

Changes to 2021 exams and assessments – what we know so far

With vaccination programmes starting to make real progress around the world, many hopes are being raised that the pandemic will be brought under control in the not-too-distant future. In the meantime, case numbers are unfortunately rising again, so while an end may be in sight, it does mean that there will be more changes for those students taking exams before heading to university in the UK this autumn.

It may be too early to be able to fully assess what this means for your students applying, but this email summarises the information we have so far – we'll keep you posted as more is confirmed. In 2020, UK and international awarding bodies worked hard to conduct exams and assessments in the same way – but whether this is the best option for 2021 remains to be seen.

International A-levels

While final arrangements are pending, the main international A-level organisations are mostly leaning towards running exams and assessments wherever it is safe to do so. Cambridge International and Pearson International A-Levels have made stronger statements about their intention to run exams in May or June 2021, highlighting feedback from their schools that exams running as usual is the preference and the fairest option for students. Oxford AQA have not currently indicated how they will manage summer assessments.

International Baccalaureate

International Baccalaureate exams are currently scheduled to take place as planned in May 2021. However, International Baccalaureate are currently talking to their global network of schools and assessing whether this remains possible in light of local situations and public health regulations.

Advanced Placement Tests

Advanced Placement tests (AP) are being scheduled for May and June 2021, and are also preparing arrangements to offer 'a full length digital contingency exam' to those unable to sit physical tests due to restrictions related to the pandemic.

UK qualifications

All UK exams are cancelled this year. We are still waiting confirmation on how grades will be awarded for each UK qualification.

Universities are still expecting to welcome students this September from all round the world and even though the process is a little unusual this year, UCAS and the universities will be doing all

they can to help students through this uncertain time.

Get our updates

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