

CABINET STATEMENT

Written Statement: Independent Review of the Arrangements to Award General Qualifications in Summer 2020

Kirsty Williams, Education Minister

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On 28 August 2020 I announced the establishment of an Independent Review to look at the summer 2020 arrangements to award grades, and to give consideration to arrangements for summer 2021. In doing so, I invited Louise Casella, the Director of The Open University in Wales, to act as Chair and to establish a Review Panel, whose membership includes:

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- Professor Alma Harris, Deputy Head of Swansea University School of Education. International Council Adviser to First Minister and Deputy Minister, Scotland;
- Rosemary Jones OBE, School Improvement Advisor, Education Consultant and former Headteacher; and
- Andy Youell, freelance data and systems specialist, formerly Director of Data Policy and Governance at the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA).

Today I welcome the publication of their [final report](#) and would like to thank all members of the Review Panel, including Dr Sue Hybart for the support she also provided, for their hard work in undertaking this important task. I am also extremely grateful to all the learners and their families, practitioners and stakeholders right across the education sector who came forward to share their views and experience.

This publication marks the second report from the Review Panel, the first of which was published in October 2020 and informed my decision to cancel examinations in 2021, alongside the expert advice of Qualifications Wales and my discussions with education stakeholders and partners within and beyond Wales.

Today's report has been considered by the Design and Delivery Advisory Group of school headteachers and college leaders who have been working to develop revised arrangements for qualifications in 2021.

I am grateful for the work of the Review Panel, alongside the work of the Design and Delivery Advisory Group, and the expertise and flexibility of approach provided by Qualifications Wales and WJEC, in enabling me to make my 20 January announcement on qualifications in 2021. This announcement set out my intention that learners undertaking GCSE, AS and A levels approved by Qualifications Wales will have their qualifications awarded through a Centre Determined Grade model.

While there is still important work to do in finalising some of the details of the Centre Determined Grade model, it is my sincere hope and expectation that our education system can continue to work together to support the progression of our learners in exam years, both through the delivery of these assessment arrangements and through a wider package of support.

I want to thank each and every learner and education professional for their ongoing flexibility and adaptability in responding to the situation in which we find ourselves. Your individual and collective contribution to the national effort against Covid-19 is truly humbling.

[Independent Review](#)

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