

How GCSE, AS and A Level Qualifications Will Be Awarded in Summer 2021

A Student Guide



We know that it has been a difficult time for students over the past year, with disruption to learning and exam cancellations. This guide provides you with a summary of the next steps and details about how you'll receive a grade for each of your subjects this year.



Why the change?

On 6 January 2021, the Minister of Education, Peter Weir MLA, cancelled all CCEA GCSE, AS and A2 examinations scheduled for Summer 2021. Instead, the approach to awarding your grades in Summer 2021 will be based on your teachers' professional judgements, with moderation. These will be known as **Centre Determined Grades**.



Who will receive a grade?

GCSE students, in Year 12 or above, and AS and A level students entered for CCEA qualifications in 2021 will be issued with a grade.

Students in Year 11 or below may **not** be entered for or awarded GCSE qualifications in 2021. They must continue to study their GCSE subjects into Year 12.

There are two exceptions:

- **GCSE Irish** students who may progress to GCSE Gaeilge or require GCSE Irish for progression to other courses delivered in Irish; and/or
- **GCSE Mathematics** students who will be entering **GCSE Further Mathematics** in 2022. (*GCSE Mathematics is required for progression to GCSE Further Mathematics.*)



What is a Centre Determined Grade?

Your teachers will look for evidence of the work you have completed for each of your subjects, carry out an assessment and give you an appropriate grade. This will apply to all subjects at GCSE, AS and A level.

An algorithm will **not** be used.



How will I get a Centre Determined Grade?

Your school will have ensured that you have sufficient knowledge of your subject content to be awarded a grade. CCEA has provided guidance to your school that will enable school staff to develop their approach to assessment and quality assurance. They will then choose the appropriate evidence to determine your grade.

We know that students have experienced disruption to teaching and learning due to the pandemic. Lost teaching and learning time is being addressed by your school having the flexibility to choose what you will be assessed on.



What evidence can be used?

You will only be assessed on what you have been taught, over the past two years, either in a classroom setting or during home learning.

Your teacher can select a range of evidence, which may include:

- coursework that you have completed;
- previous class exams that you have already taken;
- CCEA's optional assessment resources; and/or
- other work that you carried out in class or at home.

Your school will let you know what evidence is being used to determine your grade.

CCEA's guidance is that no more than three pieces of evidence should be used to determine your grade. However, schools have the option to select more evidence if they wish.

Your school's Centre Determined Grades policy will set out what evidence will be used to determine your grade. If you have a question about the evidence that will be used, please ask your teacher.



Will grades be awarded fairly across schools?

Quality assurance is embedded throughout the alternative awarding arrangements. Significant support, guidance and training are being provided to strengthen your teachers' understanding of how to make consistent, fair and accurate assessment judgements.

The process being followed by your school to determine your grade is flexible to take account of each school's differing circumstances, experienced throughout COVID-19.

CCEA awarding organisation and CCEA Regulation continue to engage frequently with our counterparts in the rest of the UK. This is to ensure comparability in awarding and assessment and that no student from Northern Ireland will be at a disadvantage.



I am a private candidate; what should I do?

You should continue to work with the school, college or exam centre you have entered with, to ensure they have sufficient evidence to determine your grade.

Further information on the process and evidence required, is available in the [CCEA Information Regarding Private Candidates and Summer 2021 Alternative Awarding Arrangements](#)



When will I get my results?

CCEA AS and A level results will be released on 10 August 2021, followed by the release of CCEA GCSE results on 12 August 2021.

The full range of grades, including the A* grade at GCSE and A level, will continue to be awarded this year. (Please note that the highest grade available at AS level is the A grade.)



Will I be able to appeal my grade?

CCEA will be working with other awarding organisations over the coming months to make sure that a consistent appeals process is put in place and will provide more detailed guidance in due course. This will be well in advance of the issue of results. Centres will be required to develop their own written appeals process.



What should I do now?

You should keep on studying. Your teachers will be able to give you guidance on what you need to learn and how you will be assessed.



Supporting Our Learners' Health and Wellbeing

Our learners' wellbeing will always be important to us. We understand the challenges you're facing now, and we want to support you as much as we can.

We encourage you to communicate, remotely and safely, with your family, friends and teachers, in line with Public Health Agency guidance.

The dedicated Wellbeing Hub on our website includes tips and advice that our learners, along with their parents and teachers, can use to stay healthy and mindful at this time.

You'll also find helpful and relevant learning activities on the Wellbeing Hub, including CCEA resources, and links to other organisations that support the objectives of the curriculum. Find out more at www.ccea.org.uk/learning-resources/wellbeing-hub

For more information on Summer 2021 Awarding, including FAQs and a dedicated Student Area, visit www.ccea.org.uk/summer-2021

Key facts for Summer 2021 alternative awarding process

- 1 There are no public examinations
- 2 Teachers will use their professional judgement to decide grades.
(We are supporting this work with training, support materials and guidance)
- 3 Evidence can take multiple forms e.g. coursework, previous class assessment, CCEA's **optional** assessment resources and/or classwork
- 4 The CCEA assessment resources are **optional** *(These will be marked by teachers)*
- 5 Students will only be **assessed** on what they have **been taught**
- 6 Centre Determined Grades will be based on a student's work
- 7 Work **completed at home** can contribute to the evidence
- 8 We suggest that no more than 3 pieces of evidence are required
(Schools have the option to select more evidence if they wish)
- 9 Schools will let students know what evidence is being used
- 10 The **full range of grades**, including A*, will continue to be awarded for GCSE and A level
- 11 No algorithm will be used to generate grades
- 12 There is **flexibility** for schools as everyone will have had a different learning experience