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Correspondence

Letter to students

Updated 9 December 2022

Applies to England

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Information for students and parents and/or carers

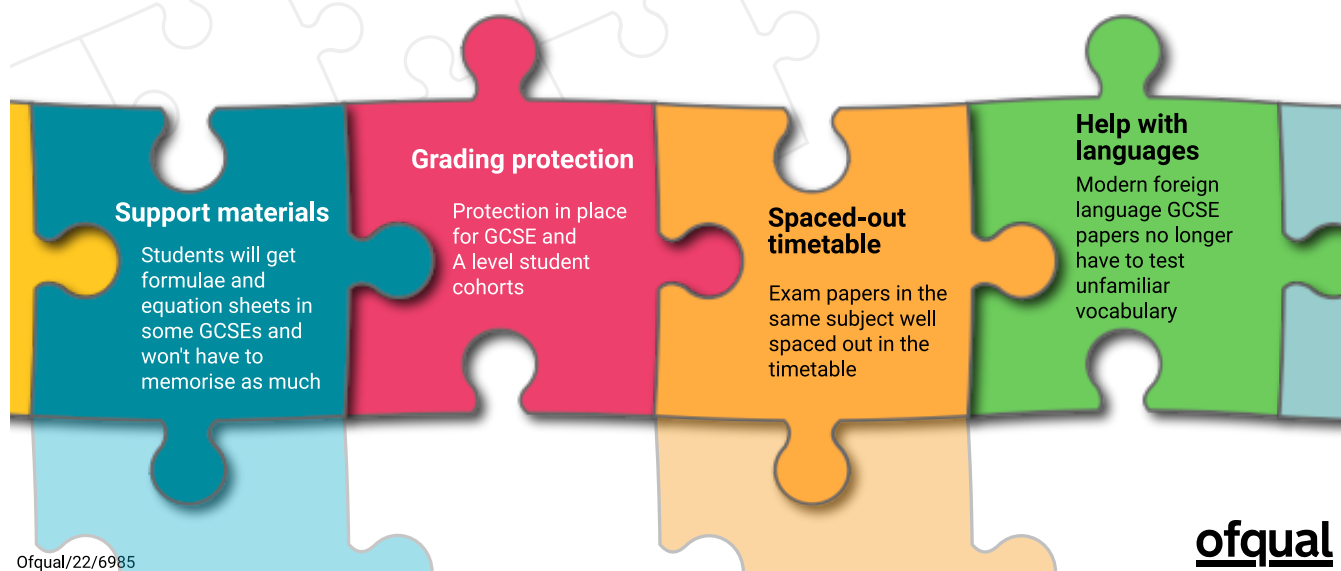
Dear student,

You have shown so much resilience during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and continue to do so as we move towards normality as a country.

As Chief Regulator my job is to make sure that the exams and formal assessments you take are as fair as they can be, setting you up for the right opportunities in the next stages of your education, employment and life.

I've listened to students who were taking their qualifications in the summer of 2022 and the arrangements for 2023 have been made very much with that feedback, and your best and long-term interests, in mind. Below you will find a summary of what we are doing to support you in your forthcoming exams and assessments.

Support for students: summer 2023



Infographic detailing the support for students in summer 2023

Arrangements for GCSEs, AS and A

levels in 2023

Formulae and equation sheets will be given in GCSE maths, physics, and combined science exams, so students do not need to memorise as much. In GCSE modern foreign languages, the exams do not have to test unfamiliar vocabulary. Exams may still contain unfamiliar vocabulary, but exam boards can give meanings for words that are not on their vocabulary lists.

Exam boards have also set aside 'contingency days' in the exam timetable. These days would be used in the unlikely event that exams had to be moved because they could not take place when planned. These are the afternoons of 8 and 15 June, and on 28 June, so students need to be available.

Grading for GCSE, AS and A levels in 2023

Grading will be back to normal this summer. But there is some protection in place for GCSE and A level student cohorts this summer.

Broadly speaking this means that a typical student who would have achieved, say, an A grade in an A level qualification before the pandemic will be just as likely to get an A in 2023, even if their performance in the assessments is a little weaker in 2023 than it would have been before the pandemic.

Contingency arrangements

[Ofqual has provided guidance for teachers](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-resilience-in-the-exam-system-in-2023)

[\(https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-resilience-in-the-exam-system-in-2023\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-resilience-in-the-exam-system-in-2023) so that they can save evidence of student performance.

This evidence would only be used to determine Teacher Assessed Grades in the very unlikely event that exams could not go ahead.

Schools and colleges have been told that evidence should come from the mock exams that students normally take. Teachers should let students know when they are taking assessments that could be used, but students should just approach them as they normally would.

Vocational and Technical Qualifications

For vocational and technical qualifications (VTQs) taken in schools and colleges, there will be a return to normal standards. Many students will be taking VTQ assessments over the winter. To help students feel prepared in taking assessments Ofqual has put together [resources for students](https://ofqual.blog.gov.uk/2022/02/10/what-sorts-of-things-might-help-you-prepare-for-exams/) (<https://ofqual.blog.gov.uk/2022/02/10/what-sorts-of-things-might-help-you-prepare-for-exams/>).

You may be aware that some students were affected by late or incorrect vocational qualification results last summer. We are working to make sure that you will not experience this again in 2023 and that you receive the results you need for progression when you expect them.

Student guide

Ofqual will also be publishing a Student Guide in the spring term, with all the information students need on exams and assessments in 2023. You will find this on the [Ofqual website](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofqual) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofqual>).

Everyone at Ofqual joins me in congratulating you on the commitment to your studies you have shown so far, and to wishing the very best for your qualifications as we head in to 2023.

With best wishes,

Dr Jo Saxton, PhD.,
Chief Regulator Ofqual

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