

EMTAS Position Statement

This Hampshire Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service (EMTAS) Position Statement provides guidance relating to the determination of centre assessment grades for the summer 2020 GCSE exam series for students for whom English is an Additional Language (EAL).

Key Features and Considerations

The [Ofqual guidance](#) for Heads of Centre, Heads of Department and teachers on the submission of Centre assessment grades sets out how GCSE grades should be determined this year:

'For every GCSE... exam boards will require each school, college or other exam centre to submit the following information:

- 1.) a **centre assessment grade** for each student – the judgement submitted to the exam board by the Head of Centre about the grade that each student is most likely to have achieved if they had sat their exams. This professional judgement is derived from evidence held within the centre and which has been reviewed by subject teachers and relevant heads of department
- 2.) the **rank order** of students within each grade – for example, for all those students with a grade of 5 in GCSE maths, or a grade B in A level biology, a rank order where 1 is the most secure/highest attaining student, and so on' (Ofqual, 2020, p.5)

[Summer 2020 grades for GCSE, AS and A level, Extended Project Qualification and Advanced Extension Award in maths - Information for Heads of Centre, Heads of Department and teachers on the submission of Centre assessment grades](#), Ofqual (April 2020)



The [Ofqual guidance](#) for teachers, students, parents and carers sets out two questions and answers specifically in relation to how GCSE grades should be determined for EAL learners:

‘Can schools and colleges consider evidence from specialist teachers or other professionals when making grading and rank ordering decisions?’

A centre should, if applicable, seek further information from teachers and other education professionals who have been supporting a student’s learning to allow them to make secure judgements about centre assessment grades and a student’s position in the rank order. This might include... peripatetic/advisory teachers who may work across a number of centres, such as EAL teachers or qualified teachers of deaf, vision impaired and multi-sensory impaired children and young people.’
(Ofqual, 2020, p.7)

‘How will this affect students who have English as an additional language (EAL)?’

Schools and colleges should use their professional experience to make a fair and objective judgement of the grade they believe a student would have achieved had teaching and learning continued as normal and had they sat their exams. For students with English as an additional language (EAL), schools and colleges should consider the likely language acquisition a student would have made by the time of the exam, and any increased ability to demonstrate subject content knowledge, as part of this and reflect this in their judgement. They may seek further information from specialist EAL teachers as part of this.’ (Ofqual, 2020, p.15)

[Summer 2020 grades for GCSE, AS and A level, Extended Project Qualification and Advanced Extension Award in Maths – Guidance for teachers, students, parents and carers](#), Ofqual (May 2020)



Hampshire EMTAS recommendations

- 1.) One factor to take into account when determining Centre assessment grades is EAL learners' content knowledge and understanding in each subject. Subject teachers should bear in mind that in some subjects EAL learners might be able to demonstrate this in a variety of ways.

Some students will have been able to demonstrate subject knowledge and understanding in various ways in the classroom, such as practical and oral work, completing graphic organisers, annotating drawings or reading or writing around the subject in first language (L1). These students will be well placed to rapidly convert their understanding into written English, given the 2-3 months in school they would have had if exams had proceeded as normal.

- 2.) Keep in mind that some EAL learners will have had access arrangements in place for the exams, including the use of a bilingual dictionary and possibly extra time. Students who had these access arrangements in place would have been literate in L1 and will therefore have been likely to be able to convert their subject knowledge into written English in an exam situation.
- 3.) Late-arriving EAL learners who have joined secondary school in the last two years would likely have been able to make more rapid progress in their ability to demonstrate their understanding in English in the 2-3 months of school they have missed, if they have been well supported by schools and subject teachers, than EAL learners who have had the whole of their education in the UK. For some students in some subjects this can result in a difference of one or two GCSE grades.

Recommended actions to take

- 1.) If an EAL learner has previously been referred to EMTAS, check their EMTAS Profiling Report for any information relating to L1, prior educational experiences and academic achievement. The Profiling Report will also include an assessment of the EAL learner's initial levels of English. This can be used as a basis to check the progress of the learner's acquisition of English over time, using an EAL-specific framework such as [The Bell Foundation EAL Assessment Framework](#).
- 2.) Prior to submitting centre grades, it would be pertinent for schools to complete an analysis of outcomes for EAL and BAME groups, including GRT, to '*identify and mitigate unconscious and conscious bias by exam centres in provided predicted grades for students to exam boards*'. ([The Equality and Human Rights Commission](#), 2020, p.4)

i.e. where issues are identified through such an analysis, schools should check with subject staff that assessment decisions have been reached appropriately and grade decisions should be reviewed as necessary.

EMTAS Specialist Teacher Advisors are available to provide further support and guidance to schools. Please email emtas@hants.gov.uk and the Specialist Teacher Advisor for your district will be in touch.

**Hampshire EMTAS Specialist Teacher Advisor team
May 2020**

For further information

Visit the [EMTAS website](#). Specific information on late-arriving students can be found on our website [here](#).

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Acronyms used in this guidance

EAL	English as an Additional Language
GRT	Gypsy Roma and Traveller
BAME	Black, Asian and minority ethnic
L1	first language