



Summer assessment update

Dear Parents and Carers,

The arrival of pupils on the school site has breathed much welcomed life back into our school. Children in Years 10, 11, 12 and 13 have our undivided attention as we support them over the final period of face-to-face teaching before they receive their provisional grades from teachers in June.

In this letter, I will provide:

1. Updates from Qualifications Wales and the WJEC, including guidance on grading.
Please excuse the high level of detail in this letter. I have presented the information in the form of frequently asked questions so you can skip to areas of particular interest.
2. A link to a live webinar at which you can ask questions about the summer assessment process.

Reminder of the context

As you know, the Minister has confirmed the following:

- Learners undertaking GCSE, AS and A levels approved by Qualifications Wales will have their qualifications awarded through a Centre-Determined Grade model. This means that their grades will be determined by their school based on an assessment of the learner's work.
- Deadlines and controls for Non-examination assessment (NEA) have been removed, however centres are encouraged to undertake some NEA to build pupils' learning and skills.
- WJEC will support centres to develop and deliver internal quality assurance processes.

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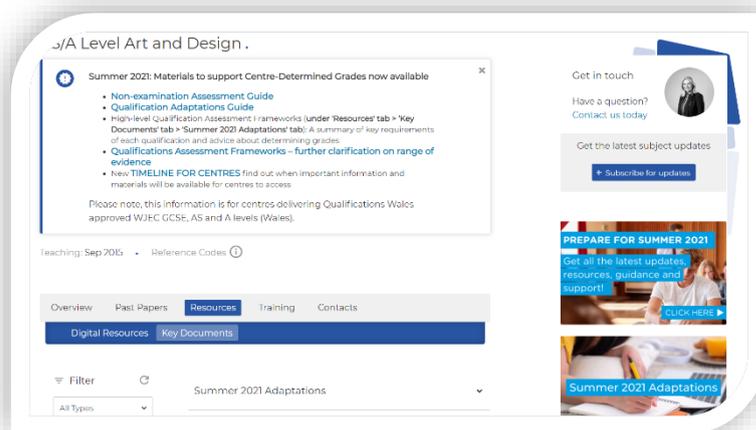
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Updates from Qualifications Wales and the WJEC examination board – Frequently Asked Questions

Where can I find information on each of my child's qualifications?

On every subject page on the WJEC website (under 'Key Documents') you can access 'High-level Qualification Assessment Frameworks' which summarises the key requirements of each qualification and advice given to teachers on determining grades.



<https://www.wjec.co.uk/qualifications/>

What range of evidence will be used by teachers when determining grades?

Assessment evidence can be generated from a range of activities which could include:

- WJEC past papers (adapted and including oral and practical assessments where appropriate)
- Examinations completed or any mock exams taken
- NEA - Non-Examined Assessment. For example controlled assessments, coursework etc. This may include incomplete NEA
- Other assessed work.

The WJEC assessment frameworks available to teachers outline what the WJEC consider to be the key requirements for learners to be able to progress. These are described in terms of what learners **should** cover rather than what they **must** cover for summer 2021.

WJEC recognise that the disruption to teaching and learning will have impacted different learners in different ways, but that overall a significant amount of face-to-face teaching and learning has been lost in 2020-2021. Therefore, teachers have been given flexibility to use a wide range of evidence when determining grades to ensure your child is not disadvantaged.

What if my child cannot complete their NEA because of Covid 19 restrictions?

Current restrictions may hamper learners' ability to complete all aspects of their NEA (for example they may have restricted or no access to specialist equipment, facilities, and

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software). Due to such restrictions, incomplete work, or alternative evidence demonstrating learners' knowledge, understanding and application of skills in the relevant aspects of the qualification specification, irrespective of the form the NEA is presented, can be used as evidence. Your child's teacher will advise your child on the best way forward in these circumstances. As with past papers, if your child's teacher adapts WJEC's published or previously published NEA tasks, they will need to adapt the accompanying mark scheme and notional grade boundaries to account for the changes in content and, where appropriate, the standard.

What guidance has the WJEC provided about the conditions for completing assessments?

The assessment arrangements in place this year rightly afford teachers and learners greater flexibility than in a standard series. However, centres must take the conditions under which assessments have been taken into account when making their final grading judgements. To ensure that no learner is advantaged or disadvantaged, centres, when setting summative assessment activities, must consider:

- supervision (direct/indirect and face-to-face/remote)
- duration of each task (reflective of the duration of related tasks in a standard series)
- feedback provided to the learner whilst undertaking the assessment
- opportunities to re-draft work
- access arrangements provided to learners who have been approved to receive such arrangements.

Do past papers have to be completed in one sitting?

If centres are using WJEC's assessment materials, or a centre-devised assessment similar in structure to their assessment materials, to generate evidence of learning, there is no requirement for such assessments to take place in one session as an 'examination'. Your child's teacher can divide the assessment into sections to suit the programme of learning. For example, if in a standard two-hour examination, your child would normally complete three essays, then it would be feasible to set them each of the three essays to complete in separate 40 minute sessions, once they had completed the learning for each element of the unit. If your child has approved access arrangements, they would be given their additional extra time to complete the assessment tasks. This is to ensure fairness for all learners.

Are family and friends allowed to help my child with the assessments?

To ensure fairness for all learners, teachers must be confident that any work completed remotely by your child is authentic and is their own unaided work. WJEC strongly advise us to inform your child that any work they produce that will be used as evidence to determine their final grade must be their own work, and if that is not the case and remains undeclared, it would constitute malpractice. Where a learner has received assistance, this must be acknowledged

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so that centres can award accurate and fair grades. Additionally, if a learner has had access to additional resource material, has been given a lengthy period to produce the evidence, has been given the opportunity to re-draft work based on feedback provided by the teacher, or has only been assessed on a very narrow aspect of the content, this must be taken into account when weighting the evidence and in awarding the overall grade.

How does the WJEC suggest we check that your child's work is their own?

WJEC advise that regular checks are undertaken to authenticate work not completed under the direct supervision by the teacher. This could be achieved by:

- conducting a question and answer session with your child to discuss aspects of their responses
- online video conferencing to observe working and discussing progress with the learner
- comparing your child's performance at home with work completed within the classroom
- setting specific timescales for the work to be started and finished, and keeping records of when the work was produced
- reminding your child of the risks of getting help at home from family members which could constitute over-assistance and might lead to a malpractice investigation.

Can old and online work be used when determining my child's grade?

If your child has produced a valid and reliable assessment which is an accurate reflection of the standard at which they are working, prior to the Minister's announcement in January regarding the awarding of qualifications this summer, such work **can** be used by the teacher in determining the final grade.

What approach are teachers taking to grading my child's work?

To determine a grade, teachers will make a holistic judgement based on the evidence they have of the learner's performance in the subject. There are different factors to consider when making their judgement. For example, they may go through the following stages when determining a grade:

Consider what they have taught – Teachers will consider the extent to which they have been able to teach the content of the adapted specification to this cohort of learners, with reference to the key requirements for progression as outlined in the specific Qualification Assessment Framework. The evidence used to make their judgement will only include assessment of content that has been taught.

Collect the evidence - Assessment evidence can come from a range of activities which could include: WJEC past papers (adapted as appropriate); mock exams; other past papers provided by WJEC; NEA (including incomplete NEA); other assessed work. The number of pieces and type of evidence required to support judgements is not prescribed. Ideally, the evidence used will be consistent across the class or cohort, but in some cases evidence for individual learners

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may vary, depending on specific or extenuating circumstances.

Evaluate the quality of the evidence - When considering how suitable the evidence is in determining the grade teacher will consider factors such as:

- coverage of assessment objectives and content
- authenticity: how confident are they that it is your child's own work?
- level of control: was the assessment taken in timed conditions without access to additional resources; was there an opportunity for redrafting; was it supervised?
- marking: what internal standardisation processes have been applied to ensure a consistent marking standard?
- grading: is there a notional grade boundary provided for the assessment(s) which indicates the learner's attainment standard?
- the context in which each piece of evidence was completed: as an informal or more formal assessment; as a piece of formative or summative assessment. Evidence teacher's believe is an authentic representation of your child's performance will give them confidence in their overall holistic judgement.

Consider extenuating circumstances – Where possible, reasonable adjustments for disabled learners and access arrangements will be in place when evidence is generated. Special consideration requests, in the event that a learner is unable to take an assessment or suffers a traumatic event that might affect their performance, will not apply this summer because learners will not be taking their exams. However, where illness might have temporarily affected performance, for example in mock exams, teachers should bear that in mind when making their judgements. Please let us know if this applies to your child.

Assign a grade - Grades should be based on a holistic judgement of the evidence of your child's performance on the subject content they have been taught. Your child will not have to demonstrate all aspects of the grade descriptor to receive that grade. Teachers will apply their professional judgement to decide whether the knowledge and skills demonstrated meet the usual standard expected for the grade.

Will my child's grade be based on their target or predicted grade?

No. WJEC have been very clear with schools that grading is based on **demonstrated attainment, not potential**. The grade awarded must be based on your child's performance in the evidence teachers have collected. If all the collated evidence suggests your child is performing consistently at a grade B, a grade B should be awarded; there would be no reason to consider awarding that learner a grade A or A*. Information held in tracking systems that provide target or predicted grades based on assessment inputs and data modelling can be used to **support** grading decisions, but it is essential that the final grade is derived solely based on performances produced by your child, i.e. the evidence used to determine the grade

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to input to the system, and not a predicted trajectory or a target grade.

How will the school ensure each teachers' grading is objective?

Guidance on what equality law means to centres and training on avoiding unconscious bias will be made available to facilitate more objective judgements. At the end of May, teachers will record the Centre Determined Grade for your child, along with a clear and unambiguous rationale as to how the evidence selected led to the final grading judgement.

How much of the course does my child need to cover in their evidence for each subject?

The advice is that all assessment objectives are covered as fully as possible and to ensure that there is sufficient coverage of the breadth of specification requirements but with some aspects covered in greater depth than others (evidence of high achievement in a narrow aspect of the specification will not, on its own, justify a high grade). The aim is to have sufficient evidence of each learner's knowledge, skills and understanding to be able to determine the appropriate grade.

Are there any qualifications delivered in Llanfyllin that will not have Centre Determined Grades (CDGs)?

Some of our students follow courses that are regulated by Ofqual (England) rather than Qualification Wales (see below). A separate grade system is being followed for these qualifications. Pupils will not receive their grades for these courses by June as they will for courses regulated by Qualifications Wales.

- OCR ICT
- BTECs
- WJEC Entry Level
- LIBF qualifications

How are grades being awarded for vocational qualifications (VQs)?

The UK Government has outlined its plan for how students doing vocational qualifications will receive their grades this summer. You can read the Education Secretary's full statement here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/teacher-assessed-grades-for-students>

My child would be entitled to modified past papers in a normal exam. Do they still receive modified papers?

To ensure accessibility for learners who have approved access arrangements and require reasonable adjustments to access assessment materials, WJEC have developed a comprehensive range of modified past papers, such as large print, braille etc. The full list of modified past papers that will be available for the summer 2021 series on WJEC's secure

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website (from the week commencing 15 March) is now available to view.

Different teachers are assessing my child in different ways. Should I be worried about this apparent inconsistency?

No. Evidence and assessment approaches may vary from one child to another within and between subjects. Your child's teachers will select an assessment approach and evidence in line with the guidance from the exam board. They want your child to perform as well as possible so, where applicable, will select the past papers or assessments most appropriate to the content your child has studied. In all cases, when deciding upon the assessment approach, teachers will have carefully considered how to ensure your child can demonstrate their full potential.

Is there still going to be an opportunity for my child to appeal their grade?

Yes. Qualifications Wales has confirmed that there will be a three-stage appeals process:

Stage 1 – By 25th of June Schools and colleges will share provisional centre determined grades with their learners. Your child can ask us to review provisional grades and/or check for any errors before they are submitted to WJEC. They must clearly outline the grounds for their request for a centre review. We must investigate and provide your child with a response including the reason for our decision to uphold or not to uphold their case.

A template form for learners to request a review and for the school to record their decision will be provided by WJEC with the detailed guidance. The Centre Determined Grade is provisional until qualification grades are issued by WJEC on results days.

Stage 2 – After results day in August, a learner can appeal to WJEC that the grade judgement that their school has made is unreasonable and/or a procedural error has been made.

Stage 3 - Following completion of the Stage 2 appeal, learners can request an Exam Procedures Review Service (EPRS) review from Qualifications Wales to check whether WJEC has followed their procedures correctly.

Final qualification grades will not be issued to learners until the results days, which are 10 August for AS and A levels and 12 August for GCSEs.

What resources has the WJEC made available to schools to help with the final weeks of teaching?

The WJEC have created a wealth of digital resources, tools and materials to support teachers in the delivery of their qualifications. They've been developed to enhance learning, stimulate classroom discussion, and encourage student engagement. Their digital resources are

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available for free to teachers and students, aiding each stage of the learning process.

You can access this package of free resources: <https://www.wjec.co.uk/home/assessments-2021-get-the-support-you-need/free-teaching-and-learning-tools-and-resources/>

Where can I access information about the changes made to the content of courses?

You can access this information here: <https://www.wjec.co.uk/home/assessments-2021-get-the-support-you-need/summer-2021-changes-to-assessments/>

Timeline so far....

Date	Event teachers	Key: FAO parents FAO
W/C 22 nd March	Subject specific training materials	
19 th -25 th March	Centres submit Assessment and Internal QA policies to WJEC	
22 nd March	Training: Unconscious bias and objectivity	
24 th March - 6pm	Parents/Student Information Live Event from the Senior Leadership Team (see link below)	
12 th April	WJEC provides feedback to centres on their policies	
19 th April	Training: Making final judgements	
22 nd April	Entries amendment window deadline	
W/C 26 th April	Final appeals process information	
26 th April	Training: Good practice in making final grading decisions and QA	
5 th May	Training: Live Q&A sessions	
17 th May	Training: Submitting CDGs	
By June 25 th	Pupils receive their Provisional CDGs	
14 th June – 2 nd July	Submission window for CDGs	
21 st June – 12 th July	WJEC QA learner decision records and overall outcomes	
13 th – 16 th July	WJEC discusses any issues arising from the QA with centres	
10 th August	AS and A level Results Day	
10 th August – 7 th September	AS and A level appeals window	
12 th August	GCSE Results Day	
24 th August – 21 st September*	GCSE appeals window	

*Provisional date

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Live Event Information Webinar - Wednesday 24th March at 6pm

This week, we will be hosting a live webinar for pupils and parents. The webinar can be accessed via the link below:

<http://tiny.cc/yl-join-live>

If you cannot make the meeting, you are welcome to contact us directly at the school.

We will also be hosting assemblies for students. Please encourage your child to attend via their year group Team.

And finally...

We continue to regularly receive additional information on the summer assessment series from Welsh Government, the WJEC and Qualifications Wales. Our summer assessment timeline is a 'live' document. Indeed, we are expecting further guidance soon on: the review and appeals process; centre to centre discussions; internal and external quality assurance; decision making records; and version three of the overarching assessment guidance. These updates will require further changes to our timeline.

While we may not be in a position to answer all your questions now, rest assured that we will continue to share updated information as soon as possible.

In the meantime, please can I encourage you to reinforce our message to your child that the next **eight school weeks** presents them with a **wonderful opportunity** to produce some outstanding work. We appreciate that the challenge may feel daunting, but please be assured that we are supporting your child every step of the way.

Yours sincerely,

Dewi Owen
Head teacher

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