

CAS Assessment working group response to Consultation on how GCSE, AS and A level grades should be awarded in summer 2021 [Ofqual link](#)

It was agreed that the Assessment working group would not submit a response to the Ofqual consultation. Many of us will voice through the consultation process some of the points raised in our discussions.

We have forwarded this to the [School Curriculum and Assessment Committee](#) (SCAC) who will be communicating with Ofqual.

Arising from the conversations we highlighted the following points about the current situation:

1. Whilst we welcome having a paper available for schools to use in assessment we feel that there is scope for schools to be pressured into using this paper.
2. Any paper used must be used at the discretion of the teaching practitioner and results from this paper should not be submitted to the exam board. This is due to a range of factors such as students not having completed all units so not sitting a full paper, any paper sat at home without school supervision may produce a result that far exceeded or underperformed the students normal standard could be down to a range of factors so cannot be taken in isolation.
3. If exams are used, AOs don't need to receive the results. The teachers who choose to use the exam will use it to inform their own professional judgement but this professional judgement needs to be trusted.
4. The suggestion that schools perform the appeals process will lead to a significantly increased workload for schools and unless extra funding is forthcoming would be untenable. There is also an issue with affluent parents threatening to sue schools over results leading to inequality for some students without this recourse.
5. We cannot reduce the grade of a child who has not completed all the content of a course through no fault of their own. If they display a grade 9 in the work provided then we have to assume they are a grade 9 student. We would be less certain of their grade with less evidence but we cannot penalise a student for lack of evidence. We must judge them on the evidence available.
6. The timeline of the process must be realistic. If papers are to be provided for teachers to use, these must be sufficiently in advance of the grades being submitted. Care which will be needed over the very manual process of collating marks, uploading to exam boards portals, checking etc. The current timeline which is suggested as likely – late May, early June exams leading to mid-June deadlines gives very little time for review and checking to make this process robust.
7. Current proposals are liable to lead to significant stress and work for both teachers and students. With this in mind. Whatever solution is used needs to have the increased workload mitigated as part of the solution.

Computing Specific.

For the GCSE computing specifically, if schools have opted to not cover some particular topics their children could be advantaged. We were willing to accept this as there is not going to be any ideal solution at this time.

Teachers are uncertain whether the current Y11 should still have to evidence the 20 hours programming work. The NEA tasks would provide good evidence for a students grade but it is possible some may not have completed it yet. We wish to seek some clarity from the AO's on this & ask them to issue a clear statement either way.

AO assess sample portfolios of work

It was suggested that if there was any discussion then a system where schools submit a sample annotated examples of evidence of working level to boards to be moderated as per old style coursework would work better.

Teachers create ran orders of learners

This rationale is based on the principles of Assessment without Levels and an **algorithm**. Teachers are trusted to make a judgement about how well their learners are doing relative to each other. The examination grade is awarded on the basis of the assumption that the performance is like the performance profiles of previous years' classes (if the data is available to the AO) and the previous years' performance profiles of the school.

The teacher produces a rank order based on as much data as they, the teachers of the school, can muster. Teachers might use ad hoc or informal tests etc, to determine the rank. There is no appeal against the rank as it is a professional judgement of the teacher.

The rest is an AO algorithm!

The AO takes the rank and, using the profiles of the school's previous years' submissions in the subject (if available and/or the school's overall profile, assigns to each candidate a mark.

The AOs marks for each subject is moderated by Ofqual to ensure the 2021 cohort profile matches the previous years' profiles and issues any adjustments to the AOs.

Ofqual sets the grade boundaries.

The AO uses the modified mark and the grade boundaries to make the award.