

# Summer Awarding Grades (2021) – Examinations Update

## Background and Useful Information

### General Questions - Examinations & Grading of Qualifications

#### **Q: Why did the summer 2021 exams need to be cancelled?**

**A:** As a result of the disruption to the education of students caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, the government considered that exams cannot be held in summer 2021 in a way which is, and which is perceived to be, fair.

In reaching this decision the government acknowledged that many schools are providing high-quality remote learning but there will be an impact on the coverage of the curriculum and students' exam preparation. This impact will vary between regions, schools within a region and students.

#### **Q: Which qualifications are impacted?**

**A:** The following qualifications regulated by Ofqual and offered by AQA, OCR, Pearson, WJEC Eduqas, ASDAN and City & Guilds.

- GCSEs (including short course GCSEs)
- AS and A levels

Further information can be found in the links below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/consultation-on-how-gcse-as-and-a-level-grades-should-be-awarded-in-summer-2021>

#### **Q: How the assessment grade system will work?**

**A:** The government set out its policy that centres will be submitting students' grades in a letter February 2021 ([Direction from the Secretary of State for Education to Ofqual's Chief Regulator](#)). JCQ and the awarding organisations have been working together to prepare guidance and information to support the provision of grades to students this summer by centres.

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In developing this guidance, they have:

- taken into consideration the needs of centres, students and teachers;
- ensured compliance with Ofqual regulations and requirements; and
- tried to minimise administrative burden for centres.

**Q: Where can I find this guidance on the arrangements for summer 2021 exams?**

**A:** All information relating to the guidance we have followed can be found at <https://www.jcq.org.uk/summer-2021-arrangements/>

### **Davenant Specific Q&A's On Summer Examinations 2021**

**Q: What are the Cohort Characteristics of Year 13?**

**A:** Year 13 consists of 170 students. (Male: 83, Female: 87) There are 5 students listed as disadvantaged. 6 students, are listed as English as an additional Language. There are 12 students in need of SEN Support. 106 students of the cohort are White British, there are 23 other ethnic groupings, which the remaining students fall into.

**Q: What are the Cohort Characteristics of Year 11?**

**A:** Year 11 consists of 171 students. (Male: 90, Female: 81) There are 20 students listed as disadvantaged. 9 students, are listed as English as an additional Language. There are 38 students in need of SEN Support. 116 students of the cohort are White British; there are 15 other ethnic groupings, which the remaining students fall into.

### **How will the students be graded this summer?**

Teachers will decide on a Teacher Assessed Grade (TAG) that will assess the standard at which a student is performing in the absence of the usual exams sat by students.

TAGs will apply to all GCSEs, A Levels and Vocational courses.

**Q: What is the definition of a Teacher Assessment Grade?**

**A:** Known as a CAG at Davenant this is the grade that the student has been awarded. Teachers have decided on a Teacher Assessed Grade that will assess the standard at which a student is performing in the absence of the usual exams sat by students. The school has created a Centre Policy which outlines our approach and internal quality assurance – this document is a JCQ requirement.

**Q: What is the Centre Policy?**

**A:** JCQ have released a guide for students and parents/carers – please see link below for this useful document:

<https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/JCQ-Guidance-for-Students-and-Parents-on-Summer-2021.pdf>

You can find our Centre Policy at <https://www.davenantschool.co.uk/site/data/files/cags-documents/9A1657C8EF1465B5605258BE1AC9FEA3.pdf>

**Q: Did every subject use the same sources of evidence, to produce the CAG?**

**A:** No, Ofqual guidance to schools was that teachers should be drawing on a range of evidence. The information relating to the evidence used to produce the CAG can be found in the CAGs Booklets on our website under **EXAMS 2021**

<https://www.davenantschool.co.uk/page/?title=Examinations+and+Revision&pid=113>

**Q: Does it make a difference to the grade, if my child is entered for the Higher or Foundation Tier qualification?**

**A:** A single grade, appropriate to the tier, will be produced for all candidates for each qualification, whether they are entered for Foundation or Higher tier.

**Q: My child has additional needs, were these needs taken into consideration when calculating the CAGs?**

**A:** Yes, any access arrangements that would have been in place for this summer's exams have been accounted for. Teachers have completed the task of determining the CAGs with the utmost diligence. To ensure the most accurate results possible, and so far as possible, that students are not advantaged or disadvantaged based on their socioeconomic background or particular protected characteristics.

**Q: Was special consideration be applied this year to any assessments undertaken as part of the CAGs process?**

As our some of our assessment points have been exam based we applied special consideration to a student's scores where appropriate. Please see EXAMS 2021 section for more details:

<https://www.davenantschool.co.uk/page/?title=Examinations+and+Revision&pid=113>

In addition, parents were communicated to and it was explained that in the event of serious illness or personal circumstances potentially impacting the student's performance during the Assessment Point period or in a particular assessment parents were to contact us for guidance.

**Q: When was the CAG submitted to the Exams Boards?**

**A:** All grades were uploaded by 18<sup>th</sup> June 2021

**Q: How did this work, and how can I be sure the information Davenant submitted for my child, was accurate?**

**A:** We have used our SIMS system, which is the school's main **Management Information System**, to collate the data from each teacher. The data has then been through a series of checking processes at varying levels of seniority within the school and signed off. The same data has been imported into the various performance systems to check it against previous years. We have finalised this extensive internal quality assurance process for data, before submitting it to the various different Exam Centres. Each Exam board has adopted a different approach to receiving the school's data. Exam boards are independent of each other and have differing volumes of entries, for which they are required to collect. This of course means systems for collecting this data, have been developed independently, and via a method each board believes facilitates the most effective administration of the data, each board is expecting to receive. All CAG's data, submitted by Davenant to the relevant Exams boards, has followed a robust quality assurance process and has been authorised by the Head Teacher, who is responsible for checking and declaring, that the results submitted were as free from bias as possible.

To underpin this extraordinary exam season, and in light of the changes to the submission of Exam Grades 2021, we have provided training for our staff (including Unconscious Bias Training) and adjusted our policies (including the Exams Policy & Conflict of Interest Policy which can be found on our website).

<https://www.davenantschool.co.uk/page/?title=Policies&pid=36> )

**Q: Will the student know their TAG before Results Day?**

**No.** Teachers cannot discuss the final CAG grades with parents/carers or students. Disclosure of the grades prior to results day would constitute Exam Malpractice

**Q: Is any external body checking the grades?**

**A:** Yes. The Quality Assurance system in place is robust and relies on the school completing in-depth training and extensive paperwork. There were three stages to the external quality assurance conducted by exam boards:

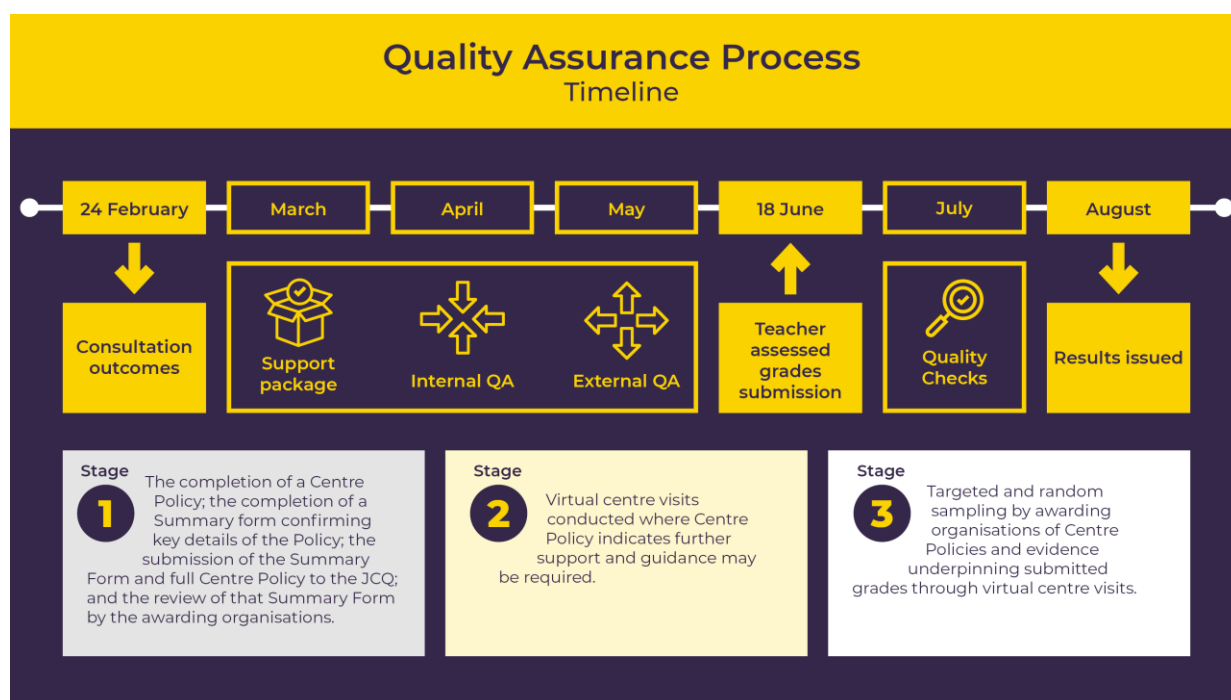
**Stage 1** – centre policy review – our centre policy was approved by the exam boards and outlined the process we have followed.

**Stage 2** – virtual centre visits - online visits from an exam board where there are concerns about the centre policy, which took place in May and June. This did not happen for Davenant as our Centre Policy was approved by the Exam Boards without the need for this stage.

**Stage 3** – post submission sampling – a random and a risk-based sampling of subject-level evidence. We were NOT called for Risk-based sampling and we are now pleased to report that we were successfully Quality Assured through the Random Sampling process.

See below for the JCQ timeline on the Quality Assurance Process

## JCQ Quality Assurance Process



### Q: When will results for A Levels and GCSE's be released?

A: Results will be released on 10<sup>th</sup> August 2021 for AS & A Level and 12<sup>th</sup> August for GCSEs.

### Q: Can students appeal against their original centre assessment grades?

A: Dissatisfaction with grades issued by exam boards does not constitute grounds for appeal and nor does a speculative appeal, however students will be able to appeal their grades see link below for more details.

<https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/JCQ-Guidance-for-Students-and-Parents-on-Summer-2021.pdf>

### Q: Can I sit my exams in the autumn, if I feel my grade does not reflect my true ability?

A: Yes. Please see link below

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/ofqual-confirms-autumn-assessment-arrangements>

Please note that we have been informed that the deadlines for entries of the exams for autumn 2021 are as follows:

**AS & Alevel** – 8<sup>th</sup> September 2021

**GCSE** – 4<sup>th</sup> October 2021

### General Information on Freedom of Information Requests

Q: How to access information from a public body?

A: Link to ICO website: <https://ico.org.uk/your-data-matters/official-information/>

Q: Where can I find further guidance on Freedom of Information requests?

A: For a guide to freedom of information, please see link provided: <https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-freedom-of-information/>

Q: What is the Freedom of Information Act 2000

A: Please see link provided for: The Freedom of Information Act (2000) - [Link](#)

### **General Information from GOV.UK Regarding Summer 2021 Examinations**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/direction-issued-to-ofqual>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/simon-lebus-responds-to-the-secretary-of-states-direction-of-23-february-2021>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/information-for-centres-about-making-objective-judgements>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/how-qualifications-will-be-awarded-in-2021>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/student-guide-to-awarding-summer-2021>

<https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/JCQ-Guidance-on-the-Determination-of-Grades-for-A-AS-Levels-and-GCSEs-Summer-2021.pdf>

<https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/JCQ-Guidance-for-Students-and-Parents-on-Summer-2021.pdf>

<https://www.jcq.org.uk/summer-2021-arrangements/>