



November 2018

Dear Colleague

Overseeing the Winter 2018/19 GCSE exam series

Ahead of the winter series of exams (November 2018 and January 2019), I am writing to all schools and colleges to explain our approach to overseeing the award of GCSEs and the Welsh Baccalaureate. In this letter, I will be focusing on the GCSEs that learners will sit this November, and the GCSE and Welsh Baccalaureate components they will sit in January 2019.

The November 2018 series

GCSE Mathematics – Numeracy and GCSE Mathematics qualifications will be examined for the fifth time this November. This November is also the fourth time the new GCSE qualifications in English Language and Welsh Language have been examined. In previous November series, only students who were resitting were allowed to enter for GCSE English Language and GCSE Welsh Language. Following the Welsh Government announcement about changes to school performance measures in 2019, the entry restrictions for this series have been lifted ¹.

The January 2019 series

In January 2019, one unit from each of the English Literature and Welsh Literature GCSEs will be examined. Individual components of the Key Stage 4 and Advanced 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 examined.

¹ https://gov.wales/docs/dcells/publications/171019-early-entry-letter-en.pdf?_cldee=a2VycnkuZGF2aWVzQHF1YWxpZmljYXRpb25zd2FsZXMuMub3Jn&recipientid=contact-4950940a0a1ae7118104e0071b6e3521-216b174c9ea34d4aba13a5f4887e0cd1&esid=9bd1945b-97b9-e711-811b-e0071b6e1771&urlid=3

Qualifications Wales

Q2 Building, Pencarn Lane
Imperial Park,
Newport
NP10 8AR
☎ 0333 077 2701



www.qualificationswales.org

Cymwysterau Cymru

Adeilad Q2, Lôn Pencarn
Parc Imperial,
Casnewydd
NP10 8AR
☎ 0333 077 2701

There will be final re-sit opportunities for legacy GCSEs in subjects in which reformed qualifications were introduced for first teaching from September 2017, such as Computer Science, History and Psychology. You can find more details about re-sit opportunities on awarding body websites. We expect only small numbers of students will 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 published official statistics on November entries at 09.30am on Thursday 29 November 2018. The official statistics show there were 22,450 entries for GCSEs in November, down 32,395 (59.1%) from last November. Year 11 entries account for 18,585 (82.8% of all entries), down from 50,190 (91.5% of all entries) last November. These large changes in entries may be partly a response to changes to performance measures by Welsh Government aimed at discouraging widespread early and multiple entry. There were 3,345 November entries for GCSE English Language in 2018, a decrease of 71.8%. 52.6% of GCSE English Language November entries were from year 11 students, down from 88.3% last November. There were 6,720 entries for Mathematics, down 15,950 (70.4%). There were 12,170 entries for Mathematics – Numeracy, down 7,560 (38.3%). 73.4% of entries for GCSE Mathematics were for year 11 students, compared to 96.3% for GCSE Mathematics – Numeracy. For further information please see our official statistics release².

As in previous examination series, we have required WJEC to apply a 'comparable outcomes' approach which ensures that the standard is maintained from one series to another. More information on the comparable outcomes approach can be found on our [website](#).

Issuing results

Students will get their results for this November's GCSEs on **Thursday 17 January 2019**. Schools and colleges will get the results the day before, on Wednesday 16 January 2019.

Students will get their results for January's GCSEs and units taken on **Thursday 7 March 2019**. Schools and colleges will get the results the day before, on Wednesday 6 March 2019.

² <https://qualificationswales.org/english/publications/an-annual-report-which-presents-provisional-data-on-november-2018-gcse-and-level-1level-2-certificates-entries-for-wales/>

Further Information

I hope you find this letter helpful. We give regular updates to schools and colleges on GCSEs, A levels and the other qualifications we regulate through our 'Slate' newsletter. You can sign-up to receive this from our [website](#).

Yours sincerely



Philip Blaker

Chief Executive