

Report to:	CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Relevant Officer:	Paul Turner, Head of School Standards, Safeguarding and Inclusion
Meeting	28 January 2021

EDUCATION ASSESSMENT UPDATE

1.0 Purpose of the report:

- 1.1 To inform the Committee of the headlines in relation to end of Primary Phase assessment, GCSE equivalent assessment and A-Level equivalent assessment in the 2019-2020 school year.
- 1.2 To share the current thinking about how the exams and assessments that were scheduled for summer 2021 will be replaced.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

- 2.1 That the Committee notes progress made to date and provides appropriate challenge and support to facilitate further improvement.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

- 3.1 To fulfil the Committee's scrutiny role in seeking assurance.
- 3.2 Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? N/A
- 3.3 Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? N/A

4.0 Other alternative options to be considered:

- 4.1 None

5.0 Council priority:

- 5.1 The relevant Council Priority is: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience.

6.0 Background information

- 6.1 No formal examinations took place in summer 2020 due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. To enable students to receive qualifications, it was announced that students who were due to sit A level, AS level or GCSE exams in the summer of 2020 would receive a calculated grade. For each student,

schools and colleges have provided a centre-assessed grade for each subject. This is the grade that their school or college believe that they would have achieved had exams gone ahead, taking into account a range of evidence including, for example, non-exam assessment and mock results. It was intended that these grades would be put through a process of standardisation, using a model developed with the Office of Qualifications and Examinations (Ofqual) to arrive at the final calculated grade.

- 6.2 On Monday 17 August 2020 Ofqual confirmed that there would no longer be a standardisation process for AS and A levels or GCSEs and instead all students would be awarded the centre assessment grade submitted by their school or college, unless it was lower than their calculated grade, in which case the calculated grade would stand. Unless there was evidence that a processing error had been made, these grades were to be final. Revised A and AS level grades went to schools and colleges on 19 August 2020, replacing the calculated grades that were issued on 13 August 2020.

Students were largely able to use the grades they received in the summer to move on to their next step.

- 6.3 Students who did not feel their final grade reflected their ability, or who were not able to receive a grade in the summer, had the opportunity to sit an exam in the autumn term. AS and A level exams took place in October and GCSE exams in November 2020.

- 6.4 The examination series for summer 2021 will now also not go ahead and Ofqual and the Government are now beginning a consultation on how best to proceed.

- 6.5 In light of the evolving public health measures, schools and colleges were able to continue with the vocational and technical exams that were due to take place in January 2021, where they judged it right to do so.

The following Primary School assessments scheduled between April and July 2021 have been cancelled:

- KS1 teacher assessments
- KS2 tests and teacher assessments
- Phonics screening check

Schools do not need to complete any further activities to prepare for these assessments. Local authorities will not need to undertake monitoring or moderation activities.

- 6.6 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

7.0 List of Appendices:

- 7.1 None

8.0 Financial considerations:

- 8.1 None

9.0 Legal considerations:

9.1 None

10.0 Risk management considerations:

10.1 None

11.0 Equalities considerations:

11.1 None

12.0 Sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations:

12.1 None

13.0 Internal/external consultation undertaken:

13.1 None

14.0 Background papers:

14.1 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-support-the-summer-2021-exams/guidance-to-support-the-summer-2021-exams?priority-taxon=b350e61d-1db9-4cc2-bb44-fab02882ac25>