

## GCSE Results FAQs 2022/23 and Support Information

### How were grades arrived at this year?

In 2020 and 2021 results nationally rose. This was due to the different type of assessment used. As 2022 was the first-year exams were held, the government had to decide how to approach grading. It decided that the fairest system was a transition year between 2021 national results and 2019 national results.

This means that results for each qualification will roughly be around the midpoint although this won't be exact.

### Were students marked more harshly than last year?

No. It is important to remember the difference between marking and grading. This year, exam board markers marked papers in exactly the same way, using the same mark schemes as they had done previously (2019 and before).

Once enough marks were received, exam boards then set grade boundaries in line with the policy above. This means that grade boundaries are likely to be lower than the last time they were set (2019) to allow for more students than normal to achieve each grade. The grade boundaries for each qualification will be released on results days.

### Does this mean grades were arrived at by algorithm?

No. Ultimately, the starting point for a student's grade is the work they produce in the exam. Their marks across all their papers are then compared to other candidates' marks nationally. As above, grade boundaries are then set by the exam boards who were asked to aim for a midpoint between 2019 and 2021 grades.

However, experienced examiners and subject leads in the boards could, as in a normal year, argue that the performance of candidates is stronger, and so more candidates can achieve higher grades. This is unlikely to have happened this year, as grading was already more generous than normal exam years.

## **How is this fair to students who have been so affected by the pandemic?**

It's important to remember that all students taking exams this year are in the same boat. A range of other mitigations to reflect lost learning were put in place (see below). For the purpose of selection (e.g. apprenticeship admissions), all students in this year's cohort have been graded in the same way. The ongoing impact of the pandemic will not have been equal across candidates, even within a single school, college or trust, or even within a single class. It would therefore have been impossible to try to adjust marking or grading at an individual level.

## **What other mitigations were put in place?**

As well as more generous grading compared to a normal year, the exam boards provided:

- advanced information about what was or wasn't on the exam paper, which was released in the spring;
- formula and equation sheets in some STEM subjects;
- less content and optionality in GCSE English literature, history and geography;
- changes to coursework and practical work in some subjects;

## **Support for managing stress:**

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/student-and-parent-support/managing-stress-when-waiting-for-results>

## **AQA student and parents support page:**

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/student-and-parent-support/results-day>