



# Changes to qualifications

GCSEs and A Levels are being reformed into linear qualifications. For further details including information specific to younger year groups, the following link is very helpful:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/timeline-of-changes-to-gcse-as-and-a-levels/changes-to-gcse-as-and-a-levels-that-will-affect-each-current-school-year-group>



Linear qualifications are assessed by exams at the end of the course, rather than by modules throughout the course. These reforms are being introduced in phases.

## Changes to qualifications

### AS and A Levels

Under the old system, the AS level was made up of two modules. Students could either bank those modules and get the AS Level (worth half an A Level) or go on to add a further two modules to make up the full A Level.

Under the new system, AS Levels are standalone qualifications worth half an A Level. Students can still take them, but the results do **not** count towards the final A Level grade. Students wishing to get a full A Level must study for two years and take all the exams at the end of Year 13.

NB There are still a number of subjects that are offered which are BTECs or Cambridge Technical qualifications. These include Business Studies, Sport, Applied Science, Health and Social Care and IT.

AS and A Level grades will still be A\*-E with U as a fail grade. These reforms have been phased in from 2015.

# Changes to qualifications

## GCSEs

GCSEs have already been reformed into linear qualifications, with all the assessment taken at the end of the course. New reforms are bringing in a revised grading system based on the numbers 9-1, with 9 being the highest, as follows:

**Ofqual**  
.....

### New GCSE grading structure

New grading structure	Current grading structure
9	
8	A*
7	A
6	B
5	
4	C
3	D
2	E
1	F
1	G
U	U

**GOOD PASS (DfE)**

5 and above = top of C and above

**AWARDING**

4 and above = bottom of C and above

Broadly the same proportion of students will achieve a grade 4 and above in the new GCSEs as currently achieve a grade C and above (shown by the dotted line). However, Grade 5 in the new GCSE will be a "good pass". Consequently fewer students nationally will achieve a "good pass" grade in the new GCSEs.

## Changes to qualifications

The GCSE reforms have been phased in since September 2015 with Maths + English followed by the majority of subjects after this.

### Practical Work

The new-style GCSEs place an increased emphasis on end-of-course exam assessment.

- Speaking and listening has already been removed from GCSE English Language. It is assessed and reported separately but does not count towards the final GCSE grade which is based 100% on exams.
- In the new style 9-1 Science GCSE, practical work will be carried out during the course and assessed solely in the exams at the end. There will be no "ISA" assessments of practical skills.
- Practical assessment remains part of the new-style GCSEs in (but in some cases, this is a reduction from previous years with a higher percentage of the final grade being assessed by terminal exam):
  - Art (60%)
  - Design and Technology (50% TBC)
  - Drama (60%)
  - PE (40%)
  - Modern Languages (25% speaking)
  - Music (30%)

All other new-style GCSEs are assessed completely on exams taken at the end of the course.