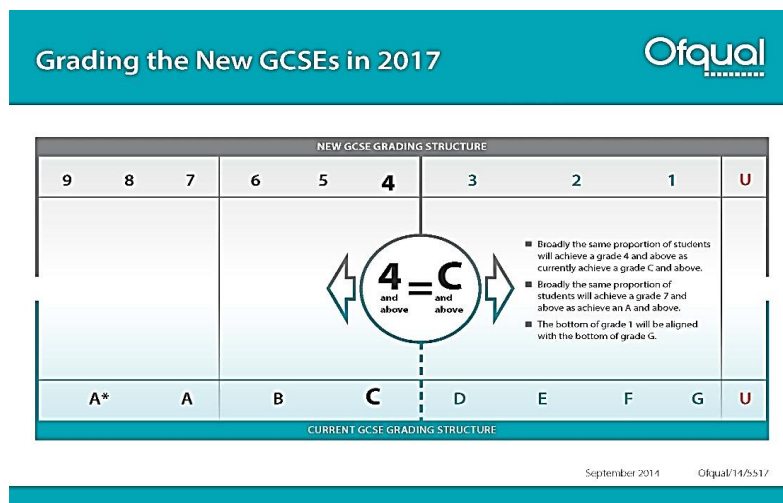


# THE GCSE CERTIFICATE

Key points about the GCSE examination are:

- grades are awarded on a nine point scale 9 to 1;
- 9 is the highest achievable grade with 1 being the lowest awarded grade;
- some subjects involve controlled assessment which counts towards the final grade;
- all subjects will have at least one written examination paper;
- in some subjects pupils are entered for the examination in tiers according to their ability in that subject;
- for most GCSE subjects, 5% of the total marks available in the final written examination paper are allocated to spelling, punctuation and grammar.

The diagram below shows how the old A\* to G grading structure relates to the new numerical structure:



Colleges and employers ask for certain GCSE grades and subjects as entry levels for courses or employment. The normal entry requirement for A-Level study is 5 GCSEs awarded at 9 - 5, with a grade 6 or 7 in specified subjects.

Please note that the Government has moved away from the system of modular examinations to a system of linear examinations. This means that for two year GCSE courses starting in September 2024, exams will be taken at the end of the course (summer of Year 11).

**There may be other changes to the examination system that we are unable to anticipate at present. The information in this booklet is up-to-date as of January 2024.**

## Controlled Assessment

Controlled assessment was introduced into GCSE qualifications from September 2009 and has, in most cases, replaced coursework as a means of internal assessment. Controlled assessment is used for aspects of a subject that can't be readily assessed through external examination, such as research, carrying out tasks, and performance and production skills. The amount and type of controlled assessment required vary between subjects.

In many ways, preparation for controlled assessment will be the same as for coursework. Like coursework, controlled assessment allows pupils to produce an extended personal response to an area of the subject specification. The preparation that is required and appropriate will vary according to the type of subject. Generally teachers will:

- Teach an overview of the chosen topic/task before pupils set to work
- Give pupils the context they need to understand the topic
- Teach pupils any skills they need for their tasks, such as research skills
- Support and guide pupils throughout the research, drafting and write-up stages.