



This is your daily email to keep you updated on the government's response to coronavirus (COVID-19).

Thank you message from the Secretary of State for Education

Gavin Williamson, Secretary of State for Education, has recorded a message for staff across the education and children's social care sectors thanking you for all the exceptional work that you are doing during this challenging time.

The message can be viewed here:

- <https://twitter.com/GavinWilliamson/status/1245763274496507904>

Ofqual update on examinations

Since the Secretary of State announced that the 2020 exam series in England would be cancelled to help fight the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19), Ofqual has developed a process which will fairly recognise students' work and make sure they get their grades in time to progress. Ofqual has today set out how GCSEs, AS and A levels will be awarded this summer and published further guidance for education staff, students, parents and carers.

For this summer's awards, schools and colleges are being asked to provide centre assessment grades for their students. These should be fair, objective and carefully considered judgements of the grades schools and colleges believe their students would have been most likely to achieve if they had sat their exams and should take into account the full range of available evidence.

Ofqual has published a message to students to reassure them that they, and exam boards, will do everything they can to make sure that, as far as possible, grades are fair and that students are not disadvantaged because of this unprecedented situation.

Guidance from Ofqual on how qualifications will be graded and awarded in summer 2020 can be found here:

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/gcses-as-and-a-level-awarding-summer-2020>

Summer 2020 exams and school/college accountability

The department has confirmed that it will not hold schools or colleges to account on the basis of exams and assessment data from summer 2020, and that others, such as Ofsted and local authorities, should adopt the same approach. We will not be publishing, or sharing, institution-level school and college accountability measures, such as Progress 8 and Level 3 Value Added, using the summer 2020 data.

We have set out details of statistical publications that will not be released this year and will be providing a further update for settings in due course.

Updates on forthcoming statistical publications can be found here:

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education/about/statistics>

The information below has not changed since yesterday.

Collection of guidance for educational settings on GOV.UK

All of the Department for Education's coronavirus guidance for educational settings can now be found in one place on GOV.UK at:

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-schools-and-other-educational-settings>

Our main guidance for schools, the 'school closures guidance', will be regularly kept up-to-date. Any new advice for schools on specific issues, such as food, exams or safeguarding, will be linked from it:

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-school-closures>

Handwashing advice

The most important thing individuals can do to protect themselves is to wash their hands more often, for at least 20 seconds, with soap and water. Public Health England recommends that in addition to handwashing before eating, and after coughing and sneezing, everyone should also wash hands after using toilets and whenever you return home.

The latest guidance and video on hand washing can be found here:

- <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public>

Department for Education coronavirus helpline

The Department for Education coronavirus helpline is available to answer questions about COVID-19 relating to education and children's social care. Staff, parents and young people can contact this helpline as follows:

Phone: 0800 046 8687

Opening hours: 8am to 6pm (Monday to Friday), 10am to 4pm (Saturday to Sunday)

If you work in a school, please have your unique reference number (URN or UKPRN) available when calling the hotline.