

Dear Colleague

Wales and Northern Ireland – GCSE and A level changes

As you will be aware, separate qualification reviews have taken place in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. These reviews have resulted in the adoption of three different approaches:

- **England:** all current GCSEs must be delivered in a linear way and all assessments are to be taken at the end of the course. The November window is restricted to Maths and English resits only, and if candidates wish to improve their grade they will need to re-sit the whole qualification, not an individual unit. As A levels are redeveloped these will be linear qualifications only, and in science a student's performance in the practical aspect will no longer contribute to the final grade of their assessment.
- **Wales:** will retain a modular approach at both GCSE, AS and A level, with the option of re-sitting individual units to improve the overall grade.
- **Northern Ireland:** are free to choose either modular or linear courses. Also, the Department for Education in Northern Ireland has stated recently that they intend to retain a science practical as part of the overall A level assessment.

Edexcel GCSEs and A levels

GCSEs: we will now only offer GCSEs that meet the requirements for English centres. Therefore, candidates who sit a unit early will be unable to bank the result and use that mark as part of their overall grade, as all the assessments must be sat at the same time and in the series they wish to claim their grade.

A levels: these will meet Ofqual requirements for English centres and will be offered only as fully linear qualifications.

We will **not** be developing new modular specifications that meet the GCSE and GCE AS and A level Qualification Principles for Wales or Northern Ireland.

continued overleaf

The table below shows the first two phases of the redevelopment across GCE and GCSEs and we expect to reform the remaining subjects for first teaching from September 2017.

For 2015 first teaching on 2 year programmes – not available from Pearson/Edexcel for Wales		For 2016 first teaching on 2 year programmes - not available from Pearson/Edexcel for Wales	
GCSE	GCE AS and A levels	GCSE	GCE AS and A levels
English Language	Art & Design	Design & Technology	
English Literature	Biology	Drama	Drama
Mathematics – numeracy	Business Studies	Geography	Geography
Welsh Language	Chemistry	French, German, Spanish	French, German, Spanish
Welsh Literature	Computer Science	Music	Music
	Economics	Physical Education	Physical Education
	English Language	Religious Studies	Religious Studies
	English Literature	Art & Design	Mathematics
	English Lang & Literature	History	Further Mathematics
	History	Science suite of GCSEs	Welsh Second Language
	Physics		
	Psychology		
	Sociology		
	Welsh First language		

Please visit our website at www.edexcel.com/learningforabetterfuture for more information about the reforms to GCSEs, AS and A levels in England from 2015.

Yours sincerely



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