



7 February 2023

Dear Colleague

As this academic year progresses, I want to take this opportunity to remind you of the assessment and grading arrangements that are in place in Wales this academic year, as you process applications and make offers to learners.

Exams and assessments 2023

The arrangements for this academic year broadly reflect the usual, pre-pandemic arrangements that you will be familiar with. As we take the next step towards the return to pre-pandemic arrangements, learners will sit formal exams and assessments as they did last summer, with advance information available to support their revision. Adaptations were in place for the summer 2022 examination series, however, this year there are no adaptations to qualifications.

Advance information will be provided to learners taking Made-for-Wales GCSE, AS and A level qualifications. It may also be provided for some Made-for-Wales vocational qualifications.

The main purpose of advance information is to help learners focus their revision as they prepare for exams. It is not intended to limit the amount of content studied as part of each qualification.

The transition back to pre-pandemic grading

We know that the pandemic has had a significant continuing effect on learning, therefore our grading approach reflects this in the fairest way possible. The intention is that this year's results will fall broadly midway between the 2019 and 2022 summer results. This signals the next step in our transition back to pre-pandemic outcomes.

In addition, this approach reflects the unitised nature of A levels and some GCSEs, where units already taken and graded in 2022 will contribute to overall qualification grades awarded this summer.

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Progression for our learners

Each jurisdiction in the UK has made its own decisions about the approach to grading this year, however, we do not believe that this will lead to outcomes that are so different that they will affect the offers that you make to learners in Wales.

We believe that our grading policy will give learners who are close to grade boundaries some small benefit of the doubt when grades are awarded. This approach is intended to reflect the disruption that this year's learners have experienced over the period of the pandemic. Our intention is that in the next academic year 2023-24, we will return to pre-pandemic outcomes in assessments.

As you continue to process applications from learners with qualifications taken across the UK and the world, I ask that you treat learners in Wales with parity when making decisions about places on courses starting this year.

Yours sincerely

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

Philip Blaker

Chief Executive