

TO HEADS OF MATHS

Dear XXX,

Don't choose your new GCSE Mathematics qualification on the basis of current sample assessment materials (SAMs)

At the end of what has, I know, been a very busy term, I wanted to update you on progress with regard to the new GCSE Maths qualification.

Some of you have told us that you believe the sample assessment materials are of differing levels of demand across awarding organisations and indeed some leading academics have said that this is their view too. It is important to await the outcome of Ofqual's work, outlined in Teachers' Update No 10, since new sample assessment materials may need to be produced.

In their Teachers' Update No 10 (2 December) Ofqual said

"We've accredited three of the four submitted specifications and we continue to work with WJEC Eduqas. Accreditation means we're confident that exam boards can meet our requirements going forward; it doesn't mean we've signed off all materials - eg every question - as completely meeting our requirements.

In September we provided exam boards with generic feedback that we asked them to consider but which did not provide a barrier to accreditation. Much of this concerned the way mathematical problem solving is assessed in exam papers.

We're meeting with exam boards this month to take this forward and we expect that this could result in us revising or adding to the guidance for the exam boards on GCSE mathematics that we published on our website in May.

Any further specimen exams that exam boards publish in future will have to take account of any revised guidance so they may show some changes from the materials already published. Live papers for summer 2017 will also have to take account of any revised guidance. None of this affects the content that must be taught and that has been published by the DfE."

Supporting you through the process:**Expert support is our priority and we're strengthening it for 2015.**

Looking ahead to the New Year, we will be intensifying our work to help you prepare for the new syllabus. This will include:

- An extension of our collaborative networks to enhance face-to-face support
- Free 'Getting Ready to Teach' events as part of our wider professional development programme
- The next round of mock papers and support materials to help you prepare for teaching the new qualifications.
- A wide range of teaching and learning resources, both print and digital.

We'd also like to remind you of the wealth of free material on our website to support those of you who are already working with your Year 9s on the new specification. Graham Cumming and his team of subject experts are on hand to support you every step of the way to September 2015. We look forward to working with you.

With all good wishes,

Yours sincerely

Mark Anderson
Managing Director, Pearson UK