

Exams

Legal references on this page apply to England.

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Ofqual Consultation Outcome

A [statement published by Ofqual on May 5th 2020](#) said: "We said in our consultation decision document that we could not identify any reliable way to calculate grades for private candidates who could not be included within a centre's cohort of students. **No workable possibilities were advanced by respondents to the consultation and we have decided that private candidates can be included only through centres.**

"There was broad support for our proposal to only allow exam boards to issue results for private candidates for whom the Head of Centre is confident they can submit a centre assessment grade and include them in the centre's rank order. The majority of respondents considered this necessary for the fairness and integrity of the approach. Most of those who disagreed were students who are private candidates themselves and their parents or carers.

"We have worked with exam boards to explore options for private candidates to receive grades this summer. Last week, the boards set out new guidance, and we published [an update to our Information document](#), about the alternative sources of evidence a school or college might consider where it does not have sufficient evidence about a student's attainment to submit a centre assessment grade and rank order information. It also confirms that some students may transfer to another centre ahead of the grading process if the centre where they had registered decides it cannot submit a centre assessment grade. In this case, some other centres may be able to work with private candidates who need a grade this summer in order to progress. So that the grading process is fair, the Head of Centre must have the same level of confidence in the grade and rank order position as for all other students when providing information to the exam board."

More links [here](#)

On April 15th 2020 Ofqual launched a very SHORT consultation (CLOSING APRIL 29TH) on grading exams during covid 19. The consultation discusses the impact for private candidates. Please respond to the consultation if this affects your family and be sure to use [the online response form](#). More details [here](#).

<https://groups.io/g/HE-Exams>
[Home Educators Exams Wiki](#)

[Special Needs Access Arrangements](#) special accommodation in exams eg extra time, reader, scribe, rest breaks, modified paper. <http://www.dmurphytutoring.co.uk/blog/access-arrangements-in-examinations> MUST-READ BLOG ON ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS AND PRIVATE CANDIDATES, FEBRUARY 2016. See also <http://www.senmagonline.co.uk/index.php/component/k2/item/151557-access-arrangements> and [this webinar](#) (November 2016)

Introduction

Analysis of local authority support for exams when children are home educated [More](#)



Home educated young people take exams as private candidates which involves selecting an exam board with suitable courses and finding an exam centre. State schools don't generally let young people who aren't registered pupils go in to sit exams.

[DfE explains how external candidates results don't affect schools](#) November 29th 2013

Some home educating families find that it is not necessary to take as many exams as children do in school and there may be flexibility or non-standard entry where colleges understand more about the applicant's background. Home educators also tend to begin exams earlier. In some cases it's been possible for home educated young people to sit exams as external candidates in private schools. Home educating families tend to progress through the course material by self-study working through recommended textbooks. Families can also set up their own tutor groups.



The reason why home educators tend to use centres which are already up and running rather than setting up their own registered exam centre are to do with [the rules for becoming an exam centre](#)

IGCSEs

A growing number of home educating families opt to take IGCSEs because of the difficulties of arranging to sit GCSEs. The main exam boards or awarding bodies for IGCSEs are [CIEc](#) and [Pearson Edexcel](#). More exam centres are registered with Edexcel though this does not necessarily mean that the centre will accept private candidates for IGCSEs.

Online A Levels and Science Practicals

<https://online.pembrokeshire.ac.uk/exams/> Pembrokeshire College. See also [the wiki Science A Level page](#).

How can you get science laboratory experience, or conduct practical science investigations, from home education? This page is for KS4 (GCSE-level) and beyond, with ideas for workshops, residential courses, and how to approach practical work from home - see the wiki page http://he-exams.wikia.com/wiki/Science_Practicals

New Style GCSEs and A Levels

New GCSEs will be graded 9 to 1, rather than A* to G. Grade 9 is the highest grade, set above the current A*. The grades were given for the first time in 2017 results for specifications that first started teaching in 2015. By 2019, all GCSE results will be using the new system. [More](#)

In July 2014 the Department for Education announced that GCSE alternative qualifications - including IGCSEs - would not count towards school performance tables from 2017. [More](#)

Alternative Qualifications and Courses

[links to](#) Access to Music Crest Awards (Science); John Muir Awards (Environment, conservation); Smallpeice Trust (Engineering, short residential courses); University of Kent Space School (Astronomy, short residential course); University of Leicester Space School; ASDAN awards

Exam Centre Run By Home Educators

Faregos Exam Centre run by home educators for home educators, Hampshire + Home education Exams tutor groups, Hampshire and Hampshire/Berkshire border [More](#)

Useful Links

[JCQ Rules for Becoming an Exam Centre](#) [Survey of Local Authorities Help Finding Exam Centre](#) [Home Educators Experience of Finding Exam Centre](#) INCLUDING TAKING A LEVELS AT HOME [AQA web page for private candidates](#) [List of exam centres used by AQA private candidates in the past](#) [Edexcel Private Candidates FAQ](#) [Edexcel Private Candidate Centres](#) [Past Papers and Mark Schemes AQA](#) [Past Papers and Mark Schemes Edexcel](#) [Xtreme Papers](#) (past papers etc) [Home Education English Literature/Language Distance Learning](#) [Home Education Science Distance Learning](#) Sam Martell and Clare Patrick [Home education tutor, Home Counties](#) Covers ID, Subject code, cash-in code, unit code, component code, specification, syllabus number, tier, candidate number, centre number, statement of entry, Unique Candidate Identifier (UCI), Unique Learner Number (ULN) [Eddis Tutorial Guide for Private Candidates](#) [Eddis Tutorial FAQ Exams Private Candidates](#) [Home Ed Friendly Centre, Wales](#) [Forum for Private Candidates](#) [Home Ed Friendly Centre, Wales 2](#) [Exams Officers News from DfE](#) [Northstar CIE IGCSE Exam Centre](#) [Revision technique](#) using active recall testing and spaced repetition [Student Room Discussion A Levels as Private Candidate](#) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/learning-records-service-personal-learning-record> Personal Learning Record

Compulsory English and Maths 16+

The Department for Education has recognised that IGCSEs will count as equivalent "for the foreseeable future." Please see the letter from the Minister for Skills and Equalities [here](#) ([pdf here](#))

Students must study maths and/or English as part of their programme in each academic year. This applies to students aged 16 to 18 (and 19 to 25 with an education, health and care (EHC) plan) who do not hold a GCSE grade 9 to 4, A* to C (a standard pass grade) or equivalent qualification in these subjects doing a programme of 150 hours or more, which started on or after 1 August 2014.

"We have made a change to our maths and English condition of funding guidance that will apply from academic year 2019 to 2020. The change means that students with a grade 2 or below in maths or English can study towards a pass in functional skills level 2 (legacy or reformed) or they can still study towards a GCSE grade 9 to 4. Once they have achieved this, there is no requirement to undertake further maths or English qualifications to meet the condition of funding. Full time students with a grade 3 must still study an eligible GCSE qualification in order to meet the condition of funding. Part time students with a grade 3 can still study any qualification approved to meet the condition of funding as a stepping stone towards achieving a GCSE grade 9 to 4. This adjustment allows providers and students with prior attainment of GCSE grade 2 and below, to choose which level 2 qualification is most appropriate." [the DfE web page](#) (last updated February 13th 2019)

GCSE Condition of Funding Exemption

Students with SEND exemption

"Where a student with SEND does not hold a GCSE grade 9 to 4, A to C or equivalent qualification in maths and/or English, an*

institution may decide that it is not appropriate for them to study for a GCSE or a stepping stone qualification. In this case, in addition to the student's EHC plan, the institution must hold an evidenced assessment that the student is not able to study these subjects. All exemptions must be considered on a case by case basis. There is no blanket exemption for whole institutions."

[GOV.UK Link](#)

Home Education 14-16 College Funding

Home educated young people aged 14-16 in England are able to attend college and the Government will pay for the course.

<http://edyourself.org/articles/14-16collegeFAQ.php>

End Old-Style (Legacy) maths English GCSEs for Under-16s

In August 2016 the Government published [this updated paper](#) on legacy English and maths GCSEs linked from [this page](#) confirming the Ofqual decision issued in March (see below). Depending on the GCSE syllabus offered by the college, this could affect some [home educated 14-16 students](#) on infill college courses for 16+ GCSEs beginning September 2016 with exams in September 2017.

March 2016: [Ofqual says](#) "At GCSE will require exam boards to provide: two resit opportunities in relation to legacy GCSEs in English, English language and mathematics (including linked pair maths GCSEs – 'applications of mathematics' and 'methods in mathematics'), one in November 2016 and one in summer 2017. **The summer 2017 resit will be limited to candidates aged 16 or over on 31 August 2016.**"

[Ofqual says](#) "only those students who have taken the qualification previously, who have good reason not to have taken it when planned (such as illness), or who are aged 16 or above on 31 August in the year of the last scheduled sitting can take these resits." (I think this means if someone has taken the GCSE before or intended to, then they DON'T have to be 16 for the November 2016 resit)

<https://www.tes.com/news/further-education/breaking-news/students-given-two-final-chances-resit-legacy-gcse> March 2016

[Ofqual also announced](#) a resit opportunity, **no later than summer 2018**, in all GCSE science and additional science qualifications, adding "exam boards may decide to offer GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry and Physics but we will not require them to." Further explanation of legacy resits [here](#)

Apprenticeships (England)

Paid apprenticeships combine on the job training with study. Apprentice pay rates are [here](#). Starting pages about apprenticeships can be found [here](#) and [here](#). There is a national apprenticeship scheme where you can search for an apprenticeship near you. [LINK](#). You can apply as soon as you are 16, provided you have the relevant qualifications. Entry is competitive. Minimum entry qualifications are strictly applied (although IGCSEs can now count) [LINK](#)

NB for home educators, there is **LESS FLEXIBILITY** with apprenticeships and the 14-16 home education funding from the Education Funding Agency **DOES NOT APPLY**. Check [here](#) or [here](#) for the latest funding rules.

[Traineeship](#) requirements are not as stringent, although you must also be 16. A traineeship is a course with work experience that gets you ready for work or an apprenticeship. It can last up to 6 months.

End Modular A Levels

[timetable for changes AS and A Level](#) updated June 2015

[Ofqual](#)

Speaking and Listening Component

Speaking and listening assessments will not count towards final grades in GCSE English and English language for awards made from Summer 2014. [More](#)

Changes to A Level Resits

[Legacy A Level Resits](#), Ofqual March 2016

Open University for Under-18s

Some home educated young people under the age of 18 take courses with the Open University and obtain sufficient credits either to continue with a full OU degree or to apply to a bricks and mortar university. **Funding has changed in England**. More information [here](#)

[Tamsyn Fortune Wood: OU as route to Birmingham City University](#)

[Home Education Exams Wiki: experiences of Open University](#)

[Open University Policy Under 18s](#)
[OU Fees](#)
[Alex Dowty: OU as route to Oxford](#)

Related Pages about Home Education and Exams

[FAQ for Exam Officers External Candidates](#)
[Analysis Local Authority Help With Exams](#)
[Special Arrangements for Exams](#)
[Westminster Meetings Discussing Exams Access](#)
[Education Committee Recommendations re Exam Support](#)
[FAQ Exams for Private Candidates](#)
[Case Studies Home Education and Exams](#)
[Survey Local Authority Help with Exam Access](#)
[Removing Private Candidates from Schools Results Tables](#)

Ofsted Guidance

Click [here](#) for Ofsted guidance on home education to inspectors, April 2015.

We recommend that the Government place a duty on every local authority to ensure access to local centres for home-educated young people to sit accredited public examinations. (Paragraph 43) [Education Committee Report Support Home Education](#)

[Sir Michael Wilshaw, Ofsted](#): When we inspect local authorities we will be asking are local authorities supporting children at home and funding access to qualifications and examinations

Link Reference

This article is <http://edyourself.org/articles/exams.php>. The following links to other websites are contained in the article, displayed as citations to aid you in printing the document.

1. Home Educators Exams Wiki http://he-exams.wikia.com/wiki/HE_Exams_Wiki
2. this webinar <http://ehe-sen.org.uk/exams.php>
3. More <http://edyourself.org/articles/examsreport.php>
4. DfE explains how external candidates results don't affect schools <http://edyourself.org/articles/privatecandidates.php>
5. the rules for becoming an exam centre <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations>
6. Pearson Edexcel. <http://www.cie.org.uk/programmes-and-qualifications/cambridge-secondary-2/cambridge-igcse/>
7. the wiki Science A Level page http://he-exams.wikia.com/wiki/Science_A-levels
8. http://he-exams.wikia.com/wiki/Science_Practicals http://he-exams.wikia.com/wiki/Science_Practicals
9. links to <http://edyourself.org/articles/hesfestalks2014.php#14-19>
10. More <http://edyourself.org/faregos.pdf>
11. JCQ Rules for Becoming an Exam Centre <http://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/general-regulations>
12. AQA web page for private candidates <http://www.aqa.org.uk/student-support/private-candidates>
13. List of exam centres used by AQA private candidates in the past <http://www.aqa.org.uk/student-support/private-candidates/finding-a-school-or-college>
14. Edexcel Private Candidates FAQ <http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/support-topics/understanding-our-qualifications/where-c-an-i-take-edexcel-exams.html/student>
15. Edexcel Private Candidate Centres <http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/support-topics/understanding-our-qualifications/where-c-an-i-take-edexcel-exams.html/student>
16. Past Papers and Mark Schemes AQA <http://www.aqa.org.uk/exams-administration/exams-guidance/find-past-papers-and-mark-schemes>
17. Xtreme Papers <http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/support-topics/exams/past-papers.html/student>
18. Home Education English Literature/Language Distance Learning <http://www.catherinemoonetutoring.co.uk/>
19. Home Education Science Distance Learning <http://www.echo.education/>
20. Eddis Tutorial Guide for Private Candidates <http://www.eddistutorial.com/private-candidates.html>
21. Eddis Tutorial FAQ Exams Private Candidates <http://www.eddistutorial.com/frequently-asked-questions-faq.html>
22. Home Ed Friendly Centre, Wales <http://homeedpartners.co.uk/>
23. Forum for Private Candidates <http://studentforums.biz/>
24. Home Ed Friendly Centre, Wales 2 <http://online.pembrokeshire.ac.uk/>
25. Northstar CIE IGCSE Exam Centre <http://examswithnsw.org/fees/>
26. Student Room Discussion A Levels as Private Candidate <http://ankisrs.net/>
27. <http://edyourself.org/articles/14-16collegeFAQ.php> <http://edyourself.org/articles/14-16collegeFAQ.php>
28. home educated 14-16 students <http://edyourself.org/articles/14-16collegeFAQ.php>
29. here <http://www.ocr.org.uk/ocr-for/exams-officers/support-and-tools/siu/legacy-resit-arrangements-040516/>
30. More <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20141031163546/http://ofqual.gov.uk/news/changes-to-gcse-english-and-english-language/>

31. Tamsyn Fortune Wood: OU as route to Birmingham City University <http://www.home-education.org.uk/articles/article-open-university.pdf>
32. Home Education Exams Wiki: experiences of Open University http://he-exams.wikia.com/wiki/Open_University
33. Open University Policy Under 18s <http://www.open.ac.uk/students/charter/essential-documents>
34. OU Fees <http://www.open.ac.uk/courses/fees-and-funding>
35. Alex Dowty: OU as route to Oxford <http://www.thesundaytimes.co.uk/sto/Migration/article187261.ece>
36. FAQ for Exam Officers External Candidates <http://edyourself.org/articles/examofficers.php>
37. Analysis Local Authority Help With Exams <http://edyourself.org/articles/examsreport.php>
38. Special Arrangements for Exams <http://ehe-sen.org.uk/exams.php>
39. Westminster Meetings Discussing Exams Access <http://edyourself.org/articles/allpartygrouphomeeducation.php>
40. Education Committee Recommendations re Exam Support <http://edyourself.org/articles/edcomsupporthomeed.php>
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43. Survey Local Authority Help with Exam Access <http://edyourself.org/articles/examcentresurvey.php>
44. Removing Private Candidates from Schools Results Tables <http://edyourself.org/articles/privatecandidates.php>
45. Education Committee Report Support Home Education <http://edyourself.org/articles/edcomsupporthomeed.php>
46. Sir Michael Wilshaw, Ofsted <http://www.parliament.uk/documents/commons-committees/Education/EdC130213CORRECTEDTRANSCRIPT.doc>