



## FAQ's on A Level Reform

### 1. Why have A Level Reforms taken place?

According to reports which have been commissioned by Ofqual, reasons stated are:

- A levels need to challenge and stretch students further.
- There is a perceived lack of consistency between exam boards and subjects regarding level of difficulty.
- There is a current lack of synoptic assessment skills in A2 due to the modular format.
- Universities want A levels to more effectively prepare students for tertiary level education learning requirements.
- Universities have requested higher differentiation between students' achievement rates.

### 2. What Reforms have taken place already?

- January Examinations have been removed from all Ofqual regulated A Levels. If students wish to re-sit AS units they need to enrol in the June 2014 session. (IAL's are excluded from this but only one re-sit per unit is permitted.)

### 3. What other changes will take place?

- For students who begin the course in September 2015, the A levels will be linear with examinations at the end of the two year period. The first examinations will be in June 2017.
- The AS will become a stand- alone qualification; it will no longer automatically form the first part of an A2 level.
- As from September 2015, there will be revised curriculum content for the following subjects:
  - Art and Design
  - English Language and English literature
  - Biology
  - Business Studies
  - Chemistry
  - Computing
  - Economics
  - Geography
  - History
  - Physics
  - Psychology
  - Sociology
- As from September 2016, there will be revised curricula for Mathematics and Further Mathematics.



## FAQ's on A Level Reform

### 4. What sort of changes are anticipated in terms of curricula?

We do not know for sure as yet as the issues are still being researched and debated.

However, possible outcomes are:

- Inclusion of long answer type questions to test synoptic skills at the end of the A level course.
- A reduction in the percentage of marks assigned to coursework units.
- Possible internally marked, externally moderated, practical work assessments for Science subjects, in addition to the 100% externally marked written exam papers, to appear as a separate grade on the results statement.

### 5. How is the English School preparing for the new A levels?

- Heads of Department are in touch with the exam boards' subject leaders and kept informed about decisions, as they are confirmed.
- All teachers have the opportunity to attend training sessions, either locally or remotely, via webinars.
- We are in constant contact with regional exam board representatives, via phone and e-mail.
- Members of the senior management meet regularly with exam board executives.
- Information about the GCE reform is shared with teachers as it becomes available.
- Parents' meetings will be held when sufficient information is available.

### 6. What do I need to do as a parent?

At the moment all you need to do is to continue to support your child's progress as you do already. We will inform you when we have more specific information about the changes.

The English School. November 2013