

Circular S/IF/38/13

May 2013

To: The Principals of Post Primary schools and Directors of Colleges of Further Education

For circulation to: Principals and Examinations Officers

A Level Reform

On 20 May the Minister for Education John O'Dowd MLA announced changes to GCE A Level qualifications in Northern Ireland following a consultation.

GCE (and GCSE) qualifications will continue to be offered in Northern Ireland. These are currently the subject of a fundamental review being carried out by CCEA on behalf of the Minister for Education. A final report will be submitted to the Minister for his consideration at the end of June.

Consequences of the changes announced on 20 May include:

- For candidates taking CCEA GCE qualifications that commenced their studies in September 2012, the January assessment opportunity will continue to be available. 2014 will be the final year of this opportunity. In January 2014 these candidates will be able to take modular examinations they have not previously taken and /or re-sit modular examinations already taken.
- Candidates taking CCEA GCE qualifications commencing their GCE courses in September 2013 (and thereafter) will not have January assessment opportunities. GCE examinations will be held only during the summer series.
- CCEA as the regulator of qualifications in Northern Ireland has confirmed with AQA, OCR and Pearson that there will be no further January assessment opportunities for any GCE qualifications provided by these Awarding Bodies in January 2014 or thereafter. From September 2013 candidates will only be able to take GCE examinations in the summer series.
- Schools with candidates taking GCE qualifications with WJEC should seek guidance on assessment opportunities from WJEC.
- With effect from September 2014, GCE examinations accredited for use in Northern Ireland must take place during the summer series only.
- Candidates wishing to re-sit a GCE examination will have one opportunity to do so, in the summer of the year following that in which they originally sat the paper.

If you have any queries regarding the content of this circular please contact:

Roger McCune at CCEA on: (028) 02890 261200 ext: 2287

Email: rmccune@ccea.org.uk

