

Joint Council for
Qualifications^{CIC}

Awarding 2021:

JCQ support for teachers and exam centres during a difficult year

- **3rd March 2021**
- **Westminster Education Forum**
- **Philip Wright**

Contents

- JCQ objectives and role
- 2020 – Report by the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR)
- 2020/21 Timelines and challenges
- Supporting teachers - guidance
- Supporting public confidence:
 - Government and Ofqual directions (Jan/Feb 2021)
 - Quality Assurance
 - Appeals
- 2022 and beyond: long-term challenges and opportunities

JCQ objectives and role

- JCQ's objectives are to:
 - Ensure the examinations framework provide a **fair and level** playing field to all students
 - **Reduce bureaucracy** for schools and colleges by facilitating and delivering **common administrative arrangements for examinations and assessments**
 - Provide a **forum for strategic debate**, information exchange and expression of common interest amongst awarding bodies across the UK
 - Enable member awarding bodies to **jointly express views** and collectively respond to national issues
 - Provide a channel for collective **engagement with key stakeholders** including the HE sector, teachers, and their representative organisations

Disclaimer

The views expressed in this presentation does not necessarily represent the views of JCQ members.

The arrangements highlighted are subject to the publication of the regulatory framework for General Qualifications, which we understand will be during the week commencing 22nd March 2021.

2020: Report from OSR

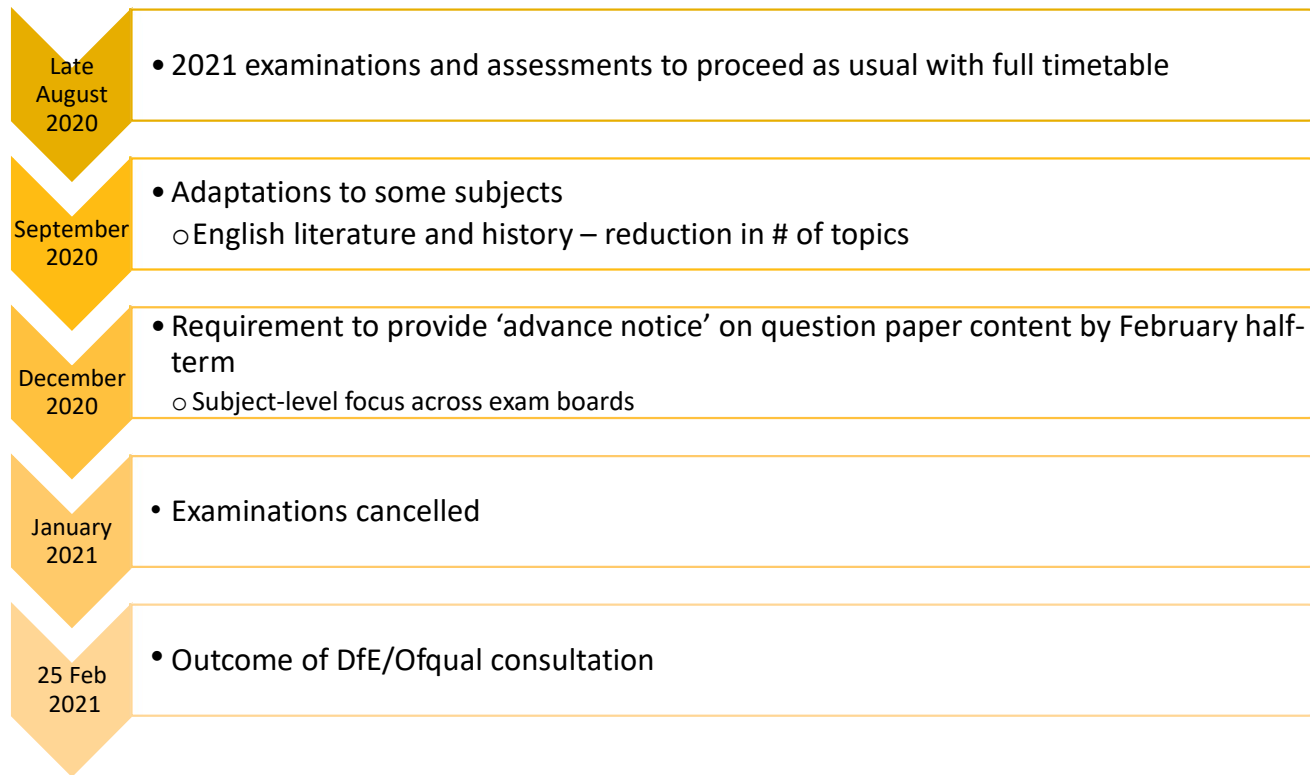
Ensuring statistical models command public confidence

Learning lessons from the approach to developing models for awarding grades in the UK in 2020, (Published 02 March 2021)

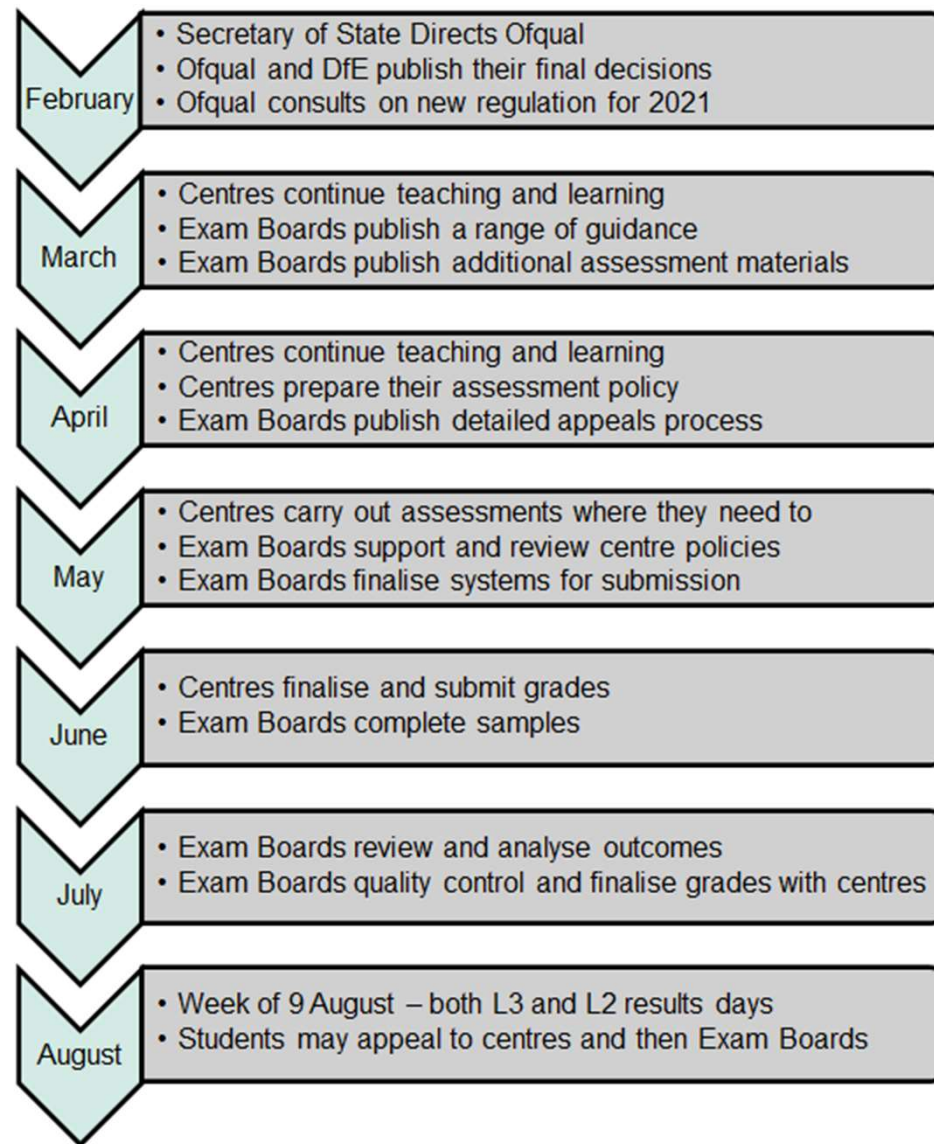
- *“The teams in all of the qualification regulators and awarding organisations **acted with honesty and integrity**. All were trying to develop models that would provide students with the most accurate grade and enable them to progress through the education system. This is a vital foundation for public confidence.”*
- Some of the challenges identified in the report:
 - *“The novelty of the approach, which meant that it was not possible to learn over multiple iterations and that best practice did not already exist.”*
 - *“The constraints placed on the models by the need to maintain standards and not disadvantage any groups.”*
 - *“The variability in exams results in a normal year due to a range of factors other than student ability as measured by prior attainment.”*
 - *“Tight timescales for the development and deployment of the model.*
 - *“The challenges of developing the models while all parts of the UK were in a lockdown.*
 - *“Teacher estimated grades varied significantly from historic attainment for some schools or colleges.”*

2020/21 timelines: the evolving impact of Covid-19

Government policy had to adapt in light of Covid-19 infections in England:



2021: timelines



Supporting teachers: JCQ documentation and guidance

Available by end of March

- Main Guidance document
 - Process
 - Key dates and timelines
- Grading – preparing the grades
 - Basket of evidence
 - Assessment materials
 - Access arrangements and special considerations
- Centre Quality Assurance
 - Centre-based approach
 - Head of Centre Declaration
 - Template CQA Policy
- Grade submission and external QA
 - 18th June deadline for grade submission
 - Approach to external QA and follow-up
- Appeals
 - Outline process (final guidance available in April)
 - Proformas for appeals to Exam Boards

Supporting teachers in grading

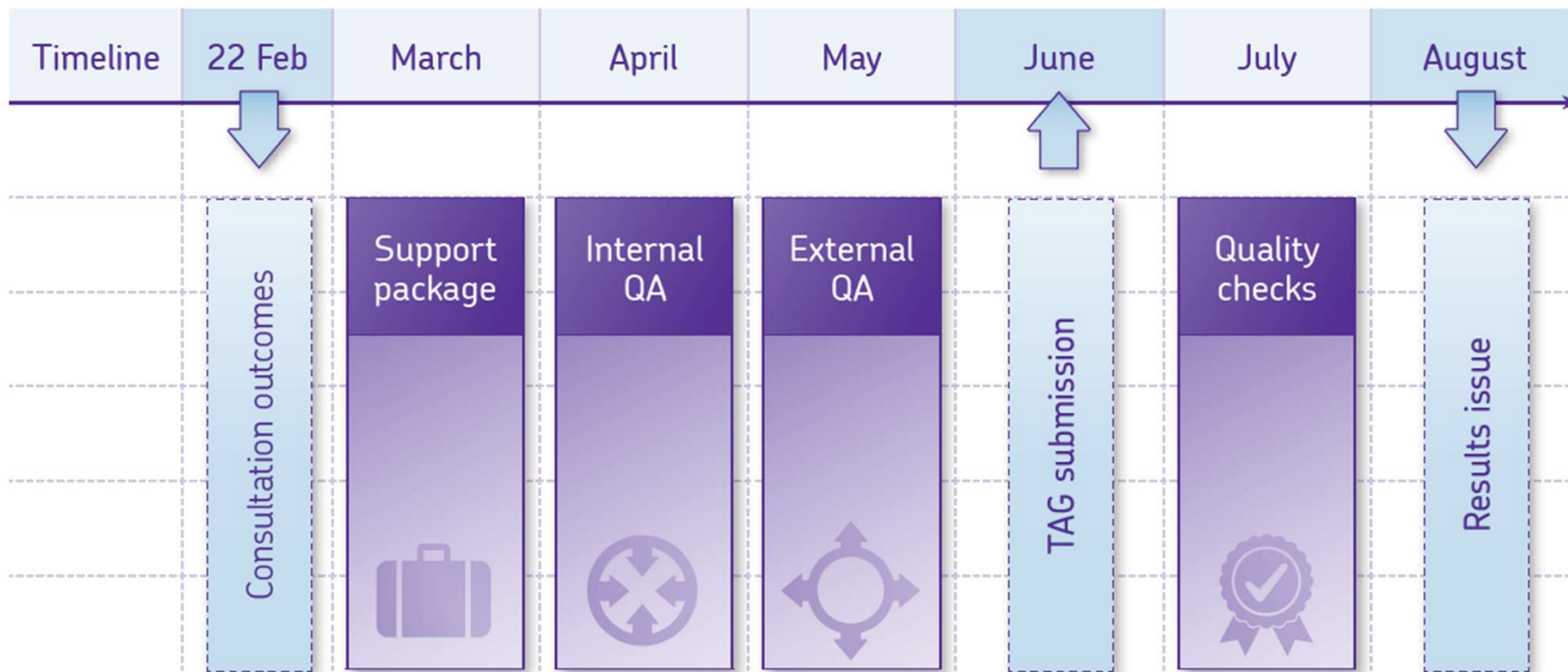
- **What are the 2021 assessment materials?**

- The 2021 assessment materials are **qualification-specific resources** with questions covering key knowledge, understanding and skills
- They are made from a **variety of exam questions**, from a range of papers
- They are generally shorter than a full examination and constructed to **comfortably fit within a lesson or less**. They could also be used as a homework task
- The number, breadth and depth of the **material will vary between subjects**, and reflect the characteristics of each qualification (e.g. where there is only one exam component there will be less material than for a subject which is usually assessed entirely by examination)
- The amount and nature of **additional support materials provided** alongside the assessment materials will mirror the number, breadth and depth of those materials as per the above
- Exam boards will also provide a guidance document which will **map content or skills coverage** and also highlight the support materials available, to assist with marking

Government and Ofqual directions: Public confidence and communication

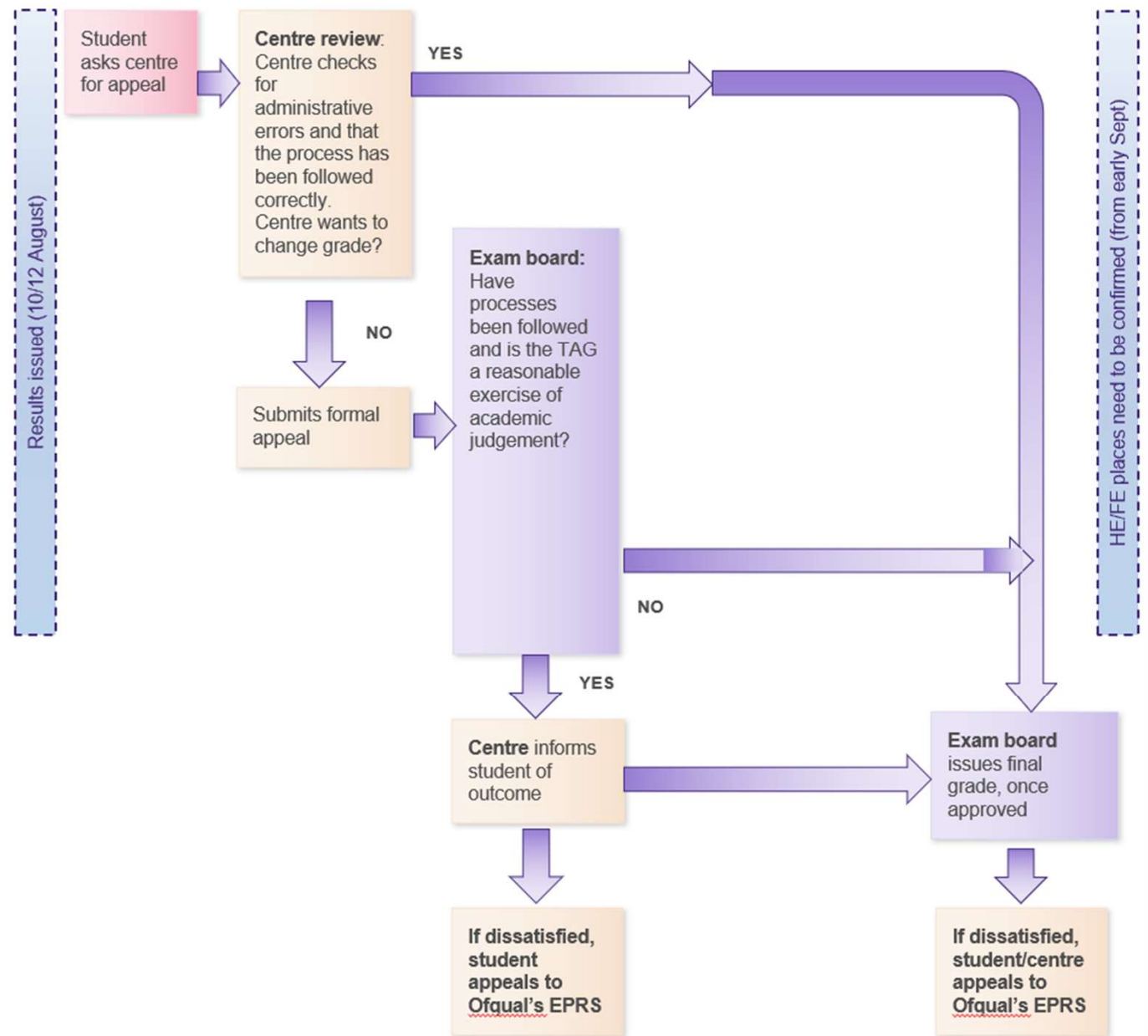
- Prime Minister's announcement 4th January 2021:
 - *"We recognise that this will mean it is not possible or fair for all exams to go ahead this summer as normal. The Education Secretary will work with Ofqual to put in place alternative arrangements."*
- Letter from the Secretary of State for Education to the Chief Regulator, Ofqual, 13 January 2021:
 - Requested joint consultation on awarding 2021
 - *"...my view is that any changes to grades as a result of the external quality assurance process should be the exception: the process will not involve second-guessing the judgement of teachers but confirming that the process and evidence used to award a grade is reasonable."*
 - *"Changes should **only** be made if those grades **cannot be justified, rather than as a result of marginal differences of opinion.**"*

Quality assurance 2021



2021 timelines: appeals

- Results days – 10th (Level 3) and 12th August (Level 2)
- Appeals guidance, i.e. the requirements such as in relation to record keeping
- Appeals support, e.g. exemplars (policy, errors)
- Student and parent communications and support



2022 and beyond:

Long term challenges and opportunities

1. Restoring and sustaining public confidence in qualifications
2. Building resilience into the annual awarding cycle in the medium and long term
3. Supporting and developing the international reputation of UK qualifications
4. Integrating technologies into examination and assessment in a secure and robust way



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