

ALTERNATIVE AWARDING ARRANGEMENTS FOR CCEA GCSE, AS AND A LEVELS IN 2021

A GUIDE FOR PARENTS AND STUDENTS



Department of
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1. WHAT ARE ALTERNATIVE AWARDING ARRANGEMENTS AND WHY ARE THEY NEEDED?**Alternative awarding arrangements are replacing examinations in all CCEA GCSE, AS and A Level qualifications in 2021.**

On 5 January 2021, the Executive decided that our post-primary schools should close to most students to limit the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. With the loss of at least a further eight weeks' face-to-face teaching and uncertainty about when it might resume, the Department of Education considers that examinations and other scheduled assessments cannot be held in a way which is, and which is perceived to be, fair. The Education Minister has, therefore, cancelled all public examinations scheduled for the January, February and summer 2021.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had far reaching consequences for our young people. They have experienced and are continuing to experience unprecedented disruption to their learning. The Department's key priority is to ensure that young people who are taking qualifications in 2021 will not be disadvantaged by the COVID-19 outbreak. They need their qualification grades in order to continue to the next stage of their education or training, or into employment.

Grades must reflect what a student knows, understands and can do. It is also important that the grades themselves and the process involved in awarding the grades must be widely understood and respected.

In place of CCEA examinations in summer 2021, a student's grade in a subject will be based on their school or college's professional assessment of the evidenced standard at which the student is performing. These will be known as **Centre Determined Grades**.

Of equal importance to the award of grades, is that we maximise learning and teaching time to support young people as far as possible to acquire the knowledge, skills and understanding they need for progression. It is vitally important that young people continue to engage with teaching and learning for the remainder of the academic year (whether face to face or remotely) and are given opportunities to continue to progress and develop prior to teachers completing their determinations. **This means we will ask schools and colleges to submit their Centre Determined Grades to CCEA in the later stages of the 2021 academic year, towards the end of May.** This will be similar to the time at which young people would usually have taken their examinations.

Working closely with the local examination board, the Council for Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA), schools and colleges will put in place robust processes to ensure the grades they submit are an accurate reflection of the ability of their students. This will give employers and wider society confidence in the qualifications awarded this year. Teachers know and understand their students and are well placed to take forward these determinations. Additional support and training will be provided by CCEA to ensure grades are awarded fairly and consistently across Northern Ireland.

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Schools and colleges will make evidence-based decisions about the grade they recommend their students be issued. Wherever possible, a breadth of evidence will inform a teacher's assessment of their students' grades. This may include the student's performance in any non-examination assessments (practical examinations, controlled assessment or coursework); other class tests and mock examinations, or any other work completed (for example practice examination questions, or extended essays).

To help teachers make objective decisions, CCEA will make available a set of assessments, which teachers can use with their students as part of their overall evidence. This will be called the **CCEA Assessment Resource**. We want to offer students the opportunity to take this during April and May, so that time for teaching and learning is maximised before these are taken. This resource will be unseen, exam questions in the units or components they would have taken if the examinations had been held.

Before Christmas, the Minister had introduced reductions to GCSE, AS and A Level assessment. This decision remains in place and as a result students may now complete the CCEA Assessment Resources in the units of the course in which they had planned to take public examinations.

The Assessment Resource is not an external examination. **It will be marked by a student's class teacher and, if used, may be only one piece of a range of evidence used to inform and support the teachers' overall assessment.** It is not high stakes like an external exam and will be used alongside a range of other evidence. Its use will also be **optional** for schools and colleges, although the Department **strongly recommends** that schools facilitate any young person who wishes to take the Assessment Resource in a particular qualification, even if the school is not using it more generally in that subject.

We hope the assessment resource will help teachers in the process of making accurate and consistent judgements by providing additional evidence of student performance towards the end of the course. It should also encourage students to engage with their learning over the next number of months by giving young people a focus to work towards. It is an opportunity for students to show their knowledge, understanding and skills in the qualification, knowing that other evidence will also be considered.

A key concern that many school leaders, teachers, parents and students have raised with the Department is the need to ensure that outcomes are fair and consistent between different schools and colleges across Northern Ireland. We have therefore put in place quality assurance arrangements throughout the process. Significant support, guidance and training will be provided by CCEA during February and March to strengthen teachers' and lecturers' understanding of how to apply standards with consistency and to make accurate assessment judgements.

Throughout June 2021, Senior Examiners and Subject Officers in CCEA will carry out an external quality assurance process looking at the grades submitted by all schools and colleges and reviewing samples of students' work to ensure the grades submitted reflect accurately the evidence provided. **Work will be reviewed from every school and college across Northern Ireland.** Where CCEA considers that the evidence provided does not match the grades given by schools and colleges, they will be expected to rerun their process and resubmit the evidence and grades to CCEA.

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CCEA is working closely with awarding organisations in England and Wales, with the aim to agree a date for the release of results across all three jurisdictions. This will ensure students in Northern Ireland are not disadvantaged in regard to university admissions and all students here, including those taking qualifications with English and Welsh examination boards, will receive their results at the same time. **Results will not be any later than the dates previously envisaged for exam results (24 August 2021 for AS and A Level and 27 August for GCSE but may be earlier.** As soon as a date is agreed, CCEA will advise schools, colleges and students.

Summary of Alternative Awarding Arrangements for CCEA GCSE, AS and A Level in 2021

- Students will continue with their education during this academic year.
- Students may take the CCEA Assessment Resource during a specified window in April and May 2021.
- Students will have opportunities to provide evidence of progress until submissions of Centre Determined Grades are made to CCEA in late May 2021.
- Schools and Colleges must submit Centre Determined Grades to CCEA toward the end of May 2021.
- CCEA will carry out external quality assurance, which will include review of students' work, across all schools and colleges throughout June 2021.
- Results will issue to all students in Northern Ireland no later than 24 August for AS and A Levels and 27 August for GCSEs.
- Students will have the right to appeal to their schools and colleges.

This guide provides an overview of the alternative awarding arrangements. CCEA will publish detailed guidance for school and college leaders in early February. Further information for parents and students will be available from your school or college, as well as the [CCEA website](#).

The views of teachers, teaching unions, employing authorities, parents and young people who will be affected by these decisions have been used to inform these arrangements.

The Department understands that this is a worrying and anxious time for many young people and their parents. We hope this guide will provide you with some reassurance about how the alternative awarding arrangements will work in practice and that young people will receive grades that are an accurate reflection of their knowledge, understanding and skills.

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2. WHO DO THESE ARRANGEMENTS APPLY TO?

The arrangements set out in this guide apply to CCEA GCSE, AS and A-Level qualifications only.

Some young people are taking qualifications with other non-CCEA Examination Boards operating in England and Wales. Arrangements are not yet finalised in England and Wales so we cannot provide further details at this time. However, you should be reassured that both England and Wales have cancelled public examinations and will use a broadly similar process of teacher assessment to award qualification grades. Your school will let you know if you are taking qualifications with other Examination Boards and provide you with details about the awarding process for these qualifications.

Guidance for young people taking CCEA Vocationally Related Qualifications, Entry Level Qualifications and Occupational Studies will be issued shortly.

All CCEA AS and A Level students will be issued with Centre Determined Grades in 2021.

At GCSE, only Year 12 students (and above) and those in Further Education or training who are completing qualifications in 2021 may be entered for CCEA GCSE qualifications and will be awarded Centre Determined Grades in 2021.

At GCSE, AS and A Level only the overall Centre Determined Grade for the full qualification will be awarded. Notional unit grades or marks will not be provided for individual units.

Students in Year 11 or below may **not** be entered or awarded GCSE qualifications in 2021. This is to ensure that students in Year 11 continue to study their GCSE qualifications throughout Year 12. **Two exceptions will be permitted:**

- CCEA GCSE Mathematics where the student will be entered for CCEA GCSE Further Maths in 2022. This is because CCEA GCSE Mathematics is a pre-requisite for CCEA GCSE Further Maths.
- Early entries for CCEA GCSE Irish in Irish-medium schools and units or where the learner intends extending their learning through GCSE Gaeilge.

We understand that some young people in Year 11 who had wished to enter for GCSE modular examinations in summer 2021 will be disappointed not to have this opportunity. However, it is only possible for teachers to give overall GCSE grades and not to predict specific marks for examination units which students have not taken.

Students in Year 11 and Year 13 will wish to have more information on the arrangements for qualifications in 2022. The Education Minister has asked CCEA to examine how best to adapt GCSE and A Level qualifications for 2022 to ease burden and reflect the ongoing disruption to teaching and learning. **The Minister will aim to make a further announcement on arrangements for 2022 by the end of March 2021 or as soon as possible thereafter.**

You should be reassured that the Department of Education understands that your studies are being disrupted and we will adapt the qualifications to make sure you are not disadvantaged. It is likely that you will not have to take all units of the qualification in 2022.

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3. WHAT WILL BE ASSESSED?

Qualification grades indicate what a person who holds the qualification knows, understands and can do, and to what standard. That is their purpose. People who use qualifications, for example to make selection decisions, need to be able to rely on the grades.

For qualification grades to be meaningful, a person who holds a qualification with a higher grade must have shown that their knowledge, understanding or skills are at a higher standard than a person who holds a qualification with a lower grade.

Our aim is to ensure that students who were expecting to take examinations this summer can be confident their grades are still meaningful and serve their usual purpose.

However, the public health situation and the ongoing disruption means many students will not have had the opportunity to be taught all of the content of the course, or will have been taught it remotely. Young people in Years 12 and 14 have lost at least five months of face to face teaching during their courses. Students cannot, therefore, be assessed on what they would have likely achieved if examinations had gone ahead – which is what teachers were asked in 2020 – because many students will not have covered all of the content that would have been required for the examinations due to the ongoing disruption.

To allow for this, the grades awarded in 2021 should be based on the evidenced standard at which the student is performing – their demonstrated knowledge, understanding and skills in the content of the course they have covered.

Schools and colleges can use evidence of students' performance against the specification from any point in the course. In order to promote ongoing engagement by students in teaching and learning during the coming months, schools can utilise evidence from the current period of remote learning, as well as when students return to school or college. We are conscious that evidence generated later in the course is likely to be the most holistic. Schools will not, therefore, submit grades to CCEA until towards the end of May 2021. We want to provide opportunities for every young person to progress and improve during the coming months and know that the work they are doing can contribute to their grades. At the same time, we know that some young people will find remote learning difficult and that more consistent evidence of the standard at which they are performing may come from earlier periods of the course.

As schools will be asked to assess the evidenced standard at which the student is performing, this means students **do not** have to have completed a specified amount of content, or demonstrate skills knowledge and understanding across every area of the specification as they would normally. In this way, we are taking account of differential learning loss, as some students have suffered more disruption to their learning than others.

At the same time, teachers cannot be asked to decide the grade a student might have achieved had the pandemic not occurred. That would put them in an impossible position, as they would be required to imagine a situation that had not happened. It would also mean that those who use the grades would not know whether the grade indicated what a student knew, understood or could do or, rather, what they might have known, understood or could have done, had things been different. The grade has to be based on the evidence of students' work.

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4. OVERVIEW OF THE AWARDING PROCESS

This Section of Guidance sets out the five main steps of the alternative awarding process in 2021. Further information is provided about each step in the process. CCEA will be providing much more detailed operational guidance to schools and colleges over the coming weeks.

Alternative Awarding Arrangements 2021 – The Five Step Process► **Step 1: Guidance, Information and Readiness**

During Step 1 of the process, CCEA will provide training, support and guidance for schools and colleges on evidence gathering as well as moderation and internal standardisation of judgements based on a range of evidence to ensure the judgements made are objective and fair.

► **Step 2: Evidence Gathering and Provision of an Assessment Resource**

In this period, schools will wish to give further opportunities for students to demonstrate what they know, understand and can do. Schools can use evidence of students' performance against the specification from any point in the course. In order to promote ongoing engagement by students in teaching and learning during the coming months, schools can utilise evidence from during the current period of remote learning, as well as when students return to school within the guidelines provided by CCEA.

To support the evidence gathering process, CCEA will provide assessment resources for each subject. Students may sit the assessment resources during April and early May.

► **Step 3: Centre Professional Judgement and Moderation**

In Step 3, schools and colleges will draw on evidence which relates to the specification, including but in no way limited to, the use of the assessment resource to reach centre professional judgements (Centre Determined Grades) for each qualification.

There is no prescribed weighting for any piece of evidence rather the Centre Determined Grade is the holistic judgement of the standard at which the student is performing.

Initial Centre Determined Grades will be submitted to CCEA towards the end of May. Grades for AS and A level qualifications are to be submitted by Friday 21 May, and grades for GCSE qualifications are to be submitted by Friday 28 May. These are **not** students' final grades and will be subject to an external quality assurance process.

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► Step 4: Review of Evidence and Award

Once Centres have submitted their initial grades, CCEA will carry out a review of evidence before issuing awards. Throughout June 2021, Senior Examiners and Subject Officers in CCEA will carry out an external quality assurance process looking at the grades submitted by all schools and colleges and reviewing samples of students' work to make sure the grades submitted accurately reflect the evidence provided. **Work will be reviewed from every school and college across Northern Ireland.** Where the evidence does not support or justify the outcomes provided, school will be expected to rerun their judgement and moderation processes.

This is a completely different process to that carried out in 2020. **You can be reassured that there will be no algorithms or statistical models used to determine grades.**

This process is very important to ensure that outcomes are fair and consistent between different schools and colleges across Northern Ireland. We want young people, parents, universities and employers to have confidence that grades awarded by different schools and colleges are of the right and consistent standard.

CCEA is working closely with awarding organisations in England and Wales, with the aim to agree a date for the release of results across all three jurisdictions. This will ensure students in Northern Ireland are not disadvantaged in regard to university admissions and all students here, including those taking qualifications with English and Welsh examination boards, will receive their results at the same time. Results will not be any later than the dates previously envisaged for exam results (24 August 2021 for AS and A Level and 27 August for GCSE) but may be earlier. As soon as a date is agreed, CCEA will advise schools, colleges and students.

► Step 5: Post-Award Review Service

Following the distribution of results there will be a post-award review service to enable anyone unhappy with their grade to ask for a review of the outcome.

Students who are dissatisfied with their results may use the appeals process. This process will allow students to present evidence in challenge of the grades provided by their centre. Subsequently, appeals against centre process may be made to CCEA.

We know that students and their parents will want more detailed information on the Appeals Process. CCEA will be working with other examination boards over the coming months to make sure that a similar appeals process is put in place across all examination boards and to provide more detailed guidance. The Department of Education will send copies of this guidance to all parents once it is finalised. This guidance will be provided well in advance of the issue of results.

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5. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Will I definitely be awarded a result for each of my qualifications?

Yes, all students who are entered by their school or college will be issued with qualification results in August so they can progress to the next stage of education, employment or training.

How will qualifications be awarded?

All CCEA exams have been cancelled. In place of CCEA exams in January, February and summer 2021, a student's grade in a subject will be based on their teacher's professional assessment of the evidenced standard at which they are performing. These will be known as Centre Determined Grades.

Teachers will make evidence-based decisions about the grade they recommend their students be issued. Wherever possible, a breadth of evidence should inform a teacher's assessment of their student's grade. This **may** include the student's performance in the CCEA Assessment Resource; in any non-examination assessments (including practical examinations, controlled assessment or coursework); other class tests and mock examinations; or any other work completed by students (for example practice examination questions, extended essays etc).

There are different arrangements for qualifications offered by English and Welsh Examination Boards and your school will be able to explain the arrangements for these qualifications.

How are you taking account of the disruption due to COVID-19?

Students will **not** be assessed on what they would have achieved if exams had gone ahead – which is what teachers were asked in 2020 – because many students will not have covered all of the content that would have been required for the exams due to ongoing disruption.

To allow for this, the grades awarded in 2021 should be based on the evidenced standard at which the student is performing – their demonstrated knowledge, understanding and skills in the content they have covered.

Schools can use evidence of students' performance against the specification from any point in the course. In order to promote ongoing engagement by students in teaching and learning, schools and colleges can utilise evidence from during the current period of remote learning, as well as when students return to school. We are conscious that evidence generated later in the course is likely to be the most holistic. Schools and colleges will not, therefore, submit Centre Determined Grades to CCEA until towards the end of May 2021. We want to provide opportunities for every young person to progress and improve during the coming months and know that the work they are doing can contribute to their grades. At the same time, we know that some young people will find remote learning difficult and that more consistent evidence of the standard at which they are performing may come from earlier periods of the course.

As schools will be asked to assess the evidenced standard at which the student is performing, this means students **do not** have to have completed a specified amount of content, or demonstrate skills knowledge and understanding across every area of the specification as they would normally. Evidence may be gathered from all work that is in line with the specification. In this way, we are taking account of differential learning loss, as some students have suffered more disruption to their learning than others.

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Will grades be similar to 2020?

It is the intention that in order to ensure fairness to all students, every effort will be made to maintain standards. It is hoped that the training given to schools in assessing the Centre Determined Grades, will ensure a level of consistency between schools and colleges and across the qualifications. It is likely that overall across our system grade outcomes in 2021 will be broadly similar to those awarded by Centres in 2020.

Can practical examinations/controlled assessment/coursework I have completed contribute to my qualification?

Yes, this work (even if not fully completed) can be utilised as part of the evidence which centres consider to arrive at Centre Determined Grades.

What evidence can be used by schools and colleges?

Any evidence completed by students during the period of their course can be used to inform teachers' assessments. There is no time limit on the evidence and it may be relevant to **any area** of the course specification. The evidence must of course relate directly to the specification for which the candidate is entered.

Is the Assessment Resource the same as an exam?

No. To help teachers make objective decisions, CCEA will make available a set of assessment resources, which teachers can use with their students. We want to offer students the opportunity to take this CCEA Assessment Resource during April and May. This will be unseen, exam questions in the units or modules they would have taken if the exams had been held.

It is likely that most students will only take the assessment resource in the mandatory units at GCSE and the reduced assessment at AS and A2, as they will not have had the opportunity to cover content across the entire specification. However, some candidates may wish to take papers in all areas of the course.

The Assessment Resource is very different from an external examination. It will be marked by a class teacher and will be only one piece of evidence to inform and support the assessment of a student's abilities. It is not high stakes like an external exam and will be used alongside a range of other evidence.

We hope it will help teachers in the process of making accurate and consistent judgements by providing additional evidence towards the end of the course and also encourage pupil engagement over the next five months. It is an opportunity for students to show their knowledge and skills in the qualification, knowing that other evidence can also be considered.

Is the Assessment Resource compulsory?

No, schools and colleges may decide they do not require the evidence from the Assessment Resource. For example, on a return to school, teachers, particularly where there is already a significant body of evidence, may wish to use the next few months to focus on the teaching and learning of specific elements of the course that have not been covered but which are important for progression. However, schools and colleges may of course decide they wish all of their students to take the papers.

The Department of Education strongly recommends every candidate who wishes to have the opportunity to take the assessment resource in a particular qualification should be facilitated to do so, even if the centre has decided not to take them more generally.

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What if schools remain closed?

If schools remain closed, students may be able to take the assessment resource at home. It will be used as evidence alongside the range of other evidence which teachers have available to inform their assessments.

What if we haven't covered the content of some of the questions?

Schools and colleges will have the freedom to omit questions from assessment resources, if their students have not had reasonable opportunity to cover the content which is being assessed.

Will we still be taught everything?

Schools and colleges are encouraged to cover as much of the specification as possible to support progression. However, we recognise the significant disruption which students have faced during their course.

Schools and colleges may decide to continue to prioritise the units which they had prioritised when examination assessment was reduced prior to examinations being cancelled.

I scored poorly in my mock examinations, will this affect my overall grade?

Teachers have been asked to draw on a range of available evidence to inform their assessment and will wish to use more than one source of evidence such as a mock examination. It is vitally important that young people continue to engage with teaching and learning for the remainder of the academic year and are given opportunities to progress and develop. Schools and colleges will wish to give further opportunities for students to demonstrate what they know, understand and can do.

This is why schools and colleges will submit their outcomes to CCEA towards the end of May. All young people will also be given the opportunity to take the CCEA Assessment Resource, which may be used as evidence to inform their teachers' assessments.

How will you ensure outcomes are fair and consistent between schools and colleges?

Quality assurance is embedded throughout the alternative awarding arrangements. Significant support, guidance and training will be provided to strengthen teachers' and lecturers' understanding of how to consistently apply standards and make accurate assessment judgements. In addition, throughout June 2021, CCEA will carry out an external quality assurance process looking at the grades submitted and reviewing samples of students' work from all schools and colleges to make sure the grades submitted accurately reflect the evidence provided.

When will I get my results?

CCEA is working closely with awarding organisations in England and Wales, with the aim to agree a date for the release of results across all three jurisdictions. This will ensure students in Northern Ireland are not disadvantaged in regard to university admissions and all students here, including those taking qualifications with English and Welsh examination boards, will receive their results at the same time. Results will not be any later than the dates previously envisaged for exam results (24 August 2021 for AS and A Level and 27 August for GCSE) but may be earlier. As soon as a date is agreed, CCEA will advise schools, colleges and students.

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Will my grade be affected by my school's previous performance?

No, if CCEA has any concerns about the profile of grades submitted in any subject, it will initiate professional dialogue with the school or college. Students' grades will be based on the evidence which they produce and that evidence should be assessed against the specification for which the student is entered. Schools who do not have evidence of process or are not able to demonstrate that evidence has been assessed in line with the specification may be asked to revisit their grades awarded.

Will an algorithm be used to work out my grade?

No algorithm will be used. Schools and colleges will submit grades to CCEA towards the end of May 2021. Throughout June 2021, CCEA will carry out an external quality assurance process looking at the grades submitted from all centres and reviewing samples of students' work to make sure the grades submitted accurately reflect the evidence provided.

Will CCEA change my grade?

It is important to ensure fair and consistent standards between schools and colleges. Grades submitted by schools and colleges at the end of May are not the final awarded grades. CCEA will be carrying out external quality assurance across all centres in Northern Ireland.

If candidates' work has been reviewed and there is evidence to suggest judgments made in a subject or subjects are not secure, schools and colleges will be asked to re-run their processes and for grades to be resubmitted. If after this process, grades submitted are not secure, CCEA will provide support teams to work with centres where evidence and grades do not comply with the appropriate standard. Ultimately, and only in the most severe of circumstances, CCEA may withhold permission for the centre in a subject or subjects to proceed to award and may commence an investigation.

Are these qualifications less valuable?

No, the level of demand and standard for the qualifications is the same as in previous years. Higher Education providers and employers will see these as valid qualifications. Schools and learners should cover as much content as is possible to facilitate progression.

What about non-CCEA GCSEs or A Levels?

Your school will let you know if you are taking qualifications with non-CCEA awarding organisations and provide you with details about these qualifications.

For AS students - will my AS grades count towards my A Level in 2022?

The Education Minister has asked CCEA to examine how best to adapt GCSE and A Level qualifications for 2022 to ease burden and reflect the ongoing disruption to teaching and learning.

The Minister will make a further announcement on awarding arrangements for 2022 including the potential use of AS data for A Level awarding by the end of March 2021 or as soon as possible thereafter.

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For GCSE students - will the outcomes of my January 2020 or November 2020 GCSE examinations contribute towards my final grade?

The outcomes of these examinations are one source of evidence, which schools or colleges may wish to consider as part of a range of evidence. Students should, however, be reassured that wherever possible a range of evidence will inform a teacher's assessment of their grade.

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6. GLOSSARY OF KEY TERMS

GCE A Level	General Certificate of Education Advanced Level. These qualifications are designed to suit students aged 16 and over. These qualifications are at Level 3 on the Regulated Qualifications Framework. They are awarded on a grade scale from A* to E. If a student fails to attain at grade E or above, the grade awarded is reported as unclassified (U).
Alternative Awarding Arrangements	The name given to all of the arrangements for awarding qualifications in 2021. They are called 'alternative arrangements' because teacher assessments will replace examinations to determine students' grades.
GCE AS	General Certificate of Education Advanced Supplementary Level. These qualifications are usually taken in the first year of A Level study. For CCEA qualifications, they normally contribute 40% of the overall A Level qualification but are also standalone qualifications. AS qualifications are awarded on a five grade scale from A to E. If a student fails to attain at grade E or above, the grade awarded is reported as unclassified (U).
CCEA Assessment Resource	Exam style papers which contain unseen questions. Students will have the opportunity to take the assessment resource during April and May. The resource will be marked by their class teacher and is one piece of evidence to inform the Centre Determined Grade.
CCEA	The Council for Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment. CCEA is the Northern Ireland based awarding organisation for GCSE, AS and A Level qualifications.
Centre Determined Grades	In place of CCEA examinations in summer 2021, a student's grade in a subject will be based on the professional assessment of the evidenced standard at which they are performing. In Northern Ireland, these will be called <i>Centre Determined Grades</i>.

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GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education. These qualifications are designed to suit students at Key Stage 4 (Years 11 and 12). They are at Level 1/2 on the Regulated Qualifications Framework. They are usually completed by students at the end of Year 12. CCEA GCSEs are awarded at grades A* to G. If a student fails to attain at grade G or above, the grade awarded is reported as unclassified (U). Further information on grading is available on the CCEA website.
Moderation	Internal moderation is described as an activity between teachers, heads of departments/curriculum leaders and senior leadership team members in a school and college to check the accuracy of how teachers have assessed students Moderation involves looking through a selection of work to decide if students have demonstrated the necessary skills and standard for the grade that has been given. External moderation is where a trained moderator from CCEA will look at students' work to check that it has been marked accurately and consistently to the correct standard.
Non-Examination Assessment	Non-examination assessments measure subject-specific knowledge and skills that cannot be tested by timed written examinations papers. Many GCSE, AS and A Level qualifications include non-examination assessment, for example externally marked and/or externally set practical examinations, controlled assessment tasks, or coursework.