



Arrangements for summer 2020 exams

Young people's consultation - April 2020

Hello

This year is different from other years. **Coronavirus has changed our lives.** Schools are closed and exams are cancelled.

This affects lots of young people. You may have questions like:

- What happens next?
- How will my grades be decided?
- Will I be graded fairly?
- Will colleges, universities or employers trust my grades?

We are Qualifications Wales




Our role is to:

- decide which qualifications schools in Wales can offer
- make sure all qualifications meet your needs and the needs of Wales
- make sure the exams you take are fair and our qualification system can be trusted.

We know lots of young people are worried. But we are working with schools, colleges and the WJEC exam board to work out the best way forward so everybody gets the grades they deserve this summer.

We want to know what you think of our plans.

This is a young person's summary. The full version is available here:

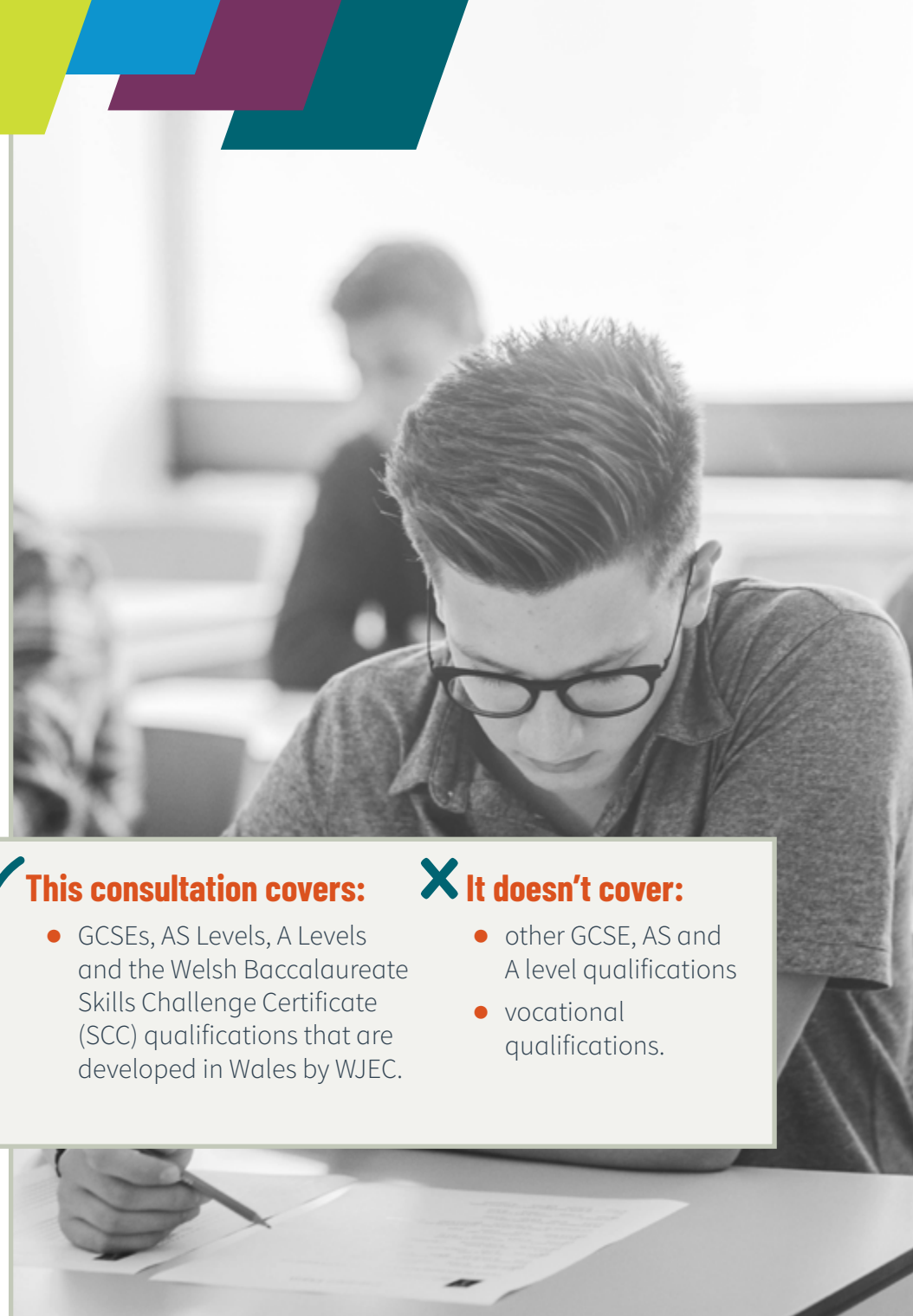
 qualificationswales.org/english/get-involved/consultations-and-surveys/consultation-arrangements-for-summer-2020-exam-series

✓ This consultation covers:

- GCSEs, AS Levels, A Levels and the Welsh Baccalaureate Skills Challenge Certificate (SCC) qualifications that are developed in Wales by WJEC.

✗ It doesn't cover:

- other GCSE, AS and A level qualifications
- vocational qualifications.



The way ahead

We sent information to schools and colleges across Wales on April 3rd. It set out clearly what information they need to collect and send to WJEC so learners can get their results this summer.



STEP 1

Schools and colleges have to:

- give learners a grade for each subject they are entered in
- rank learners in order from top to bottom for each of these subjects.

Head teachers must sign a declaration that the information is correct and true.



STEP 2

The school or college sends this information to WJEC.



STEP 3

WJEC will:

- collect together the information from every school and college
- use a **statistical standardisation model** to make sure learners are judged at the same level across schools and colleges, and that grades are similar to other years.



STEP 4

Grades are sent out to learners this summer at the usual time.



Our plan

There are two things we want to do:

Proposal 1: We have five aims for the statistical standardisation model to help make sure the grades are fair.

Proposal 2: We will set up a new appeals process for this year.

Proposal 1: The five aims

As exams have been cancelled, we need a new system for awarding qualifications that is fair. Teachers haven't had to do this before. It may be difficult for them to be impartial and not give learners grades that are too high or too low. That's why we need a **statistical standardisation model**. These five aims will help make sure that the model is balanced and fair.

Aim 1:

Learners that have an assessment grade and rank order sent to WJEC by their centre will receive a grade.

This process should be simple. Your school or college will judge your work and send the right information to WJEC. They will use this information and other data, such as your previous performance in school, to award your grade.

For some private learners, like those who do their learning at home rather than going to a school or college, this could be more difficult. If a head teacher feels confident to make the judgement, they can send information to WJEC. If they don't, they must tell learners why.



Learners that have an assessment grade and rank order sent to WJEC by their centre will receive a grade.

How much do you agree with this aim?

- I strongly agree
- I agree
- I partly agree and disagree
- I disagree
- I strongly disagree
- I'm unsure

Why?

(If you disagree, where possible, please tell us what you think might work better.)

Aim 2:

The national outcomes for summer 2020 will be broadly similar to previous years.

Each year we collect information and statistics about all qualifications across Wales. This helps us know what to expect this year's grades to look like.

This year's grades must be fair to young people who:

- sat their exams in the past
- are taking them now
- will sit exams in the future.

We will use predictions based on data from previous years to make sure grades this year are fair.



The national outcomes for summer 2020 will be broadly similar to previous years.

How much do you agree with this aim?

I strongly agree

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I partly agree and disagree

I disagree

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I'm unsure

Why?

(If you disagree, where possible, please tell us what you think might work better.)

Aim 3:

The final grades given to learners will be the outcome of a clear, fair process that uses evidence.

The **statistical standardisation model** will use evidence like:

- statistics about grades in Wales
- how schools and colleges have done in the past
- any grades learners have had in other qualifications
- this year's grades and rank order provided by schools and colleges.

We'll work with WJEC to find the best way to balance this evidence to calculate grades for learners. This system should give accurate results. The process should protect against the possibilities of learners getting results that are too harsh or too generous.



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The final grades given to learners will be the outcome of a clear, fair process that uses evidence.

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Why?

(If you disagree, where possible, please tell us what you think might work better.)

Aim 4:

As far as possible, this process will not disadvantage any learners for any reason, including groups of learners who have protected characteristics.

We've asked schools and colleges to grade and rank their learners because they know how they are doing throughout the course. But we want to make sure that teachers don't show bias by giving learners too high or too low a grade because of who they are.

It's important that all young people are treated fairly. Learners must not be treated differently to previous years. This includes learners who have extra protection because of their disability, religion, or any other reason.

Schools will need to check their evidence and information to make sure there are no errors. We can use information about grades and positions of learners in past qualifications and other evidence to spot serious issues.



As far as possible, this process will not disadvantage any learners for any reason, including groups of learners who have protected characteristics.

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Why?

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Aim 5:

The process will look at learners' results from other qualifications and units completed.

Looking at a learners past results can help tell us what grade they were most likely to get this year.

For example, an AS qualification is 40% of the A level mark. So, if someone has an AS Level in the same subject, it makes sense to use this information when awarding the A level grade.

If a learner is completing an AS in a subject taken at GCSE level, their GCSE results can be used to help award AS grades.

Some GCSEs have units that have been assessed.

This type of evidence will be used for grading.



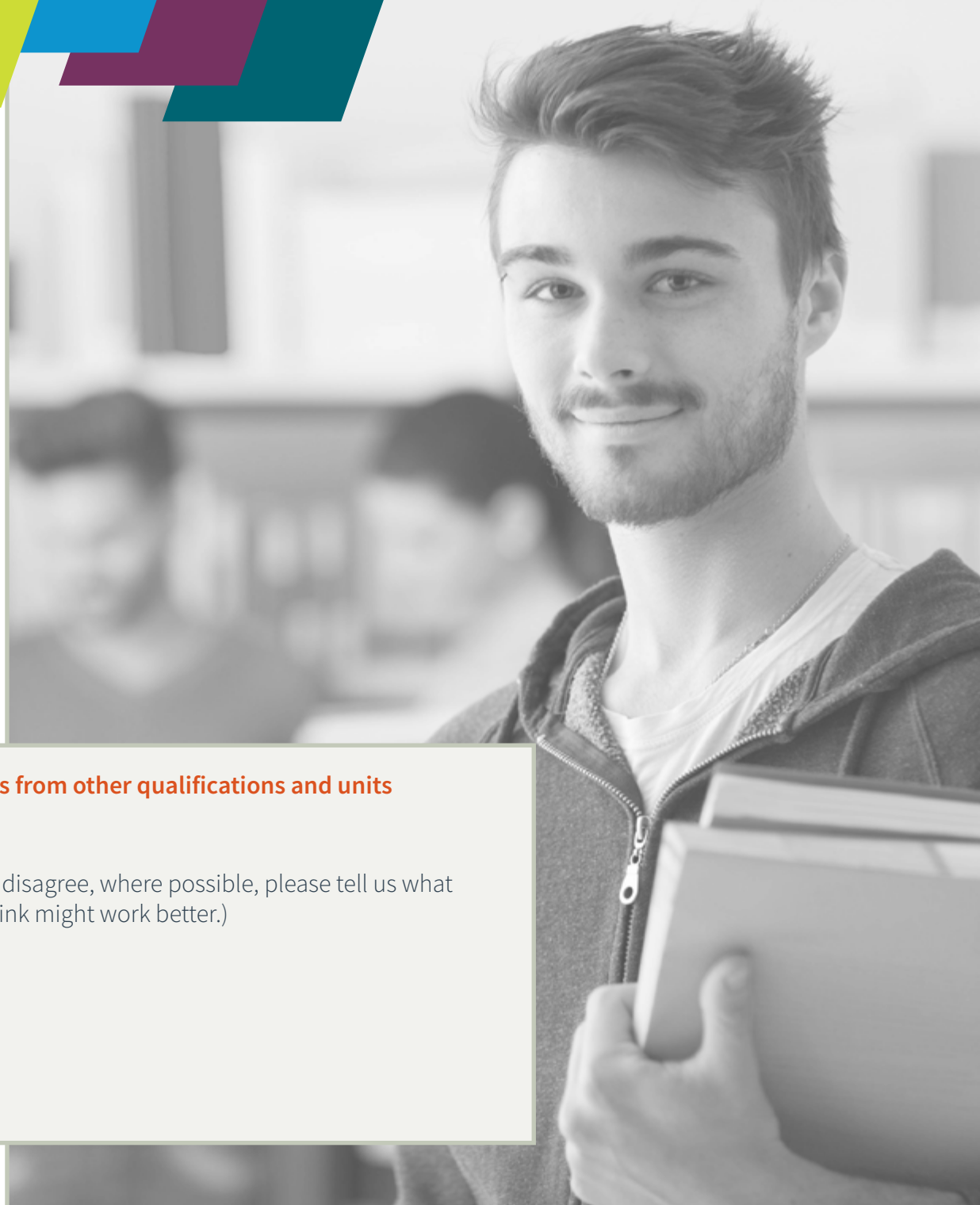
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Proposal 2: The new appeals process

WJEC and all other exam boards have systems for learners to make an appeal to challenge grades. These systems won't work when exams have been cancelled because there are no exams to be remarked. We need to set up a new system for this year.

Schools and colleges can appeal this year.

They can appeal for one or more learners if they think WJEC didn't carry out their process in a proper or fair way.

If the school or college made an error, they can ask WJEC to review the learner's grade.

If WJEC has made an error, they will aim to correct things quickly.

Individual learners cannot appeal this year.

If you think your school or college has made an error, ask them to look at the evidence and they can contact WJEC.





Learners and the appeals process

Learners won't be able to appeal the assessment grade or rank order given to WJEC by their school or college, or the way in which their school or college decided this.

This is because:

1. Schools and colleges can only share the assessment grades and rank order of learners with WJEC. They cannot share it with learners, parents, carers or anyone else. It's important that teachers can make their judgements without being influenced by other people or things.
2. Schools and colleges collect evidence in different ways. As there is not a set procedure to check against, it is not possible to have an appeal.



Learners won't be able to appeal the assessment grade or rank order given to WJEC by their school or college, or the way in which their school or college decided this.

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Reasons for an appeal

If a school or college believes WJEC has made an error, they can make an appeal. They can appeal:

- if they think the wrong data was used to calculate a grade of one or more of their learners
- if as a school or college they sent the wrong data and need it changed
- if grades were sent to the wrong learners
- if WJEC made a different error in their procedure when they were calculating grades.



Making an appeal

WJEC must give schools and colleges information on the procedures that they have followed. This information is confidential and is only available for schools and colleges. It can't be given to individual learners or their families. So only schools and colleges can appeal.



Schools and colleges will be able to appeal to WJEC for these reasons.

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Why?

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WJEC will only consider appeals about their procedures submitted by schools and colleges, and not appeals from individual learners.

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Why?

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Appeals and results

If you ask your school or college to appeal, your results can go down as well as up.

But the way grades are being ranked this summer means, in theory, an appeal could push down the grades of other learners. We don't think that's fair. So we will make sure that doesn't happen.

WJEC should not be able to lower the grades of learners who haven't made an appeal because someone else did.



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Appeals and decision making

Normally appeals involve staff who have not made the decisions about the grades. They go through a large process of remarking which can't happen this year as there are no exams to remark.

The process for calculating results this year is new, so only some people will know how it works. It may not always be possible for different people to be involved in the appeal. But we think it is important that WJEC try to involve different people whenever they can.



A simplified process

Appeals can be complicated and take a lot of time. This year we think WJEC should be able to quickly correct clear errors in the way the data has been used without needing a formal appeal.



Whenever they can, WJEC should make sure that people who make decisions about appeals were not involved in the calculation of results.

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Why?

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WJEC should be allowed to run this simpler process before a formal appeal.

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Why?

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Appeals to the Exam Procedures Review Service (EPRS)

In previous years a learner or school could appeal to the EPRS if they were still unhappy. The EPRS would check what happened and could step in to sort out issues.

This year the EPRS role will be to:

- check WJEC has followed the right procedures and policies
- check any errors have been corrected.



Next Steps

We know this year is very different and many of you have worked hard for your exams. We are working hard to make sure you have grades this summer.

After this consultation we'll write a report about what people said, the decisions we make and the reasons we made them. We'll work with WJEC to make sure we do the best things for all learners across Wales.



This year the EPRS role will be to:

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Thanks for reading this

Please use the online survey for this consultation:

 smartsurvey.co.uk/s/QWsummer2020learners

You can also send your answers to:

 summerexams2020@qualificationswales.org

 By: **17:00 on May 13th 2020.**

Due to the coronavirus, our offices are closed, so we can't accept answers by post.

If you have any questions about the consultation, please contact:

 summerexams2020@qualificationswales.org



Are you a learner?

Yes

No

If you are not a learner, please tell us in what capacity you are responding (for example, parent/carer, or teacher).

Confidentiality

Please do not write anything that may identify someone in your answers.

Your answers will only be seen by us. We will keep your answers safe.

There is a law called Freedom of Information (FOI) which means that people could ask to see information that we hold. We may have to publish all, or some of, your answer.

If you would like to find out more about our work, you can follow us on [Twitter](#) or on our [website](#).

