



By email to all schools and colleges in Wales

25 October 2019

Dear colleague

Overseeing the Winter 2019/20 GCSE exam series

Ahead of the winter series of exams (November 2019 and January 2020), I am writing to all schools and colleges to highlight some important information to help support the successful delivery of the exam series.

The winter series is examined in two sessions, November and January. We will monitor the setting of grade boundaries for all exams within this series to ensure that the appropriate standards are maintained.

The November 2019 series

There are four GCSEs being examined in November: English Language, Mathematics – Numeracy, Mathematics and Welsh Language. As in November 2018, there are no restrictions on who can be entered for these exams.

November exam entries

Provisional entry data collected by WJEC gives us an early indication of entry patterns for each exam series. We use this data to help plan our approach to overseeing the award and to interpret the results.

We will be publishing official statistics on November entries at 09.30am on Thursday 5 December 2019. You will be able to find this information in the [Research and statistics](#) area of our website.

The January 2020 series

In January 2020, one unit from each of the English Literature and Welsh Literature GCSEs will be examined. Individual components of the Key Stage 4 and Advanced

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Welsh Baccalaureate Skills Challenge Certificate can also be submitted for moderation and award. Some units within unreformed GCSE subjects, such as ICT and Health and Social Care, will also be available. (The new GCSE in Health and Social Care will first be awarded summer 2021.)

Exam Security

Schools and colleges play a key role in maintaining the security of exam papers and it is important that your staff follow the rules set out by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) for the security of papers, and the rules for conducting exams. This information is available on the [Instructions for conducting examinations](#) area of the JCQ website. WJEC's website also has useful guidance on what to do if any [security breach](#) is suspected.

WJEC has guidance on [Contingency Planning](#) providing information on what to do if exams are disrupted in any way. We advise your school / college to familiarise yourself with the WJEC and JCQ guidance on contingency planning and to ensure that contingency plans are up to date and fit for purpose.

Issuing results

Students will get their results for this November's GCSEs on **Thursday 16 January 2020**. Schools and colleges will get the results the day before, on Wednesday 15 January 2020.

Students will get their results for January's GCSEs and units taken on **Thursday 5 March 2020**. Schools and colleges will get the results the day before, on Wednesday 5 March 2020.

Results are released to schools the day before results day to allow time for administrative arrangements to be completed ahead of results day. We remind schools and colleges that they must not be shared with anyone other than those staff essential to organising the release of results to students, or to any person or organisation outside of your school or college, until results day. This guidance is also available on the [publication of results](#) area of JCQ's website.

Further Information

We give regular updates to schools and colleges on the qualifications we regulate through our 'Slate' newsletter. You can sign-up to receive this from our [website](#).

The [Exams 360](#) section of our website has information for stakeholders involved in the exam series. There are summaries of the exam process and how exam papers are set and how they are marked. A range of handy [postcards](#) are available to download from our website, covering the main features of the new GCSEs and the Welsh Baccalaureate.

I hope you find this information helpful. I will write to you again when the exams have been completed. If you have any suggestions for information you would find useful in future, please get in touch.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Philip Blaker', written in a cursive style.

Philip Blaker

Chief Executive