



Examinations 2020

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. I think there could be a serious error with the grades that I have received. What can I do?

Just because you received a calculated grade that was not the grade you had expected does not mean there has been an error. The exam board calculate the grade based on the teacher assessment. However, if you identify an error, for example, not receiving a calculated grade for a qualification, you will need to let the school know. You will be able to appeal – through the school – if you believe the process this summer was not followed correctly in your case; and the school can appeal to the exam board if we believe something systemic has gone wrong in relation to your results. Speak to a member of the Senior Leadership Team on results day if you have a concern.

2. Can I appeal the grade I have been provided because I am not pleased with it?

Ofqual have determined that this will not be a reason for appeal. You can only appeal if you believe there has been a genuine administrative error as exemplified in FAQ1. Ofqual decided it would not be in the interests of students or the fairness of the arrangements overall. Any appeal would have to be undertaken by someone better placed than the student's teachers to judge their likely grade if exams had taken place – in the unique circumstances of this summer, Ofqual do not believe there is any such person. In addition, because of the role of the rank order in grading this year, such an appeal would have implications for other students in the cohort: if one student successfully appealed against their position in the rank order, it would have negative implications for other students who would, in turn, need to be given an opportunity to appeal.

3. I do not feel that my calculated grade reflects my ability. What can I do about it?

You have the opportunity to sit the examinations in the autumn series. If you have been successful in obtaining a place on your post-16 or post-18 course, we would advise not to resit. Please read the rest of these FAQs before you make that decision.

4. When will the autumn exams take place?

A Level and AS Level: 5 October to 23 October 2020
GCSE: 2 November to 23 November 2020

In addition, students who do not gain a Grade 4 in GCSE English and Maths in a 'normal' summer exam season would be allowed to resit the exams in November. There will be provision to allow for GCSEs in English Language and Maths to run in early 2021 for students who were eligible to take exams in these subjects in November, if there was sufficient demand.

5. Will all subjects be available?

Yes. Exams in the autumn series should be of the same number in each subject and in the same format as the summer 2020 exams would have been had they not been cancelled.

6. If I choose to exams in autumn, do I have to sit them all?

No. You can select the subject(s) that you wish to sit. However, you cannot opt to take only one paper within a subject. For example, Geography GCSE or Psychology A Level have three papers – you would have to sit all three. Bear this in mind if you did not complete all content for the whole course at A Level.

7. Will the autumn exams also take into account non-examined assessment (NEA) components that I completed?

This is something that students must consider carefully: the centre assessment grades (the grades sent to the exam boards by the school) would have taken the quality (or projected quality) of the NEA into account. Many students have a propensity to excel in NEA tasks, the centre assessment grade would have taken this into account. In most exams the autumn series will be based purely on exam performance, which could make gaining the grade a student wishes to obtain potentially harder without the NEA.

It is worth noting that Art and Design is based on 60% portfolio and 40% exam board task. In the autumn series, students will have to complete a new task (40%), which will be supervised at school and marked by the exam board.

8. Will A Level endorsements for A Level practical Science (Biology, Chemistry and Physics) and for spoken language in GCSE English Language be carried forward, as happens for students who are re-sitting in a normal year?

Yes, these will be carried over for the autumn series.

9. Will the normal review of marking and appeal arrangements apply to the autumn series?

Yes

10. Will I receive a new certificate for exams that I might take in the autumn series?

Exam boards will be required to issue to any student who requests one, a replacement certificate to show the higher of their summer and autumn grades. Exam boards could charge an additional fee for this.

11. Can anyone attempt the exams in the autumn series?

No. The exam boards will limit entry to the exams to students who had entered for the summer exams and to students who the exam board believes had intended to enter for those exams. Students who would normally be entitled to take GCSEs in English Language and Maths in November will also be able to take exams in those subjects.

12. Which grade will stand if I chose to attempt exams in the autumn series?

You would keep whichever grade is higher – ie, if your autumn grade was lower than the calculated grade, then you keep the calculated grade awarded in August.

13. What happens if I have left Oaklands and I am now at college and I want to resit?

Most post 16 providers will provide an opportunity to resit English and Maths at their centre. For students below a Grade 4 they will provide tuition. We would advise taking these subjects at the post-16 college when the time is right. Other qualifications will be available at Oaklands but tuition will not be provided.

14. Who pays for the exams in the autumn series?

There is likely to be a charge for the exams you choose to sit.

15. When do I have to confirm that I wish to be entered for exams in the autumn series?

The following are the final deadlines for schools to enter candidates:

<i>A Level and AS Level:</i>	<i>4 September 2020</i>
<i>GCSE (except English Language and Maths):</i>	<i>18 September 2020</i>
<i>GCSE (English Language and Maths):</i>	<i>4 October 2020</i>

It is likely that students will need to inform the school before these dates in order to allow sufficient time to process entries. The school will inform students and their parents/carers in advance of the cut-off dates.

16. Will the school help me prepare for the autumn exams?

We will guide students to materials that could help them prepare for the exam, but we will not be able to provide timetabled extra lessons. If you are a member of Oaklands Sixth Form College, we do offer support for English and Maths GCSE resits.

17. I think I can do better in the autumn series than my summer results – is this realistic?

This is difficult to say. Some students can surprise staff (and themselves!) on results day with grades higher than expected. Similarly, some students do not reach the grades predicted. The issue to contend with for the autumn series is that you will have not studied that subject (or subject content) for 8 or 9 months. As has already been mentioned, the school will not be in a position to offer teaching of uncovered content or revision sessions to prepare you. You have to gauge whether you think you could improve your grade on that basis. Moreover, many of you will have started new Level 3/ university courses, which will be time-consuming anyway, so you could find that you will not be able to allocate the necessary time to prepare for the autumn exams – or at least to give you a realistic chance of improvement.

18. I am concerned that the grades I have received (in August) will prevent me from entering Oaklands Sixth Form College, as they are below the entry requirements.

The school will use the higher of the two grades that you receive in August. You will have the grade calculated by the exam board, but if the centre assessment grade (the grade we recommended to the exam board) is higher, we shall use that. If that is still not at the level required, contact the Director of Sixth Form learning – [Mrs Ludlam](#). Please note that if you join Oaklands Sixth Form with less than a Grade 4 exam calculated grade in English or Maths you will be required to resit. This is a national requirement.

- 19. I am concerned that the grades I have received (in August) will prevent me from entering my 16-18 college (not Oaklands), as they are below the entry requirements.**

You would need to contact the further education provider directly. They will advise you whether you can access the course (and whether you will be allowed to continue on that course if the outcome of the autumn exams is still below the requisite grade). You might want to speak to [Mrs Ludlam](#) if you want to come to Oaklands Sixth Form College instead – we know you far better than any other college provider.

- 20. I am concerned that I have not obtained the grades required for the university offer – should I sit the exams in the autumn series?**

You will need to contact your first choice university on 13 August. In previous years, students are often accepted onto their chosen course even if they have achieved slightly lower grades than expected. It is predicted that many students could defer due to the COVID-19 situation, so there could be an excess of places in the 2020 entry. This could improve chances of students securing a place on their chosen course, without needing to sit the exams in the autumn. [Mrs Ludlam](#) and members of the Sixth Form team will be able to provide further advice. It is also worth considering that universities might expect you to defer until the following autumn if you wish to take exams in the autumn series. Few universities offer a January start, though that is on offer for some courses and may present a solution if you wish to resit.

**If you have any further questions, please contact Mr Bamford,
who is responsible for exams at the school**

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