

General Qualifications

How are general timetables constructed?

Each summer, Pearson sets over **550** exams for over **200** qualifications in **49** subject areas. These take place across **36** days, from May to July, in **68** available time slots. This timing ensures that schools and colleges have time to complete the teaching of the courses, while allowing us time to mark the papers accurately, so candidates receive their results in August.

Each year, Pearson works with the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ), and other awarding organisations, to agree the timetable for the Summer exam series. About 18 months before the exams take place, the JCQ creates a draft provisional timetable for awarding organisations to review. The main aim when drawing up this draft timetable is to minimise the chances of a candidate having a 'clash', where a candidate would have to sit more than one exam in any morning or afternoon session.

The timetable is then reviewed by awarding organisations to ensure it meets the current needs of candidates, schools and colleges. This review also includes a consultation and considers comments from a wide range of stakeholders, including schools, colleges and religious groups. Due to there being a large number of candidates taking exams in a diverse range of subjects available, it is not always possible to meet every request.

Pearson will always aim to be as fair as possible to all, and, if a small change can be made that does not impact negatively on the majority, it will be considered.

The final timetable is agreed upon, completed and published on Pearson's website.

The timetable for the November series is set in the same way, while timetables for our January and October series are set by the individual awarding organisations. These timetables also go through the draft phase and consultation period, before they are published as final on our website.

Exams are scheduled during standard Subjects with larger entries are term dates - it does not take into timetabled earlier. This is to account individual centre closures. assist with marking and ensuring This is because there is only a limited a timely release of results. window in which exams can take place inal *provisional* timetable iblished on the Pearson website : 28th February for Summer; There are specific sets of quidelines 31st October for November. GCSE English/English Language, English Literature, ollowed when creating the provisional Mathematics, Science and Welsh Language exams common timetable. This allows for nsistency from year to year and across are not timetabled together in the same morning Where there is more than one specification Stakeholders, including schools, colleges or afternoon session. No other GCSE subject will fferent awarding organisations JCQ create draft provisional available at the same level, these are allocated nd religious groups, are given the be timetabled against any one of these subjects, a to the same slot, as it is unlikely that candidates common timetable for the awarding portunity to feedback on the provisional they are typically taken by a whole cohort. will take more than one qualification in the same organisations to review. This contains metables by: 30th April for Summer: subject, e.g. GCSE Mathematics A and GCSE exams for all awarding organisations 1st January for November. How is the common including any new qualifications that Mathematics B. imetable construct Religious festivals and commonly observed are developed. A common timetable occasions, e.g. Armistice Day, which fall is used to help to minimise clashes within an examination period, are taken for candidates taking exams with into account when producing the common different awarding organisations. timetable. This is because scheduling exams on these dates will impact candidates who observe these occasions. If exams are International GCSEs and International A levels scheduled on these dates, they are carefully For some subjects, e.g. GCE Maths, we are scheduled in line with their UK counterparts selected to minimise the impact on the timetable more exams in the same slot, as How does Pearson The JCO and awarding organisations consider al to reduce clashes for candidates doing a there are many options available for modules llocate timetable slots? feedback and changes are made to the common combination of International GCSE and GCSE or Final Pearson timetable published metable, where possible, taking into account IAL and A level. on the website by **30th June for** the impact on other exams. Individual comments Subject teams within Pearson provide Summer; 28th February for are considered and addressed, where possible. edback about the provisional Where the feedback cannot be addressed, it is examination slots. This feedback may onsidered for future series. Ilso include examiner and centre feedback they have received from the If a subject is not on the JCQ revious series. A series of meetings between JCC timetable, then it is timetabled When scheduling new qualifications, they are, and the awarding organisations in line with previous series, as typically, timetabled in the same slot as their takes place to mutually agree on Pearson allocates our exams far as possible. legacy qualification. This is because rules state they to the common JCO slots. provisional timetable, based on are unable to take both. If it is a completely new feedback from all the awarding subject, it is placed within a logical place in the

18 Months before exam There is no commo imetable for the January and October series Pearson uses previous timetables as a starti oint, taking into account feedback from evious series. Data on common combination f subjects is used to try and minimise exam ay clashes for candidates. When creating the timetable, special care is taken ensure that there is enough time for the examiners to mark the exams and for Pearson to process the grades for all candidates to receive their grades on Pearson's *provisional* timetable published on the website by: **30th** November for January; 31st October All stakeholders, including Pearson colleagues schools, colleges and religious groups, are given the opportunity to feedback to Pearson regarding the timetable. All feedback must be received by: 31st January for January; 31st January for October. Using the feedback, Pearson create the final timetables and these are published on the website by: 31st March for January; 28th February for October.

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