note that there may still be some changes to the guidance given that it has only been recently published and some issues have been raised in different contexts.

This link takes you to an open letter and video from Jo Saxon, Ofqual’s Chief Regulator:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/open-letters-arrangements-for-gcses-as-and-a-levels-in-2022/letter-to-students?utm\\_source=JCQ&utm\\_medium=JCQ&utm\\_campaign=Contingencies+Letter+to+students](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/open-letters-arrangements-for-gcses-as-and-a-levels-in-2022/letter-to-students?utm_source=JCQ&utm_medium=JCQ&utm_campaign=Contingencies+Letter+to+students)

We hope that by addressing a few immediate questions we will have put your minds at ease and allowed you to plan for the weeks ahead.

Howard Barnes  
Director of Studies, The Ladies’ College

GCSE subjects		IGCSE subjects	
Subject	Board	Subject	Board
Art	Eduquas	All Sciences	Edexcel
Drama	Eduquas	DT	CIE
Geography	AQA	English Language	Edexcel
Music	OCR	English Literature	Edexcel
Physical Education	AQA	French	Edexcel
Religious Studies	Edexcel	German	Edexcel
Spanish	Edexcel	History	Edexcel
Statistics	Edexcel	Latin	CIE
		Mathematics	Edexcel

**Possible FAQs about Contingency Arrangements for Replacing GCSE examinations:**

- *When will the assessments for potential TAGs be scheduled?*  
**Where there is no NEA (coursework) component in your subject, the recommendation is that you will be assessed in each of these periods of time:**
  - second half of the autumn term 2021: Teachers may identify assessments in the remainder of the term that could be used
  - spring term of 2022: Prelims/Mock examinations will be used for this purpose
  - first half of the summer term 2022: if the Summer external examinations are not able to be held we will put in place additional assessments internally

*Subjects that include one or more NEA may not use all of these windows.*
- *How will these assessments be organised?*  
**You should be assessed under exam-like conditions wherever possible.** This means, for example, you:
  - should not know the questions in the assessment beforehand
  - should work independently and without assistance (other than as required for a reasonable adjustment)

- should not have access to books or revision notes during the assessment and the assessment should be timed and supervised
- wherever possible, you should sit an assessment with fellow students taking the same subjects using the same material at the same time or with different materials if they are assessed at different times. Where it is not possible, teachers will record this. Assessment used for TAGs may be weighted differently so where this is not possible then the weighting of this evidence would be lower than more highly controlled evidence such as a mock examination.

**These controls may be provided within a classroom rather than exam hall setting.**

- The assessments should be helpful to you as part of your preparation for your summer exams. Assessments should, therefore, be similar to full or parts of the exam papers you are preparing to take next summer. Past papers may be used, in full or part, where appropriate. You will be assessed on a wide range of content, similar to that which you will expect in their summer exams, and across the assessment objectives for the qualification.

You will be told in advance which parts of the subject content will be covered by the assessment, but not be told the questions. You should be told this far enough in advance of the assessment to allow you time to revise and prepare.

- *What will happen with my assessed work?*
  - Your teachers will mark the assessments in line with published exam board mark schemes and guidance where appropriate.
  - You will be provided with feedback, which could include marks or comments.
  - Your teachers may tell you the grade for your performance in the assessment BUT they should also be clear that the marking and grading have not been quality assured. Any grade used to indicate the level at which the student has performed is not a TAG. It will not be possible for a teacher to determine a TAG unless and until Ofqual set specific guidance on the determination of TAGs for 2022, which they will only do if exams are cancelled.
  - Your original work must be retained by the centre. You may be given copies if this would help support learning.
  - You will not ordinarily be given the opportunity to repeat an assessment, for example to improve your mark in response to feedback.
- *What happens if I have been ill or am ill at the time of an assessment?*
  - Exceptions might be necessary if an individual student has been taught **significantly** less than the cohort because of illness. In exceptional circumstances, it might be necessary for assessments that were not undertaken in line with this guidance to be used to inform a TAG, for example where you miss the later assessments because of illness. In such cases you might not have been told in advance of taking the assessment that your performance might be used to inform a TAG.

#### *Subject specific points*

- Students taking **art and design qualifications** should complete their non-exam assessments – **no additional assessments are needed.**
- Students taking **Project qualifications** (EPQ) do not take exams in this subject. Project qualifications use non-exam assessment only. **Teachers do not, therefore, need to carry**

**out any additional assessment of their Project students to collect evidence in case exams are cancelled.** They should encourage and support students to complete their Project assessments as usual.

*Access Arrangements & Special Consideration*

- The same access arrangements that will be made for exams in the summer should, where possible, be applied to the assessments.
- **Students must inform their Head of Year before, or immediately after, any assessment if there were any events or circumstances outside of their control that might have adversely affected their performance in that assessment.**