

Our Ref: PJS/LRS

28 September 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

We are writing to you today with an update on Ofqual's consultation regarding changes to the contents of GCSE exams in the Summer of 2021.

While Ofqual has now made final decisions on which content has been amended in which subjects, we are still awaiting further clarification from exam boards. Subject leaders have closely followed Ofqual's consultation and have already responded in their curriculum plans.

Changes will either result in choice or removal of content or exam questions, aiming to reduce student anxiety and increase teaching time. Please be assured that school leaders, heads of department and teachers are fully aware of these changes and have already been considering their implications in their planning. Where choices have been granted, heads of departments will make those decisions, based on their knowledge of which options are most suitable for our students, closely supported by school leaders and senior management.

Once exam boards have shared further details, we will be in a position to inform our students and parents beyond the outline below:

English Literature:

Students will study one Shakespeare play, plus a choice of two out of the following topics: poetry, 19th century novel or fiction/drama from the British Isles after 1914.

English language:

The spoken language element does not need to be recorded and one teacher as 'audience' is sufficient.

Science/ Combined Science:

Practical content can be delivered by demonstration only, thus removing the need for time-costly student practicals in lessons.

Modern Foreign Languages:

The spoken language element will be assessed less formally by teacher endorsement (awaiting clarification from exam boards).

Geography:

Removal of the requirement to conduct a field study and removal of exam questions which require a student to reference one's own field study.

History:

Centre level choice of removing one topic.

Music:

Requirement of only one performance and one composition, instead of two each.

Drama:

Only one practical performance of a script and a reduction of time allocated for devising a scripted performance.

Design & Technology:

Removal of the requirement to produce a full end product. It is sufficient to produce a prototype or mock up with greater focus on the design and development process.

Food Technology:

Removal of one entire course work requirement (research). Production of 2 dishes in 3 hours, instead of 3 dishes previously.

Physical Education:

Proposed reduction of assessed sports activities from three to two with choice between individual and team (awaiting confirmation from exam boards).

Art & Design:

Removal of the externally set task. Students are only assessed on their portfolios.

We are still awaiting further confirmation from exam boards on BTEC courses and will share new information once we have received this.

Below, you also find the link to Ofqual's outline of their decisions for further information.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/906173/Consultation_decisions_-_proposed_changes_to_the_assessment_of_GCSEs_AS_and_A_levels_in_2021.pdf

While we haven't received all final information yet, we hope you appreciate our attempt to share what we know so far with you. Please, be assured that departments and subject teachers have already implemented plans allowing our students to fully benefit from the changes, both in term of reducing exam pressure and gaining valuable teaching time.

Thank you for your understanding and support.

Kind regards.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P Jenkins', written in a cursive style.

Mr P Jenkins
Headteacher