

Year 11 can be a challenging time for pupils – this year in particular, Year 11 pupils are facing a level of uncertainty over their exams and what to expect in the summer of 2021. This Curriculum Update is intended to inform you of some of the information and changes for 2020/21, address some of those uncertainties and help to answer some of the questions you and your child may have.

Please note: This information is accurate at the time of writing; however, arrangements are subject to change by the Department for Education and Ofqual - as any new announcements are made, we will of course keep you informed as soon as practicable.

GCSE Exams 2021

On 13th October, the government announced that the summer exam series will **start on 7th June and end on 2nd July** for almost all GCSEs. One maths and one English GCSE exam will be held just before the May half-term and the remainder of Exams are provisionally scheduled for after the May half-term break. Building on this announced three week delay to exams, on the 3rd December, the Department for Education announced some further measures which include:

- **Grading exams to ensure fairness**

The qualifications regulator, Ofqual, worked with the Department for Education (DfE) and stakeholders from across the sector to determine the approach to grading for 2021. In recognition of the challenges this cohort faced and is facing, Ofqual has decided that *“grading will carry forward the overall generosity of 2020, to ensure the 2021 cohort are treated fairly, relative to their 2020 peers”*.

- **Adapting exams to take account of the disruption**

The DfE have said that they *“recognise the disruption which many students are experiencing due to coronavirus (COVID-19). Ofqual is working with awarding organisations to provide details of the additional support to be provided in this exceptional year.”*

Students will be supported through advance notice of some of the topic areas that will be covered in exams. Additionally, in some subjects, supporting materials, such as formula sheets, will be provided on the day of the exams. This will allow students to focus on depth of understanding in these areas and target their revision in the run up to exams. Exam boards are expected to begin publishing specific details about adaptations to GCSE in the new year. For vocational and technical qualifications (VTQs), Ofqual has been working with awarding organisations throughout the year to agree a number of adaptations to these qualifications to take account of disruption – these are currently being implemented. Awarding organisations will also be able to reduce the number of optional units that are assessed.

- **Awarding a qualification for students who miss an exam due to coronavirus (COVID-19)**

The DfE has worked with the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ), Ofqual and the exam boards to ensure that the timetable for the summer GCSE series minimises the likelihood of a candidate missing all of their exams in one subject as far as possible. Should a student miss an exam in a subject, as a result of sickness or the need to self-isolate, then they can still achieve a grade through the special consideration process. They have said that *“students who miss exams due to coronavirus (COVID-19) will be expected to provide evidence to support the process. Further information about what evidence may be required to support applications for special consideration will be available closer to the exams.”*

- **Students who miss all exams in one subject**

If a student misses all their GCSE assessments in a subject due to sickness related to coronavirus (COVID-19), or the need to self-isolate, and is unable to access the special consideration process, they will be eligible to sit a single contingency paper. This will take place between **28 June to 16 July 2021** and timetabled to allow at least a 10-day gap after each subject's final paper in the main series. Work has started on writing this timetable.

The DfE are working with Ofqual to agree with exam boards what papers will be made available for each specific qualification. In most cases, it is expected that one contingency paper will be provided per GCSE subject. Contingency papers will be in a similar format to other papers (and similarly modified where requested), and will be produced specifically for this exam series. The DfE will publish further details on contingency papers, including how schools and colleges can register, shortly.

- **Students who miss all exams, including the contingency paper**

In the event that a student misses all of their GCSE papers in a subject during both the summer series and the contingency series, with legitimate reason, and does not have the required non-examined assessed elements required to access the special considerations process, a validated teacher assessment may be used to award a grade. The DfE have said that “further information on this will follow in the new year”.

- **Understanding and managing the impact of differential learning**

The DfE have said *“our priority is that there is a consistent approach to what is taught and will be assessed across schools and colleges. We acknowledge that some students will have faced greater disruption than others as a result of coronavirus (COVID-19). An expert advisory group made up of a wide representation from across the sector is being established to consider these issues.”*

You can read the full DfE announcement

“Guidance to support the summer 2021 exams” by clicking this [LINK](#)



Department
for Education

Year 11 Mock Exams

Year 11 Mock exams are scheduled to take place from **Monday 25th January until Friday 5th February**. Due to the unique circumstances this year, the vast majority of mock exams will take place in classrooms - **a full timetable of dates, times and locations of exams will follow in the new year**. However, we wanted pupils and parents/carers to be aware of what will be assessed in the mock exam period and to provide revision details, including where revision materials can be found, as soon as possible and well in advance of the start of the mock exams. The following table lists the number of exams for each subject, the name of each mock exam paper, the **total** assessment duration and revision information – please note that some exams will be split into two or more separate sections and will not necessarily be the entire, continuous duration shown.

Subject	No. of Mock exams	Names and total duration of each Mock Exam paper	Where can Y11 pupils find revision materials?
Art & Fashion		None – due to national course adaptations	
Combined Science (Sets 2, 3 and 4)	3	Biology Paper 2: 70 mins Chemistry Paper 2: 70 mins Physics Paper 2: 70 mins	Links to revision materials can be found in the 'remote learning instructions' documents within Foldr, for each class.
Separate Sciences (Set 1)	3	Biology Paper 2: 1 hr 45 mins Chemistry Paper 2: 1 hr 45 mins Physics Paper 2: 1 hr 45 mins	Links to revision materials can be found in the 'remote learning instructions' documents within Foldr, for each class.
D & T: Food	1	Food and Nutrition: 1 hour	Pupils will be given a revision/question guide to support their revision.
D & T: RM	1	Design and Technology Core: 1 hour	Pupils have a hard copy, there is a link on class charts and all pupils have been sent an email with full details.
Digital IT	1	Component 3: Effective Digital Working Practises – 1 hr 30 mins	Links to revision materials can be found in the 'remote learning instructions' documents within Foldr, for each class.
Business Enterprise	1	Component 3: Promotion and Finance for Enterprise – 2 hrs	Links to revision materials can be found in the 'remote learning instructions' documents within Foldr, for each class.
English language	2	Paper 1: Fiction and Imaginative Writing – 1 hr 45 mins Paper 2: Non-Fiction and Transactional Writing – 2 hrs 5 mins	Revision Materials and Past Papers are available in the English section of Foldr.
English literature	2	Paper 1: Shakespeare and Post-1914 Literature – 1 hr 45 mins Paper 2: 19 th Century Novel – 1 hr 20 mins	Revision Materials and Past Papers will be available in English section of Foldr.
Geography	3	Paper 1 – Physical Geography 1hr 30mins Paper 2 – Human Geography 1 hour Paper 3 – Decision Making Exercise (DME) – 45 mins	In Foldr, materials can be found in a folder named 'Yr11 Revision'. There are various revision PowerPoints for each topic that will also be covered in class. Pupils will be given a hard copy of the DME – this will also be available in Foldr too. Pupils will also the BBC Bitesize website and www.coolgeography.co.uk helpful.

History	3	Paper 1: Medicine through Time and Medicine on the Western Front – 1 hr 15 mins Paper 2: American West – 55 mins Paper 3: USA 1950-75 – 1 hr 20 mins	Resources for all topics can be found in Foldr, in each class's History folder entitled 'Revision'. This includes revision materials and links to online revision resources. Revision guides have also been provided for pupils and can be collected from class teachers if they have not been already.
Media studies	1	Paper 2: Understanding Media Forms and Products 1 hr 30 mins	Revision Materials and Past Papers are available in Media Studies section of Foldr.
Maths	3	Paper 1: Mathematics Non – Calculator – 1 hr 30 mins Paper 2: Mathematics Calculator – 1 hr 30 mins Paper 3: Mathematics Calculator – 1 hr 30 mins	We would highly recommend www.corbettmaths.com as a revision website. Pupils will also be given a set of practice papers, prior to the Christmas break, as a revision tool.
RE	3	Paper 1: Ethics – Issues of life and death and Issues of Good and Evil – 55 mins Paper 2: Christianity beliefs and teachings and Christianity practices – 55 mins Paper 3: Islam beliefs and teachings – 55 mins	Individual teachers have put bespoke revision in their Foldr areas for each class. There are also generic resources for all of Year 11 in Foldr: Religious Education\2020-21 REMOTE LEARNING\YEAR 11\Resources for all Y11 pupils
Spanish	3	Paper 2: Listening (Found: 40 mins; Higher: 50 mins) Paper 3: Reading (Found: 1 hr; Higher: 1 hr 15 mins) Paper 4: Writing (Found: 1 hr 15 mins; Higher: 1 hr 30 mins)	Revision materials can be found in Foldr, Spanish, Year 11.
Music	1	Paper 1: Listening & Appraising – 1 hr 30 mins	In Foldr, there are exemplar unfamiliar listening questions and revision PDF booklets with sample questions for the study pieces. We would also recommend https://venerablebede.musicfirst.co.uk/app as a revision website.
GCSE PE	2	Paper 1 – Fitness and Body Systems – 1hr 45 mins Paper 2 – Health and Performance – 1hr 15 mins	Pupils have a revision/question guide to support their revision.

There are also two formal, BTEC **externally assessed** examination units that are scheduled to take place in the mock exam window for pupils studying BTEC Travel & Tourism and BTEC Health & Social Care:

Subject	Date/Time of Exam	Revision Materials
BTEC Travel & Tourism	Wed 3rd February (am)	In the Travel & Tourism area of Foldr, revision materials can be found in a folder named 'Yr11 Revision'. There will also be a mock exam on Wednesday 13 th January (pm) ahead of this exam to help guide teaching & learning in the final run-up to the exam.
BTEC Health & Social Care	Fri 5th February (am)	Pupils have personalised revision packs and there are lots of resources in Foldr that pupils can use to support their revision. Pupils have also completed a mock exam in class this half term - teaching between now and the exam will focus on plugging any gaps in knowledge and/or skills.

Statements of exam entries, for anyone who will be sitting a BTEC exam, will be given to pupils before the Christmas break.