

The University of Manchester School Governor Initiative Conference

A year on ... Qualification Reform

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Aims of the session ...

A year on ...

Following on from last year's session, this workshop will aim to:

- be an update on qualification reform across the UK, focusing premeditatedly on England
- explore the impact and decisions made with regard to qualifications and admissions to higher education.
- an opportunity to gain and understand The University of Manchester position on qualification reform
- Explore the considerations & questions governors could ask their school/college in response to the reforms.

What are you hoping to get from this session?

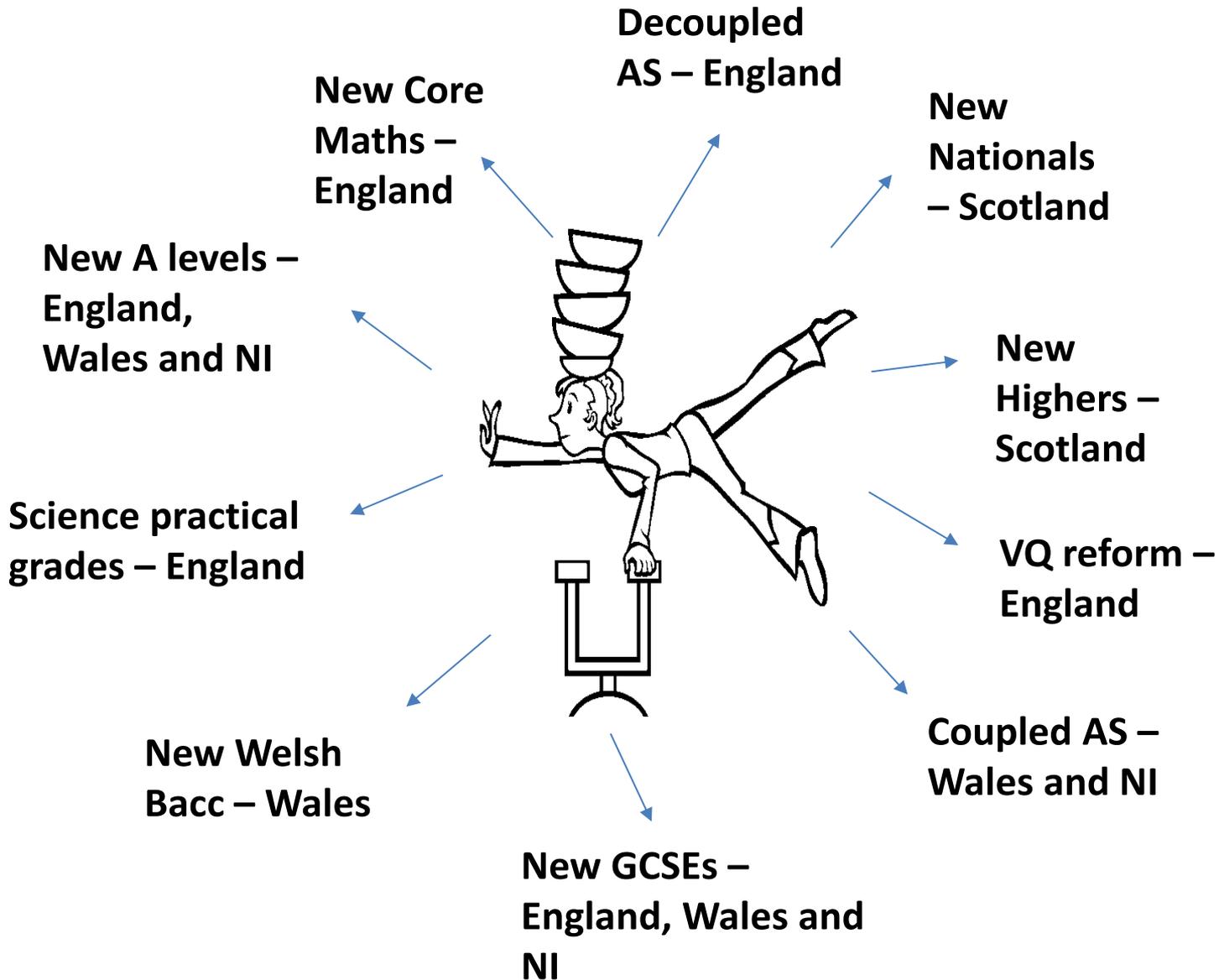
Not many pretty pictures ... I'm afraid!



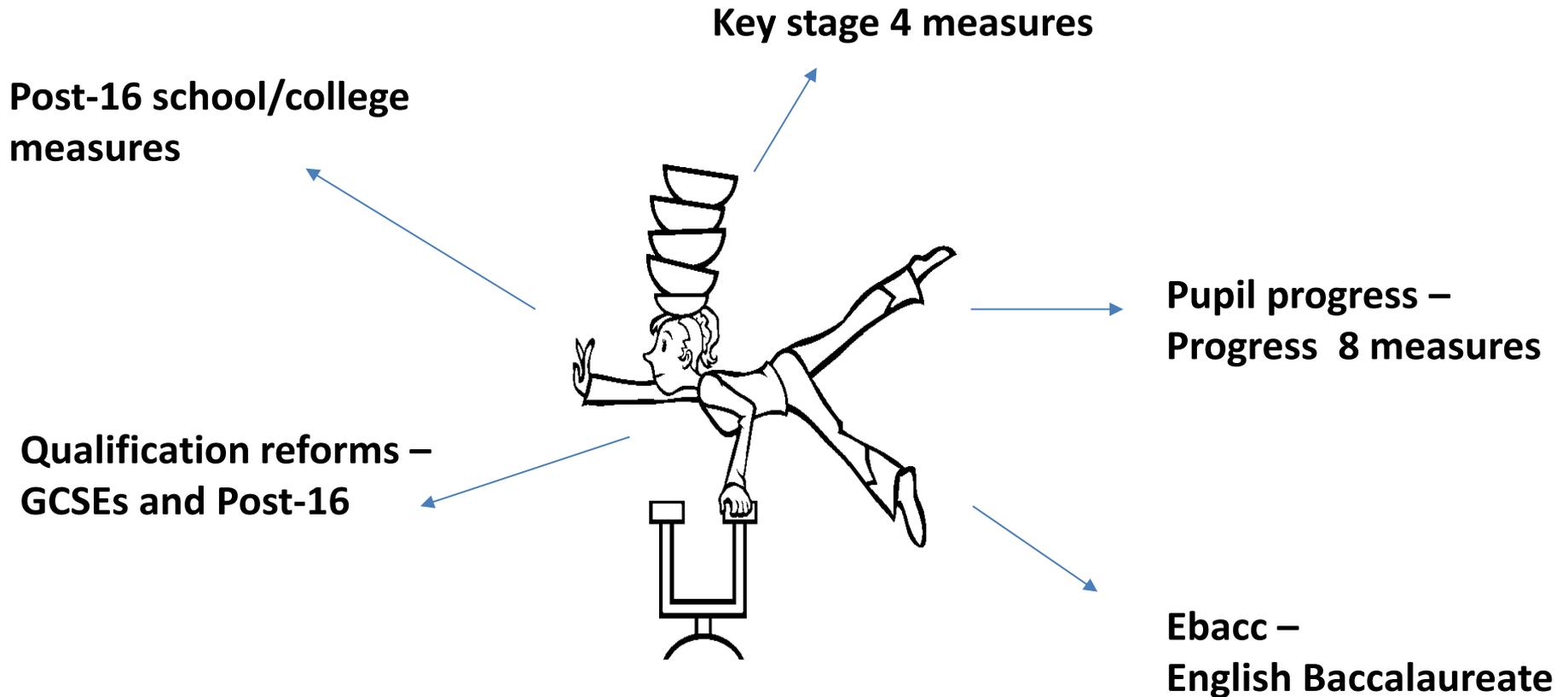
Text heavy!

Text heavy!

The qualification landscape



Information about my School / College



Qualifications reform timeline

Aug/Sep 13

Aug/Sep 14

Aug/Sep 15

Aug/Sep 16

Aug/Sep 17

Aug/Sep 18

● Jan 2013
Last Jan
Assessment
in England



Key

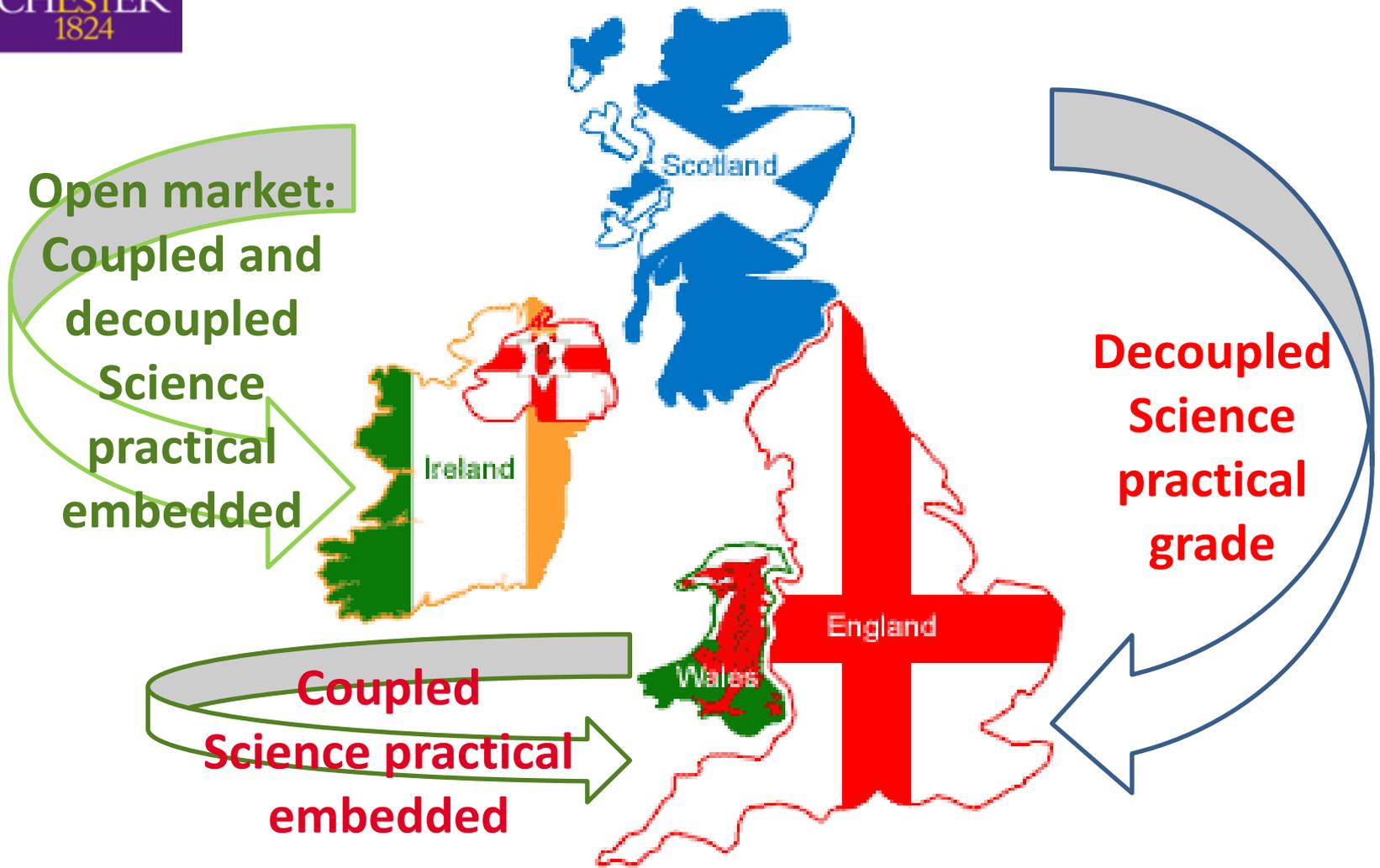
First teaching



Reach HE

* Based on current recommendations

Last updated: April 2014



The UK picture – A levels

Reformed AS level

- **Content** Drawn from the new A level content
- **Demand** Same as current AS qualifications
- **Structure** AS is now a separate qualification with the marks no longer counting towards A level
May not be offered in all subjects in your school or college
Taught over 1 or 2 years
Exams at end of the course
- **Assessment** Mainly by examination
Non-exam assessment only where necessary
- **Grading** Remains A to E plus U



Reformed A levels

- **Content** Changes to better prepare students for university
- **Demand** Same as current A levels
- **Structure** All exams at the end of the two-year course
Marks from the AS do not count towards the A level
- **Assessment** Mainly by examination
Non-exam assessment only where necessary
- **Grading** Remains A* to E plus U
A separate grade for science practical work



Awarding

- The standards of AS and A levels are not being changed; typically students who would have got Bs previously will get a B in reformed subjects.
- Exam boards will still use predictions (based on GCSE prior attainment) to guide their awards
- Key grade boundaries will be set, as now, using predictions and senior examiner judgement of students' work
- No UMS (uniform mark scale) – decoupling means there is no need for UMS which helped standardise results across units, qualifications and boards in a modular system

The impact of A level changes

- Will be challenging to manage mixed model of old and new qualifications, and differences between England, Wales and NI.
- Most of the Russell Group require students to pass the science practical.

University of Manchester statement on practical sciences

'Practical skills are a crucial part of science education and therefore there will be a requirement to pass the practical element of any science A Level taken. Where applicants are applying for science and related degrees, this is likely to be made explicit in the offers they will receive.'

- Concerns about accuracy of predicted grades.

The impact of AS level changes in England

- Use of AS in admissions is variable; not used widely in entry requirements and this is unlikely to change
- Loss of AS results could lead to greater reliance on subjective information e.g. predicted grades, personal statement, reference – and/or greater reliance on GCSEs. BUT there is concern about accuracy of predicted grades.

Use of AS level results at Manchester

These are not considered as part of the standard admissions process at The University of Manchester.

The exception to this is Medicine and Dentistry courses, where the School requires evidence of a broad programme of study. Applicants will need to present with three A-levels plus 'some other study/activity', this could be a 4th AS level, General Studies, Extended Project Qualification, and National Citizenship Award or be on the Manchester Access Programme etc.

If students have questions on the acceptability of their qualification portfolio please ask them to contact the academic School directly.

When do these reforms affect AS and A level students?

Level	Start course in 2015, A level exams 2017, AS level exams 2016	Start course in 2016, A level exams 2018, AS level exams 2017	Start course in 2017, A level exams 2019, AS level exams in 2018	Start course in 2018, A level exams 2020; no AS level exams available in these subjects
AS and A Level	Art and design, biology, business, chemistry, computer science, economics, English language, English language and literature, English literature, history, physics, psychology, and sociology.	2015 subjects plus... Dance, drama and theatre, French, geography, German, classical Greek, Latin, music, physical education, religious studies and Spanish.	2015 and 2016 subjects plus... Accounting, ancient history, Chinese, classical civilisation, design and technology, electronics, environmental science, film studies, further maths, geology, history of art, Italian, law, maths, media studies, music technology, philosophy, politics, Russian, and statistics.	All previous subjects plus... Arabic, Bengali, biblical Hebrew, Gujarati, modern Greek, modern Hebrew, Japanese, Panjabi, Persian, Portuguese Polish, Turkish, and Urdu.



Vocational qualifications at Level 3

- Reform to vocational qualifications in England driven by criteria set by the DfE in order to count towards school performance tables
- Meaning 91% of Level 3 qualifications that previously counted towards performances tables will be removed from tables from 2016
- Vocational qualifications now classed as:
 - Applied General qualifications
 - Tech Level qualifications
- Introduction of external assessment:
 - Applied General – 40%
 - Tech level – 30%

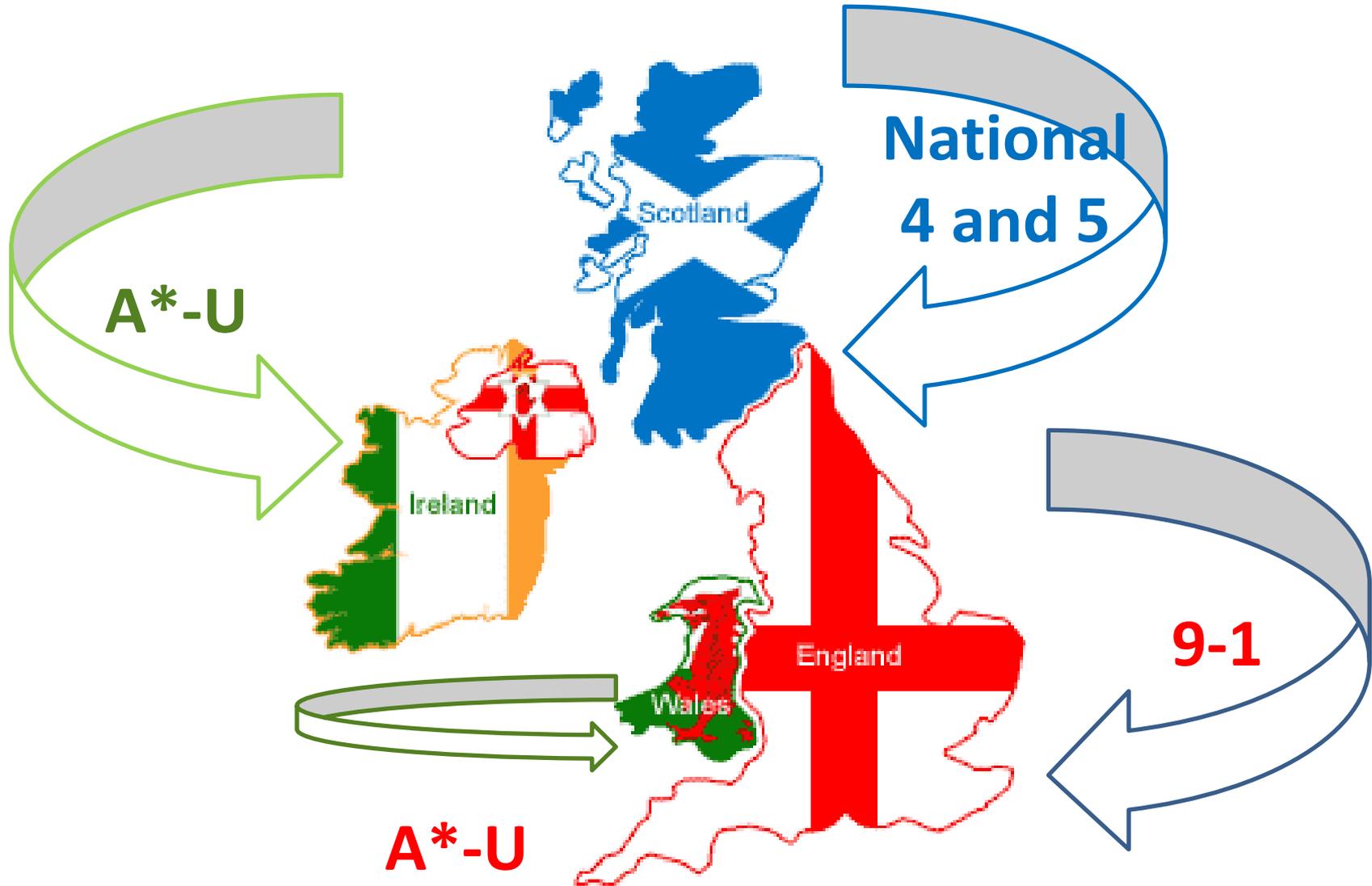
Students will be given one opportunity to resit
- ...and synoptic assessment.
- Grading - Distinction/Merit/Pass.

New BTEC & CTEC (Cambridge Technicals)

(first teaching September 2016 for 2018 HE entry)

PEARSON BTEC Level 3 Qualifications	OCR CTEC Level 3 Qualifications	A Level Equivalence / Guided Learning Hours (GLH)
National Certificate	Cambridge Technical Certificate	0.5 x A level / 180 GLH
National Extended Certificate	Cambridge Technical Extended Certificate	1.0 x A Level / 360 GLH
National Foundation Diploma	Cambridge Technical Foundation Diploma	1.5 x A level / 540 GLH
National Diploma	Cambridge Technical Diploma	2.0 x A level / 720 GLH
National Extended Diploma	Cambridge Technical Extended Diploma	3.0 x A level / 1080 GLH

The UK picture – GCSEs



Reformed GCSEs

- **Content** New and more challenging content
- **Structure** All exams at the end of the course
- **Assessment** Mainly by examination
Non-exam assessment only where necessary
- **Tiering** Foundation and higher tier permitted
only in maths, science and modern foreign
languages
- **Grading** New numbered scale (9 to 1 plus U), 9 is the
highest



GCSE 9-1 grading – standard pass and strong pass

- A new GCSE grade 4 will be called a **standard pass**. For pupils, a grade 4 standard pass or above marks a similar level of achievement to a current grade C or above.
- Pupils achieving a grade 4 or above in English and maths will not be required to continue studying these subjects post-16.
- A new GCSE grade 5 or above will be called a **strong pass**. For schools, the proportion of pupils achieving a grade 5 or above strong pass in English and maths will be one of the headline performance measures.
- The Government will also publish GCSE performance measures at grade 4 and above. The Government will no longer be reporting on the “good pass” in school performance tables.

Ofqual

Grading new GCSEs from 2017

New grading structure	Current grading structure
9	
8	A*
7	A
6	B
5 Strong	C
4 Standard	D
3	E
2	F
1	G
U	U

Department for Education

When do these reforms affect GCSE students?

Level	Start course in 2015, exams 2017	Start course in 2016, exams 2018	Start course in 2017, exams 2019	Start course in 2018, exams 2020
GCSE	English literature, English language and maths only.	English and maths plus... Art and design, biology, chemistry, citizenship studies (and short course), combined science, computer science, dance, drama, food preparation and nutrition, French, geography, German, classical Greek, history, Latin, music, physical education, physics, religious studies (including short course), and Spanish.	2015 and 2016 subjects plus... Ancient history, Arabic, astronomy, Bengali, business, Chinese, classical civilisation, design and technology, economics, electronics, engineering, film studies, geology, Italian, Japanese, media studies, modern Greek, modern Hebrew, Panjabi, PE short course, Polish, psychology, Russian, sociology, statistics, and Urdu.	All previous subjects plus... Gujarati, biblical Hebrew, Persian, Portuguese, and Turkish.



Reformed GCSE Video

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FY_mn2skrNE

Reformed GCSEs

The University does not have a blanket policy on preferred subjects at GCSE, aside from English Language and Maths, which are required at a minimum of Grade C or above or Grade 4 or above for applicants holding newly reformed GCSEs in England.

Some of our courses require additional GCSEs, sometimes in specific subjects and/or with higher grades.

In relation to GCSE reforms we can confirm our position in terms of equivalencies:

$$A^* = 8$$

$$A = 7$$

$$B = 6$$

$$C = 4$$

Practical science assessment

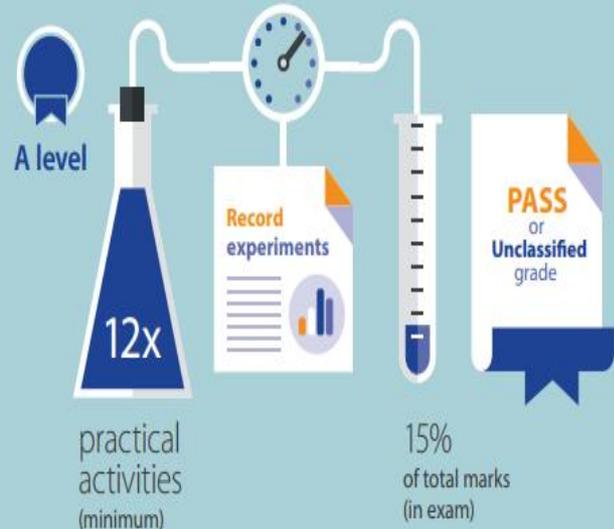
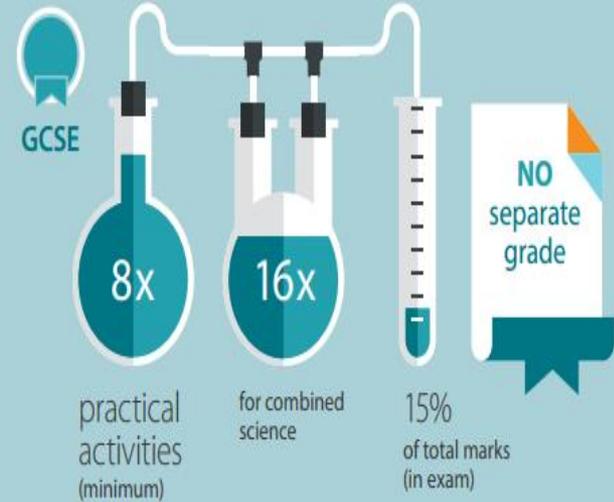
GCSE:

- Students do at least 8 practical activities (16 for combined science) covering specific techniques
- Written questions about practical work will make up at least 15% of the total marks for the qualification
- There will be no separate grade for practical skills
- Students studying combined science will receive one of 17 grades from 9-9 (highest) to 1-1 (lowest)

A level:

- More practicals – at least 12 in each science subject
- Written questions about practical work will make up at least 15% of the total marks for the qualification
- Students will need to record their experiments as they do them
- Students' competence in practicals will be reported separately ('pass' or 'not classified')
- Practical 'pass' for A level science likely to be required by universities – **check admissions information**

Improving science practicals



**How are schools & colleges
responding to these
reforms?**

**What do Governors need to
know?**

UCAS qualification provision survey

- To date UCAS has published the results of two A levels survey – Unpacking Qualification Reform (2015), and an update in 2016.
- For 2017 , UCAS repositioned their Unpacking Qualifications Reform survey as a broader, annual qualification provision survey as a broader, annual qualification provision survey encapsulating a wider range of qualifications, such as GCSEs and vocational qualifications.

Overview of previous surveys

January 2015

- 66% said they would offer the reformed AS qualifications in some or all subjects.
- A diverse range of influencing factors –funding, timetabling, performance measures, and university entry requirements, in addition to the belief that there is intrinsic value in a midpoint assessment.
- Many were taking ‘a wait and see’ approach until the full suite of revised A levels is available.

January 2016

- The AS was more prevalent in the 2015/16 academic year than previously thought, with 74% of respondents indicating they would offer the AS in all or some subjects.
- As with the previous survey, independent schools were less likely to offer the AS.
- The survey also indicated that 49% of respondents did not feel they had sufficient information when making decisions.

UCAS qualification provision survey 2017

Key Findings of 2017 survey

AS and A level provision

- 56% of respondents have changed their AS and A level provision since the 2015/16 academic year.
- 29% of respondents are offering the AS in all reformed subjects for the 2016/17 academic year, and 30% are offering the reformed AS in some subjects. Previous survey indicated 59% would offer in all subjects, and 15% in some subjects.
- 36% of respondents will not offer the AS for the 2016/17 academic year.
- 43% of respondents intend to revisit their decision regarding AS provision for the 2017/18 academic year, at which point all A level subjects will be reformed. Previous survey indicated that 64% of respondents would revisit their decision at this point. This may be due to some centres already revisiting decisions about their provision.

UCAS qualification provision survey 2017

Vocational qualification provision

- 23% of respondents are offering an unreformed vocational specification in the 2016/17 academic year, despite the availability of the fully reformed version.
- 22% of respondents do not feel universities and colleges have a good understanding of vocational qualifications.
- The majority of respondents to this section offer vocational qualifications awarded by Pearson. However, schools and colleges also offer a range of vocational qualifications awarded by other bodies such as OCR, City and Guilds, and AQA. Universities and colleges need to ensure they reflect this diversity in their entry requirements.

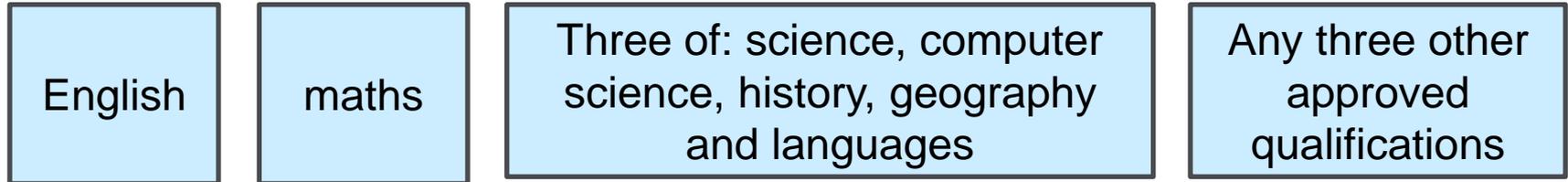
GCSE provision

- 40% of respondents do not feel confident in identifying the level a learner is performing at under the new numerical grading scale.
- Respondents to our survey commonly ask for a grade 4 or grade 5 in English and Maths to access their post-16 provision.
- The majority of universities and colleges which previously required a C, now ask for a 4. Those that asked for a B are split across the 5 or 6 grade.

Key stage 4 measures

The key stage 4 headline measures encourage a broad and balanced curriculum with a strong emphasis on an academic core:

- New focus on pupil progress – Progress 8 measures pupils' progress in 8 qualifications. These are:



- Attainment 8 measures pupils achievements in the same subjects
- Percentage of pupils achieving a grade 5 or above strong pass in English and maths
- Percentage of pupils entering the English Baccalaureate (EBacc), and EBacc achievement.



Video: Attainment 8 & Progress 8

<https://www.youtube.com/user/educationgovuk>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f0dkQqKKfeg>

The English Baccalaureate measure

EBacc

English: One of English literature and English language (where pupils have entered both)

maths

science: core and additional (unreformed); double award (unreformed); combined science (reformed); or two of biology, chemistry, physics and computer science (where pupils enter any combination of 3 of the single sciences)

history or geography

language – ancient or modern



English Baccalaureate

University of Manchester statement on EBacc

‘English Baccalaureate (EBacc) – the University welcomes applicants who have achieved the English Baccalaureate, however, we currently have no plans to make this award a requirement for students in England for entry to the University’.

Post-16 school/college measures

- As for secondary schools, the Department for Education's new post-16 performance measures place more emphasis on the progress of students.
- There are five headline measures:
 - **Progress** – how well are students progressing?
 - **Attainment** – are they getting good grades?
 - **Retention** – are they dropping out?
 - **English and maths** – for students who did not get a grade 4 or above standard pass in these subjects at GCSE
 - **Destinations** – are they getting university/college places, apprenticeships and jobs?



How governors can use this information?

- You can expect head teachers and senior leaders to increasingly refer to Progress 8 when discussing outcomes for a cohort of pupils.
- New measures will be used in national performance tables and form part of the process by which schools are held to account.
- Ofsted will expect those governing to know their schools well and they will look for evidence of effective challenge in meetings.
- All Governors must understand Progress 8 and the headline figures and scrutinise and process the data and challenge senior leaders.

Questions governors can raise with senior leaders ...

1. What is our average Attainment 8/Progress 8 score? How does this compare against schools with a similar cohort or against the national average?
2. How many pupils enter and achieve the Ebacc? Is this in line with the national average?
3. Is the picture for our school better or worse than under the old performance measures (i.e. 5 GCSE's A*-C)
4. What are the Progress scores at a subject level? Are we performing better in some subjects compared to others (particularly Maths or English)?

Manchester's response to date....

- Re-establishment of Admissions Qualification Group
- Approved statements and equivalencies

<http://www.manchester.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/applications/entry-requirements/uk-entry-requirements/>

- Qualifications bulletin for staff -
 - sign up via emailing: ukquals@manchester.ac.uk
- Dedicated email accounts to support colleagues in academic Schools and key stakeholders such as teachers and advisers and applicants

ukquals@manchester.ac.uk – UK qualifications queries

intquals@manchester.ac.uk – EU and International (including English Language) queries

Take Away Questions ...

How is your school/college responding to these changes and the opportunities and challenges they present?

- What are the implications on resources and/or staffing? Are there funding implications?
- How can your school/college ensure that all teaching staff are clear about the new qualifications?
- How is your school/college ensuring that all teaching staff have the subject knowledge required for the new reformed GCSEs/A levels?

Any Questions?

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