

Rough Guide for Parents

to the Reforms to GCSE (2015-2019)

Introduction:

New courses at GCSE are set to be introduced between September 2015 and September 2017. There will also be changes to the way in which the examinations are graded. The introduction of these new courses is being staggered in three stages from September 2015 to September 2017, which is referred to in this document as the transition phase.

During the transition phase, students will possibly be taking a mixture of new and old courses and, in the case of GCSE between 2017 and 2019, they will be receiving results, some of which are graded in letters (old courses) and some in numbers (new courses). The changes at GCSE will impact on all those currently in Year 10 and below.

This document attempts to explain:

- a) what these changes are and when they will happen*
- b) how they will affect your child*

A: What these changes are and when will they happen:

- 1. The following new GCSE courses are being taught to our current Y10 students from September 2015 and first examined in June 2017**
 - Maths, English language and English literature (no single English)
 - More content, more demanding, more extended writing
 - Students will be examined at the end of the course in June 2017.

- 2. The following new GCSE courses will be taught from September 2016 and first examined in June 2018**
 - Science (double and triple), Modern Foreign languages, History, Geography, Computer Science, Art, Design & Technology, Drama, Dance, Physical Education, Music, Religious Studies
 - Internal teacher assessment will only be used where essential
 - More content, more emphasis on literacy and numeracy
 - Exam at the end of the course in June 2018.

- 3. The following new GCSEs will be taught from September 2017 and first examined in June 2019**
 - All remaining subjects
 - Similar approach in terms of teacher assessment, content and emphasis on literacy and numeracy
 - Exam at the end of the course in June 2019

4. Grading of new GCSEs

- 9 (highest) to 1 (lowest) will replace current grades A* to G in the new courses only between 2017 and 2019
- The top 20% of those awarded a 7 or above, will be awarded a 9.
- A 4 is roughly equivalent to a C
- A 7 and above is roughly equivalent to an A and above

B) How will they affect your child?

1. If your child is currently in Year 11

- He/she will complete the current GCSEs in June 2016 and will be unaffected by the reforms to GCSE.

2. If your child is currently in Year 10:

- He/she will take the new GCSE courses in Maths and English Literature and Language (para 1 above) being first taught from September 2015.
- His/her other GCSE courses will be the current, unreformed courses
- His/her grades for Maths and English in June 2017 at the end of the course will be shown as 9 to 1 (para 4 above in Section A)
- His/her grades in all other subjects will be published as A* to G

3. If your child is currently in Year 9:

- He/she will start the new GCSE courses in Maths and Science in Year 9 and the new GCSE English Literature and Language (para 1 above) in Year 10.
- He/she will also start the new GCSEs in Y10 in subjects that are being reformed for first teaching in September 2016 (para 2 above in section A)
- Depending on his/her GCSE options choice, he/she may also be taking a subject or subjects in Y10 (i.e. those not listed in para 1 or para 2) that are not being reformed for first teaching until September 2017
- For all the new courses, the grades at the end of the course in June 2018 will be expressed as 9 to 1 (para 4 above in Section A).

If he/she is also taking an unreformed course the grading will be A* to G

4. If your child is currently in Year 8 or Year 7:

- All the GCSE subjects will have been reformed in time for September 2017. Therefore, he/she will be taking the new courses in Y9/Y10 in every subject
- His/her grades in every subject will be expressed as 9 to 1 (para 4 above) when