



# Horsforth School

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Headteacher: Dr P C Bell

Our Ref: PCB/ZMC

7<sup>th</sup> October 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

## EXAMS UPDATE

The Government has stated that there is to be a return to full examinations this year after two years of Centre Assessed Grades.

On Thursday, the Department for Education and Ofqual published a number of documents setting out plans for GCSEs, A levels and vocational and technical qualifications next year. These include the following:

- A '[decisions document](#)' setting out what changes will be put in place for GCSEs, AS and A levels in 2022, following the recent DfE/Ofqual consultation on this.
- An [article](#) by new Chief Regulator Dr Jo Saxton, explaining Ofqual's approach to grading next year, and a [blog](#) setting this out for students.
- A [consultation](#) on the contingency arrangements for GCSEs, AS and A levels.
- [Guidance](#) on the contingency arrangements for vocational and technical qualifications

I have shared some of this information with students via email but also wanted to share with parents and carers. The key points from these documents are below:

## Adaptations

- There will be optional topics and content in GCSE English literature, history, ancient history and geography.
- If necessary, centres 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.
- Centres 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.

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- 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.

## 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**. VTQs used to progress in a similar way will be issued on or before the same days, and other VTQ results will continue to be issued throughout the year.

## 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. <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/contingency-arrangements-gcse-as-a-level-project-and-aea>

This has been a really difficult time for our students and we are committed that we get the best for them whatever assessments they sit, please rest assured we are now working on how we adapt to this in each subject area to best support our students and will update you if there are any further changes.

Year 11 and 13 will still take their mock exams prior to half term and we will use the results of these mock exams to identify areas of strength and weakness and to support students with bespoke interventions throughout the year and in the lead up to the summer exams.

If you have any questions or concerns please do contact me via the [info@horsforthschool.org](mailto:info@horsforthschool.org) email address marked FAO Mrs Comiskey.

Yours Faithfully

Mrs Z Comiskey

Deputy Headteacher (Curriculum and Progress)

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