

GCSEs are being reformed: the grading system is moving from letters (A*-G) to a numerical 9 to 1 system, with 9 the highest grade.

Content of the new GCSEs is more challenging: new grades are being introduced to signal that these are reformed GCSEs, and to better differentiate between students of different abilities.

At school level, it is important to emphasise that the results of the reformed GCSEs **cannot** be compared with the old GCSEs as they are entirely new courses with a new grading system.

The new grading structure is not directly equivalent to the A*-G system.

However, in the first year that each new GCSE subject is introduced, broadly the same proportion of students will get grades 1, 4, and 7 and above, as would have achieved grades G, C and A and above respectively under the old system.

Fewer grade 9s will be awarded than A*s.

2017: examinations in the first three reformed GCSEs (English language, English literature and maths) were sat this summer. They will be graded 9 to 1. All other subjects will be graded A*-G.

2018: examinations will be sat for the first time in another 20 reformed subjects under the 9 to 1 grading system, with most other GCSEs following in 2019. Ofqual has published a timetable which can be read **here**.

How the new 9 to 1 grades compare (Ofqual)

New grading structure	Current grading structure
9	
8	A*
7	A
6	B
5	C
4	
3	D
2	E
1	F
	G
U	U

The government has decided to describe a grade 4 as a 'standard pass' and a grade 5 as a 'strong pass'.

A grade 4 and above is equivalent to a C and above: if pupils do not achieve this level they will be required to continue studying English and maths post-16. Where employers, FE providers and universities currently accept a grade C, they are expected to continue recognising a grade 4.

The grade 5 'strong pass' is being used as a school performance measure. In school performance tables, the government will publish the proportion of students achieving a grade 4 and above, and intends to publish the proportion of students achieving a grade 5 and above. **This will not affect individual pupils.**

These changes are only happening in England. Wales and Northern Ireland are not introducing the new 9 to 1 grading scale.

Any questions?

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