

Contents

- What is happening, when?
- Reformed GCSEs
- Reformed AS and A levels
- Changes to practical science
- Resits
- Information about my school/college
- Changes to marking, reviews and appeals
- Further information



**What is happening,
when?**

Why and how are GCSEs, AS and A levels changing?

GCSEs and A levels in England are being reformed, to match the best systems in the world and keep pace with universities' and employers' demands.

- GCSE content will be more challenging but still suitable for a wide range of abilities
- GCSEs will be graded on a new scale of 9 to 1 rather than A* to G as before, with 9 the highest grade, to distinguish clearly between the reformed and unreformed qualifications
- A levels will allow more time for studying and better prepare students for university
- AS levels will be optional, stand alone qualifications



When do these reforms affect GCSE students?

Level	Start course in 2015, exams 2017	Start course in 2016, exams 2018	Start course in 2017, exams 2019	Start course in 2018, exams 2020
GCSE	English literature, English language and maths only.	English and maths plus... Art and design, biology, chemistry, citizenship studies (and short course), combined science, computer science, dance, drama, food preparation and nutrition, French, geography, German, classical Greek, history, Latin, music, physical education, physics, religious studies (including short course), and Spanish.	2015 and 2016 subjects plus... Ancient history, Arabic, astronomy, Bengali, business, Chinese, classical civilisation, design and technology, economics, electronics, engineering, film studies, geology, Italian, Japanese, media studies, modern Greek, modern Hebrew, Panjabi, PE short course, Polish, psychology, Russian, sociology, statistics, and Urdu.	All previous subjects plus... Gujarati, biblical Hebrew, Persian, Portuguese, and Turkish.



When do these reforms affect AS and A level students?

Level	Start course in 2015, A level exams 2017, AS level exams 2016	Start course in 2016, A level exams 2018, AS level exams 2017	Start course in 2017, A level exams 2019, AS level exams in 2018	Start course in 2018, A level exams 2020; no AS level exams available in these subjects
AS and A Level	Art and design, biology, business, chemistry, computer science, economics, English language, English language and literature, English literature, history, physics, psychology, and sociology.	2015 subjects plus... Dance, drama and theatre, French, geography, German, classical Greek, Latin, music, physical education, religious studies and Spanish.	2015 and 2016 subjects plus... Accounting, ancient history, Chinese, classical civilisation, design and technology, electronics, environmental science, film studies, further maths, geology, history of art, Italian, law, maths, media studies, music technology, philosophy, politics, Russian, and statistics.	All previous subjects plus... Arabic, Bengali, biblical Hebrew, Gujarati, modern Greek, modern Hebrew, Japanese, Panjabi, Persian, Portuguese Polish, Turkish, and Urdu.





Reformed GCSEs

Reformed GCSEs

- **Content** New and more challenging content
- **Structure** All exams at the end of the course
- **Assessment** Mainly by examination
Non-exam assessment only where necessary
- **Tiering** Foundation and higher tier permitted
only in maths, science and modern foreign languages
- **Grading** New numbered scale (9 to 1 plus U), 9 is the highest



New GCSE grading structure

Ofqual

Grading new GCSEs from 2017

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

In the first year, the same proportion of students will achieve a grade 7 and above

as currently get A and above

achieve a grade 4 and above

as currently get C and above

achieve a grade 1 and above

as currently get G and above

GCSE 9-1 grading – standard pass and strong pass

- A new GCSE grade 4 will be called a **standard pass**. For pupils, a grade 4 standard pass or above marks a similar level of achievement to a current grade C or above.
- Pupils achieving a grade 4 or above in English and maths will not be required to continue studying these subjects post-16.
- A new GCSE grade 5 or above will be called a **strong pass**. For schools, the proportion of pupils achieving a grade 5 or above strong pass in English and maths will be one of the headline performance measures.
- The Government will also publish GCSE performance measures at grade 4 and above. The Government will no longer be reporting on the “good pass” in school performance tables.

Ofqual

Grading new GCSEs from 2017

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

Department for Education

What a GCSE certificate might look like in 2017


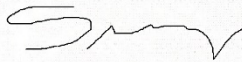

General Certificate of Secondary Education

This is to certify that the candidate named below was awarded the following grade(s) in the subject(s) shown:

A. CANDIDATE

Date of Birth: 1 January 2001

Drama	B (b)
English Language	4 (four)
English Spoken Language	Merit
Geography	A (a)
Mathematics	6 (six)
Physics	D (d)

Signature A Signature B



Reformed AS and A levels

Reformed AS level

- **Content** Drawn from the new A level content
- **Demand** Same as current AS qualifications
- **Structure** AS is now a separate qualification with the marks no longer counting towards A level
May not be offered in all subjects in your school or college
Taught over 1 or 2 years
Exams at end of the course
- **Assessment** Mainly by examination
Non-exam assessment only where necessary
- **Grading** Remains A to E plus U



Reformed A levels

- **Content** Changes to better prepare students for university
- **Demand** Same as current A levels
- **Structure** All exams at the end of the two-year course
Marks from the AS do not count towards the A level
- **Assessment** Mainly by examination
Non-exam assessment only where necessary
- **Grading** Remains A* to E plus U
A separate grade for science practical work



Awarding

- The standards of AS and A levels are not being changed; typically students who would have got Bs previously will get a B in reformed subjects.
- Exam boards will still use predictions (based on GCSE prior attainment) to guide their awards
- Key grade boundaries will be set, as now, using predictions and senior examiner judgement of students' work
- No UMS (uniform mark scale) – decoupling means there is no need for UMS which helped standardise results across units, qualifications and boards in a modular system



Changes to Practical Science

Practical science assessment

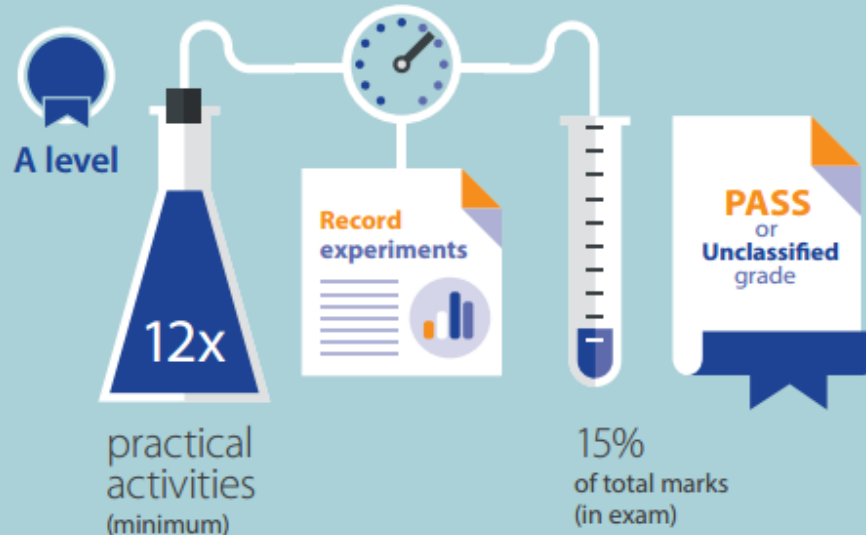
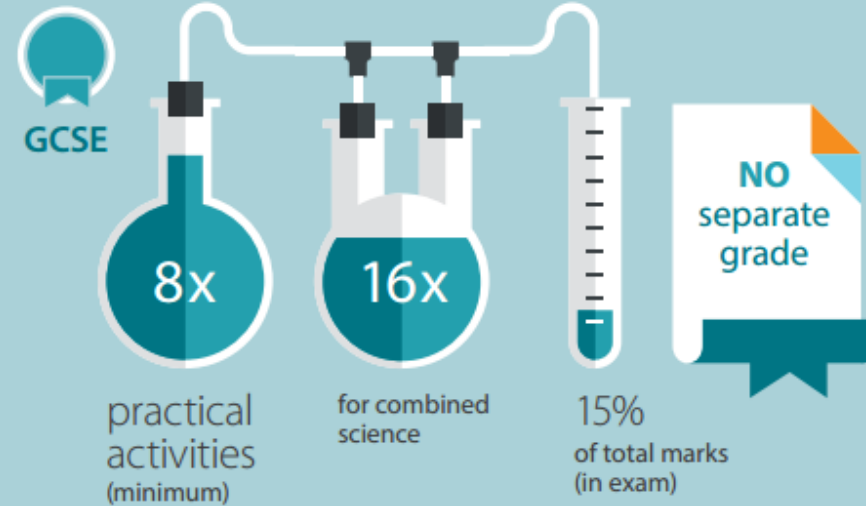
GCSE:

- Students do at least 8 practical activities (16 for combined science) covering specific techniques
- Written questions about practical work will make up at least 15% of the total marks for the qualification
- There will be no separate grade for practical skills
- Students studying combined science will receive one of 17 grades from 9-9 (highest) to 1-1 (lowest)

A level:

- More practicals – at least 12 in each science subject
- Written questions about practical work will make up at least 15% of the total marks for the qualification
- Students will need to record their experiments as they do them
- Students' competence in practicals will be reported separately ('pass' or 'not classified')
- Practical 'pass' for A level science likely to be required by universities – **check admissions information**

Improving science practicals



GCSE science grading

- Students taking **separate science** GCSEs will get a grade from 9 to 1 for each subject, with 9 being the highest grade.
- Students studying **combined science** will receive an award worth two GCSEs, consisting of two equal or adjacent grades from 9 to 1 e.g. (9-9, 9-8, 8-8, 8-7, 7-7...to 1-1).
- We considered a 9-point scale from 9-9 to 1-1 but we believed it would be unfair for students to lose (or gain) two whole grades at each grade boundary.
- If the numbers are different, the highest number will always be reported on the left.
- The new grades have been brought in to signal that GCSEs have been reformed and to better differentiate between students of different abilities

GCSE COMBINED SCIENCE

DOUBLE AWARD GRADE COMBINATIONS





Resits

Will there be an opportunity to resit?

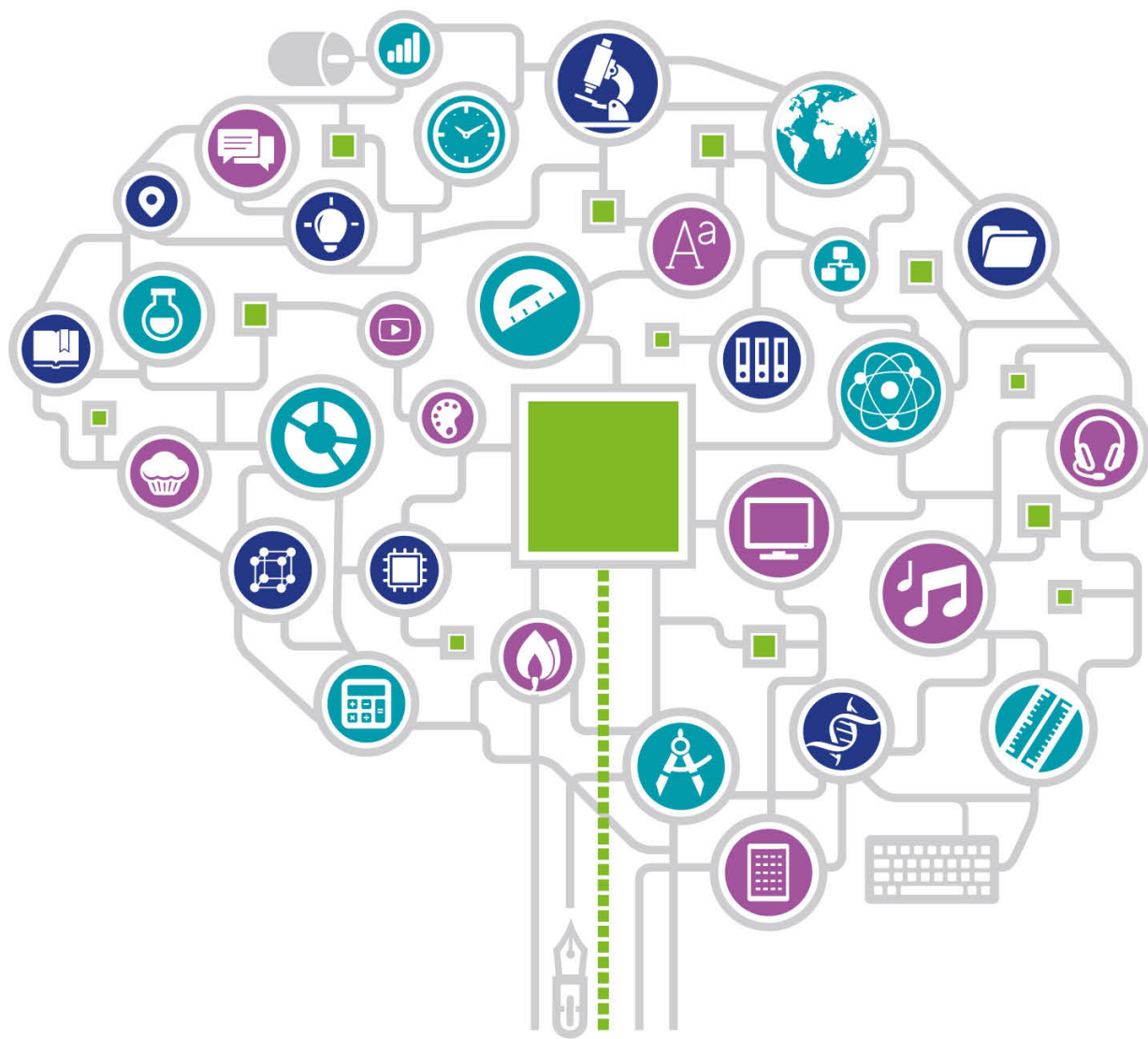
- All legacy AS and A levels will have a resit the year after the last scheduled sitting - students will be able to resit any AS or A2 units (including non-exam assessment)
- A level resits are available to those that have taken the qualification before or who have had reason not to take it as planned
- To resit legacy GCSE English, English language and maths in summer 2017, students must have been 16 or older on or before 31 August 2016
- All legacy GCSE science and additional science qualifications (not individual sciences) will have resits no later than summer 2018
- Exam boards may also offer resits in any other GCSE subject – including biology, chemistry and physics – in the year after the last sitting
- GCSE resits are available to those that have taken the qualifications previously, had good reason not to take it, or who were 16 or older on 31 August in the year of the last scheduled sitting
- For reformed GCSEs, students can resit in the following summer or in November for English language and maths

Will there be an opportunity to resit reformed GCSEs or A levels?

- Students will be able to resit GCSE maths and English language in a November exam series, subject to students being at least 16 on 31 August the preceding year
- For all other GCSE and all AS and A levels, as now, students will resit by taking the qualification again the following year



Department
for Education



Information About My School / College

Key stage 4 measures

The key stage 4 headline measures encourage a broad and balanced curriculum with a strong emphasis on an academic core:

- New focus on pupil progress – Progress 8 measures pupils' progress in 8 qualifications. These are:

English

maths

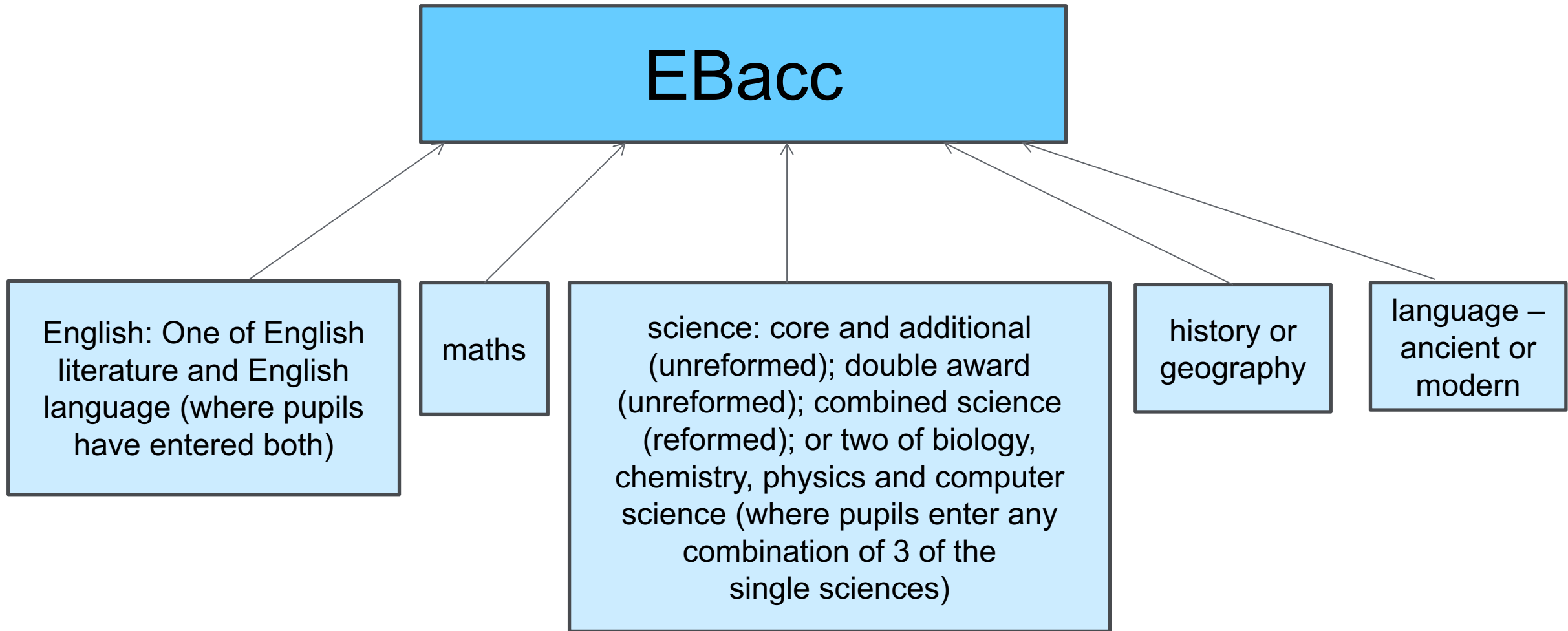
Three of: science, computer science, history, geography and languages

Any three other approved qualifications

- Attainment 8 measures pupils achievements in the same subjects
- Percentage of pupils achieving a grade 5 or above strong pass in English and maths
- Percentage of pupils entering the English Baccalaureate (EBacc), and EBacc achievement.



The English Baccalaureate measure



Post-16 school/college measures

- As for secondary schools, the Department for Education's new post-16 performance measures place more emphasis on the progress of students.
- There are five headline measures:
 - **Progress** – how well are students progressing?
 - **Attainment** – are they getting good grades?
 - **Retention** – are they dropping out?
 - **English and maths** – for students who did not get a grade 4 or above standard pass in these subjects at GCSE
 - **Destinations** – are they getting university/college places, apprenticeships and jobs?





Reviews of marking and appeals

Reviews of marking and appeals

- If schools and students are dissatisfied with their results they can seek a review of the mark they have received. We expect all marking errors to be found and corrected.
- Exam boards must change a student's marks when they find a marking or moderation error.
- Their reviewers must be specially trained to undertake reviews and exam boards must monitor their work.
- Exam boards must give reasons for the outcome of a review to schools and colleges if they want to see them.
- If a school or college remains concerned about an outcome following a review, it can appeal to the exam board.



Further Information

Responsibilities for Qualifications

■ **Government:**

- Policy, purposes and priorities
- Curriculum and subject content
- Use of qualifications for school/college accountability purposes

■ **Ofqual:**

- Standards
- Validity
- Efficiency and value
- Oversight of the system

■ **Exam Boards:**

- Design and delivery
- Award qualifications to students

