

UK ENIC Special Report

COVID-19: Guide to International Secondary Assessment in 2020

March 2021

Foreword

Since March 2020, UK ENIC has been tracking the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on education globally. During the past year, the majority of learners across the world have been affected by school closures. This disruption inevitably had a significant impact on school examinations and assessment; in many cases, national examinations were postponed, adapted or cancelled.

We have been providing a summary of changes to education delivery and announcements regarding national examinations on our blog: [Charting the impact of COVID-19 on UK admissions and recruitment](#). As COVID-19 continues to have an impact on education, the article is still continuously reviewed and updated with the latest information, and remains an essential and up-to-date resource for those working in international education.

This report brings together the information compiled for the blog throughout 2020 to provide an overview of upper secondary assessment for over 120 qualifications worldwide, and analysis of the different approaches adopted globally.

The report also examines how changes to assessment affected student performance and grading. Understanding grades in context is key to evaluating student performance and informing admissions decisions.

By publishing this special report, UK ENIC aims to support both the work of those involved in international student recruitment and admissions, and fair recognition of qualifications awarded in 2020.

Paul Norris
Head of UK ENIC

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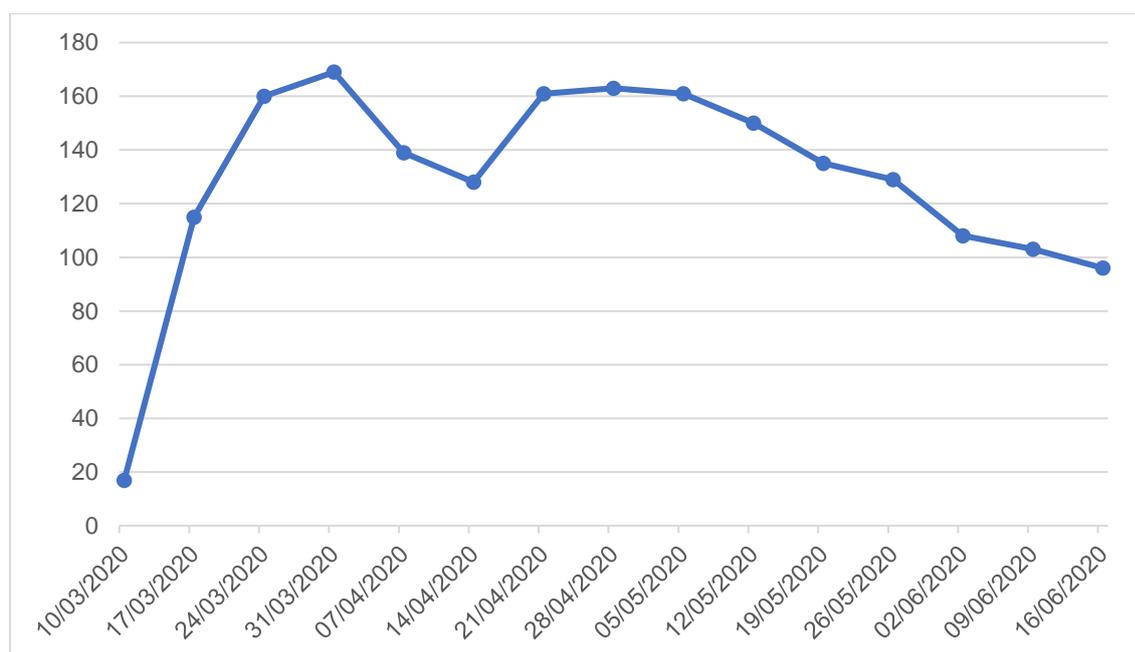
1. Introduction

The spread of Covid-19 across the world has had a significant impact on education at all levels. China closed schools in Hubei province in January 2020 to contain the spread of the virus, and national school closures followed on the 19th February 2020. Iran began to close schools and universities in February and Italy was the first country in Europe to do so in early March.

By 11th March, 17 countries had announced nationwide school closures. It was at this point that UK ENIC first began researching the impact on secondary school examinations on its blog, [Charting the impact of COVID-19 on UK admissions and recruitment](#) publishing the first issue on 17th March. Over the following weeks, further countries took the decision to close schools on a national level to curb the spread of the virus.

At the peak in late March, educational institutions were closed in 169 countries, affecting 1,475,923,522 students across all levels of education, 84% of total enrolled learners worldwide. Only a very small number of countries kept schools fully open during this time, with others opting for partial closures.

Figure 1: Number of countries with national school closures¹(March – June 2020)



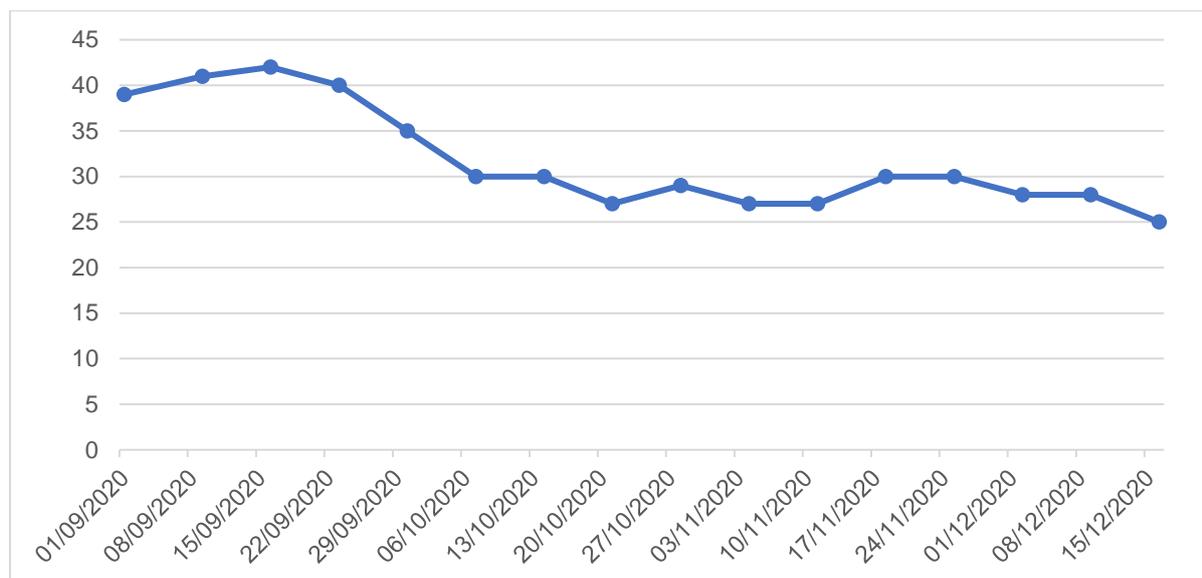
The period between April and June is when many national examinations would ordinarily take place. UK ENIC tracked announcements and compiled information in relation to secondary school assessment, updating the blog and publishing a special report on 12th May 2020 with the information available at that time.

¹ Based on UNESCO *Monitoring of COVID-19 Educational Disruption and Response*, correct as of 22nd February 2021.

Education continued to be disrupted into September and October, the start of the new academic year in many countries. Some examinations delayed from earlier in the year were able to go ahead. At the end of October, nationwide closures were still in place in 28 countries and schools were only partially open in many others. The number remained similar to this through to the end of the year.

The period between October and December is when many countries in the southern hemisphere hold national examinations, so these assessments were also affected.

Figure 2: Number of countries with national school closures² (September – December 2020)



This special report brings together all of the information on national examinations around the world that were cancelled, delayed or adapted due to COVID-19 that was gathered and reported on the blog throughout the year.

[Section 2](#) considers the different approaches to secondary assessment where examinations were cancelled, postponed until a later date or there were changes to the requirements or format of examinations.

[Section 3](#) looks at the impact of different approaches on results and grading, and some of the implications for further and higher education admissions.

[Section 4](#) provides a summary of national examinations at upper secondary level by region, including if and when examinations took place, and when results were released. Where examinations were cancelled, a brief explanation of how grades were awarded is also provided.

² Based on UNESCO *Monitoring of COVID-19 Educational Disruption and Response*, correct as of 22nd February 2021.

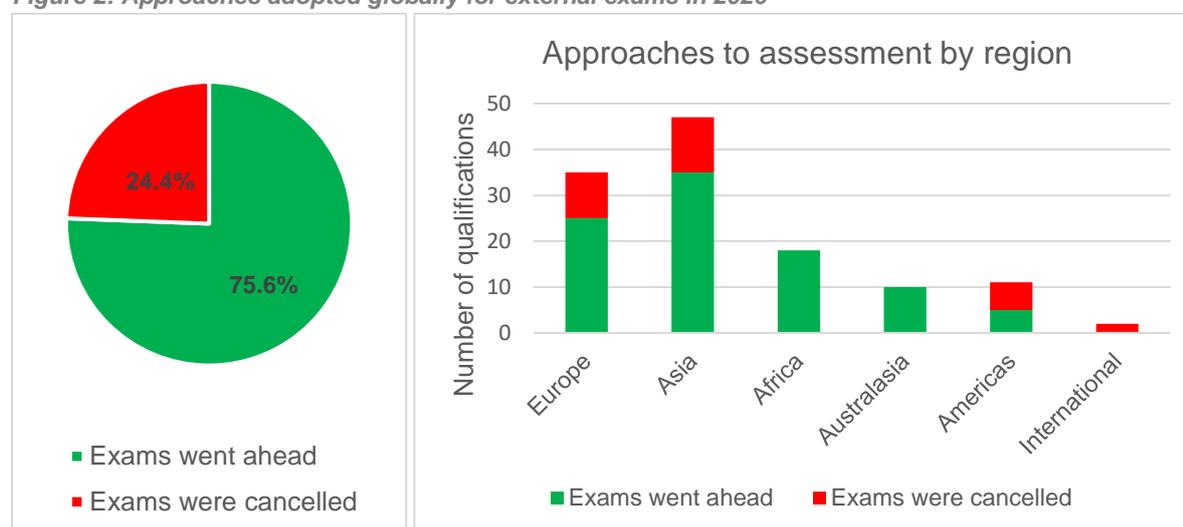
[Section 5](#) includes an index of the approaches adopted for national examinations in over 100 countries for quick reference.

2. Analysis of Global Approaches

There were many different approaches to the administration of assessment at upper secondary level in 2020 as education authorities considered how to ensure school qualifications could be awarded in a year when education was disrupted by school closures due to COVID-19. In some countries, examinations were cancelled; in others they went ahead, either as planned, later than originally planned, and / or in an adapted or reduced format.

Of the 123 qualifications for which assessment usually includes external examinations covered in this report, examinations went ahead for 93 qualifications (75.6%) and were cancelled for 30 (24.4%).

Figure 2: Approaches adopted globally for external exams in 2020



The main period for examinations in Australasia and Southern Africa is towards the end of the calendar year; these were not cancelled. A range of approaches was seen for examinations that are usually held between April and June, across Europe, the Middle East, North Africa and the Indian Subcontinent.

There were many different factors that contributed to decisions about whether national examinations could go ahead or not. A major consideration was whether sufficient measures could be put in place to conduct the examinations safely. From mid-March to May, the majority of countries had significant restrictions on daily life, including national school closures, in order to reduce the spread of the virus. In this situation, holding examinations for large numbers of students in the traditional way was often not a viable option.

Across India, many Standard XII exams were in progress when the country went into national lockdown on 24th March; any remaining examinations were immediately postponed and some of them were later cancelled. As a result, students in a number of states sat examinations in some subjects, but not in others. The majority of countries due to hold examinations during this time opted to postpone them or cancel them altogether. Hong Kong

held examinations for the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE) in April; the only one among the countries covered in this report to hold examinations during that month. As restrictions across Europe began to be eased, a number of countries went ahead with examinations in late May, including Austria, Estonia, Germany, Hungary and Luxembourg.

There were some cases in which examinations were significantly delayed, by as much as eight months. In these countries in particular there was a significant impact on the timetable for higher and further education admissions, as well as the next academic year.

Authorities also had to consider whether it was fair to assess students in the same way as previous years, given the disruption to their studies, as well as what alternative modes of assessment could be used if examinations were cancelled.

In a number of countries, the overall number of examinations was reduced, including in Israel and Denmark. Oral examinations were cancelled in Hungary and Poland, so students only sat written examinations. Conversely, Italy opted to assess students through an oral examination and cancelled the written examinations for the *Esame di Stato*.

There were a small number of examples of the format in which examinations were taken being adapted. However, online examinations were not widely adopted for a number of reasons: insufficient time to prepare, questions over ensuring validity, and concerns about increasing inequality, with some students unable to access the technology and reliable Internet access required.

Exam cancellations

In total, across the countries included in this report, external examinations were cancelled for 30 qualifications. Among these qualifications, there were a number of different approaches to assessing students and awarding grades.

APPROACH 1: GRADES BASED ON INTERNALLY ASSESSED COMPONENTS ONLY

Final grades are usually awarded based a combination of marks from internal assessment and external examinations for a number of the qualifications for which final examinations were cancelled. These include: the **Belgian *Certificat d'enseignement secondaire supérieur (CESS)***, **Dutch HAVO and VWO Diplomas**, **Moldovan *Diploma de Bacalaureat***, **Norwegian *Vitnemål for videregående opplæring***, **Slovakian *Vysvedčenie o maturitnej skúške*** and the **European Baccalaureate**, as well as the General Secondary Leaving Certificates in **Bahrain** and **Kuwait**. In these cases, for 2020, the final grade was based solely on the internally assessed component.

In addition, the **Indonesian *Sekolah Menengah Atas / Madrasah Aliyah (SMA / MA)*** was also based solely on internal assessment as national examinations (*Ujian Nasional*) were cancelled. The *Ujian Nasional* were due to discontinued in 2021 anyway, so the removal final of external examinations was effectively brought forward by one year.

APPROACH 2: STANDARDISED TEACHER ASSESSED GRADES

All assessment for the **Irish Leaving Certificate**, **UK AS and A levels** and **Scottish Highers** and **Advanced Highers** is usually conducted externally. Final examinations usually account for all, or a high proportion of, the student's final grade, depending on the subject. Some subjects also have a component of non-examination assessment, such as coursework. This meant that alternative arrangements for awarding grades had to be put in place for 2020.

UK AS and A levels in 2020

Background

A levels in England, Wales and Northern Ireland fall under three different regulators:

- The Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual)
- Qualifications Wales
- The Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA).

Content requirements and assessment objectives are similar across the three jurisdictions. Assessment is primarily through examination, although the actual amount of non-exam assessment differs by subject and by regulator

There are some differences in the qualifications regulated in each of the three jurisdictions, specifically:

- Ofqual-regulated secondary qualifications are all linear, where exams are taken at the end of the course. Qualifications regulated by Qualifications Wales and CCEA may be linear or modular.
- AS Levels contribute to the full A Level for qualifications in Wales and Northern Ireland, but not in England.

Assessment in 2020

Schools and colleges were asked to provide centre assessment grades (CAGs) for each subject. This grade was intended to reflect the grade that the student would most likely have achieved if they had sat the examinations. Schools and colleges were also asked to submit the rank order of students within each grade for each subject, which was used for statistical standardisation and not shared with students.

Initially, students were issued the results calculated following the standardisation process. However, after the original standardisation process was judged to be unfair, students were awarded the CAGs submitted by their schools if they were higher than their standardised grades.

All examinations for **International AS** and **A levels** were also cancelled. These qualifications are offered by Cambridge Assessment International Education, Oxford International AQA Examinations and Pearson for the international market. They are not

regulated by Ofqual, but awarding bodies adopted a similar approach to awarding grades to that which was outlined in Ofqual guidance for qualifications awarded in England. Students were also awarded their centre assessed grade if it was higher than the grade they received after the standardisation process.

Scottish Highers and Advanced Highers in 2020

Highers and Advanced Highers are awarded by the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA). Final grades are usually based on final examinations and externally marked coursework.

Teachers and lecturers submitted estimated grades to SQA, based on student performance throughout the course. Schools and colleges also submitted an estimated band within the grade (upper, middle or lower) and rank order for students within each grade band for each subject. These grades were then moderated by SQA.

Coursework was not marked externally and did not count towards the final grade. However, teachers were able to use any coursework that had already been completed by students to help determine the student's estimated grade.

After concerns were expressed about the grades awarded, students whose results were downgraded as a result of the SQA moderation process were re-issued with the grades submitted by their teachers.

In **Ireland**, the **Leaving Certificate** was also awarded on the basis of calculated grades.

Ireland: Leaving Certificate in 2020

The Leaving Certificate is usually assessed through final written examinations, with additional oral and practical examinations in some subjects. Examinations are administered by the State Examinations Commission.

In the process for calculating grades in 2020, subject teachers submitted an estimate of the percentage mark the student would have achieved if they had sat the Leaving Certificate examination. Teachers also ranked students within each class based on their predicted level of achievement. These grades and ranks were reviewed and finalised by the school, before being submitted to the Department of Education and Skills. Statistical methods were then used to make any necessary adjustments to grades to ensure a national standard was applied.

The majority (79%) of grades submitted by schools remained unchanged following the standardisation process.

APPROACH 3: GRADES BASED ON PRIOR ATTAINMENT

In other regions, there also cancellations of examinations for qualifications which are usually awarded on the basis of external assessment. Some Indian examination boards (including the three all-India boards) cancelled all or some **Standard XII** examinations; examinations for the **Higher Secondary Certificate** in **Bangladesh** and the **Pakistan Intermediate / Higher Secondary Certificate** were also cancelled. In all three countries, students' past performance was used as a basis for awarding grades for the cancelled examinations.

India Standard XII in 2020

In India, the Standard XII is taken on completion of 12 years of education and is used for entry to higher education. Students sit internal examinations in Grade 11 and external examinations in Grade 12.

The exact title of the qualification varies according to the awarding body, which could be a state board or one of three national (all-India) boards:

- The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE)
- The Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations (CISCE)
- The National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS).

The three national boards all cancelled examinations in 2020. State boards took a range of different approaches; of the 11 boards included in this report, seven held all of the examinations and the remaining four cancelled examinations in some subjects.

Results for the cancelled CBSE, CISCE and NIOS examinations were based on students' performance in previous examinations and internal assessments. State boards which cancelled examinations in some subjects used students' results in the examinations they completed as a basis for awarding the grades for those that did not place.

Grades for the **Bangladeshi Higher Secondary Certificate** were calculated based on students' performance in the Senior School Certificate and Junior School Certificate, externally examined national qualifications taken in Grades 10 and 8 respectively. Examinations for the **Higher Secondary Certificate** in **Pakistan** are taken in two parts: Part I at the end of Grade 11 and Part II in Grade 12. In 2020, final grades were based on the marks achieved in the Part I examinations, plus an additional 3%.

APPROACH 4: COMBINATION OF INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT

There were some qualifications for which external assessment earlier in the course was combined with continuous or internal assessment for the latter part of the course (in place of external examinations) to give the final grade. For example, in **France**, final grades were based on continuous assessment, along with grades achieved in the examinations in the penultimate year of study. A similar approach was adopted for the ***Matrikulasi (Matriculation Programme)*** in **Malaysia**, for which grades were based on examination results for semester 1 and continuous assessment for semester 2.

France: Baccalauréat 2020

In France, prior to 2020, grades for the *Baccalauréat* were based on performance in external examinations taken in the penultimate and final years of study.

For 2020, grades were based on continuous assessment throughout the year. Grades achieved in the first-year exams also counted towards the final grade. Assessments carried out during the lockdown period were not taken into account. Grades were then moderated and reviewed by an examination panel.

The *Baccalauréat* is undergoing reform; changes to assessment mean there will be fewer final examinations and continuous assessment will account for 40% of the final grade. The first cohort under the new system is due to graduate in 2021. There have also been further changes to assessment in 2021 announced due to COVID-19.

APPROACH 5: CANCEL SCHOOL LEAVING EXAMINATIONS, BUT HOLD UNIVERSITY ENTRANCE EXAMINATIONS

In a number of countries, students who wish to progress onto higher education complete two sets of examinations at the end of secondary education: one set to obtain their school leaving qualification, and a second separate examination for university entrance. Some of these countries, such as **Armenia** and **Kazakhstan**, opted to award the school leaving qualification without final examinations, but go ahead with the examination that were used as the basis for admission to higher education.

Exam postponements

Many examinations took place later than originally scheduled and later than they usually held. In the majority of cases, they were only postponed for a short period of time. For example, the **Gaokao** and the **Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE)** examinations were both put back by one month, and across Europe many examinations that usually take place in May went ahead in June. There were a small number of cases where there were more significant delays:

Country	Qualification	Original exam dates	Rescheduled exam dates
Brazil	<i>Exame Nacional do Ensino Médio (ENEM)</i>	November 2020	January / February 2021
Ghana	West African Senior School Certificate Examination	June 2020	3 rd August – 5 th September 2020
Kenya	Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education	November 2020	26 th March – 21 st April 2021
Malaysia	STPM (<i>Sijil Tinggi Persekolahan Malaysia</i>) (Malaysia Higher School Certificate)	Semester 2: March 2020 Semester 3: November 2020	Semester 2: August 2020 Semester 3: March 2021
Malta	Matriculation Certificate Examination	May 2020	31 st August - 10 th October 2020
Nepal	Secondary Education Examination (SEE)	March / April 2020	November 2020
Nigeria	West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WAEC)	June 2020	17 th August – mid-September
	Senior School Certificate (NECO)	June 2020	November 2020
Sri Lanka	Sri Lankan General Certificate of Education (Advanced level)	August 2020	October 2020
Vietnam	<i>Bằng Tốt Nghiệp Trung Học Phổ Thông (THPT)</i> (Senior Secondary School Graduation Diploma)	June 2020	7 th - 11 th August 2020

In many of these cases, the delayed examinations were completed at a different time of year to usual. In some countries this had an impact on the next academic year and admissions to further and higher education. In **Malta**, the new academic year began in September, so students who were awaiting their **Matriculation Certificate Examination** results were admitted to university with probationary status, or the start of some programmes was delayed until November. Long closures of schools and universities in other countries, including Nigeria and Nepal, meant the completion of the 2019-20 academic year and the beginning of the 2020-21 academic year were both also delayed.

Adapted examinations

Many countries made changes to the examination requirements to ensure that students were able to take their examinations safely and to mitigate for the disruption to studies. A smaller number also adapted the format of the examinations.

APPROACH 1: REDUCED NUMBER OF EXAMINATIONS

In a number of countries, the number of examinations that students are required to take was reduced for 2020.

In many cases where students are usually required to sit oral examinations, these were cancelled. An exception is **Italy**, where only an oral examination was completed.

Country	Qualification	2020 format
Armenia	ՎԿԱՅԱԳԻՐ (Certificate of Unified Examination)	One examination in a subject of the students' choice.
Austria	<i>Reifeprüfung / Matura</i>	Written examinations in three subjects. No oral examinations.
Denmark	<i>Bevis for Højere Forberedelseksamen</i> (Higher Preparatory Examination Certificate)	Reduced number of written examinations.
Hungary	<i>Érettségi Bizonyítvány</i> (Secondary Education Graduation Certificate)	Written examinations only.
Israel	Matriculation Certificate	Examinations in five subjects.
Italy	<i>Esame di Stato</i>	Oral examination only.
Poland	<i>Świadectwo Dojrzałości</i> (Certificate of Maturity)	Written examinations only.

APPROACH 2: OPTIONAL EXAMINATIONS

In order to reduce the number of students sitting examinations in this summer's session, an approach adopted in a small number of countries was to make examinations optional or only required for certain students.

In **Portugal**, it was decided that the ***Diploma Nível Secundário de Educação / Certificado Nível Secundário de Educação*** could be awarded on the basis of school assessment and students would not be required to take national examinations. The examinations were only be taken by students intending to enter higher education. A similar approach was adopted

for the **Unified State Examinations** in **Russia**; these were also only required for students intending to enter higher education.

In **Estonia**, the state examinations (*Riigieksamid*) were optional and were not required to access higher education.

APPROACH 3: ADAPTED EXAMINATIONS

An online test was developed for the **Advanced Placement (AP)**, a US qualification that is taken by students in many different countries. The format of the examination was adapted to enable it to be conducted online.

Advanced Placement (AP) in 2020

AP courses are college-level courses available in 38 subjects. They are offered in many high schools in the US, as well as many other countries internationally, with the final exam developed and administered by the College Board.

AP courses are typically assessed through written examinations, around 3hr 15 minutes in length, comprising multiple-choice as well as free-response questions. Some subjects also have short-answer questions. Short-answer and multiple-choice questions typically account for 45%-60% of the final mark for each course depending on the subject. The free-response section of the exam usually includes around two- to three- long answer questions testing essay writing skills.

AP exams would usually take place in May at designated testing centres. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the College Board developed an online free-response exam for each AP course enabling students to take the exams at home. These took place online between 11th and 22nd May. All students worldwide will sit the exams at the same time. Make-up exams were held on 1st-5th June.

The online exams were open-book and consisted of free-response questions. The questions were designed specifically for the adapted exam format. Each exam lasted 45 minutes. Most exams could be taken on a desktop computer, laptop, tablet or smartphone; students also had the option to write their answers by hand and submit a photo. World languages were assessed through speaking tasks available on an app. Only content covered in AP classes up until March 2020 was included.

The Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) offered examinations for its qualifications, including the **Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE)** in a revised format to ensure that results for postponed examinations could be marked within a reduced timeframe. Examinations consisted of multiple-choice questions and were marked electronically.

3. Results and Grading

Certificates and statements of results

Disruption to examinations and assessment led to delays in results and final certificates being issued in many countries. The tables in section 4 provide information on when results for specific qualifications were released.

For the majority of qualifications, documentation has been issued in the same format as previous years.

Some changes may be reflected on documents; for example, where external examinations were cancelled and greater weighting given to internally assessed components, no marks for external examinations are recorded on transcripts.

Pass rates and grade distributions

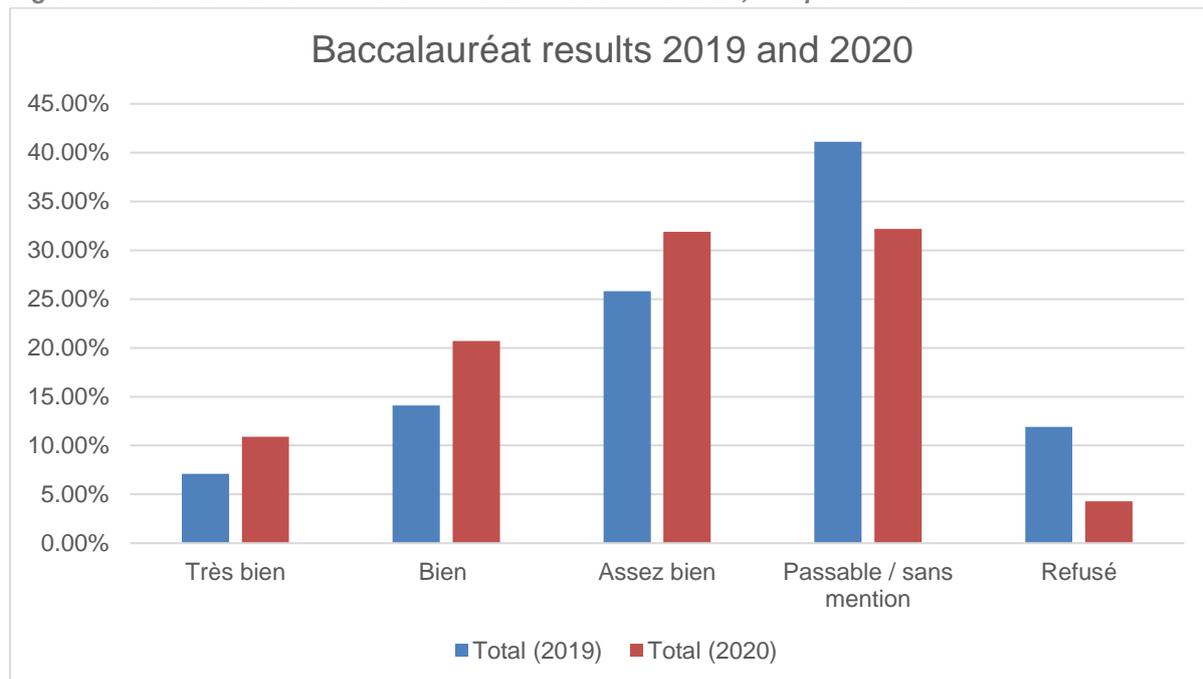
There were a range of different approaches globally to secondary assessment in 2020, many of which resulted in changes to the way in which students' performance was evaluated. Some of these may have had an impact on how students performed and the grades they were awarded. In some cases, grade distributions differed from those seen in previous years. Initial analysis of pass rates and grade data (where available) indicate some trends and patterns.

CANCELLED EXAMINATIONS

In general, where external examinations were cancelled and replaced by teacher assessment, or final grades were based solely on internal assessment, pass rates were higher and a larger proportion of students achieved top grades compared to previous years.

In **France**, the overall pass rate for the **Baccalauréat** was a record high this year at 95.7% (compared to 88.1% last year). External exams were cancelled, and students' grades were based on continuous assessment throughout their final year. The percentage of students who obtained a *mention* (*très bien*, *bien* or *assez bien*) also increased. The percentage of top grades (*très bien*) rose from 7.1% in 2019 to 10.9% in 2020.

Figure 3: Grade distribution for the French Baccalauréat in 2020, compared to 2019



Source: Ministère de l'Éducation, de la Jeunesse and des Sports, [Note d'Information no.20.25 – Juillet 2020](#)

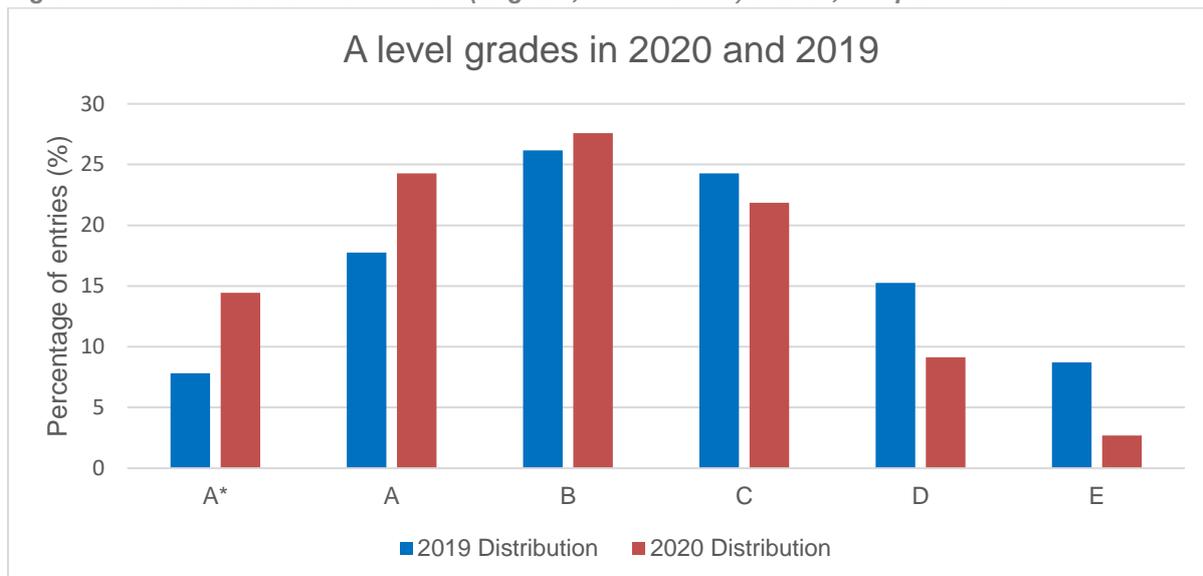
A similar trend can be observed for qualifications where a form of calculated grades were issued based on teacher judgement, such the **Irish Leaving Certificate** and **UK A levels** and **Scottish Highers**.

In the UK, students were awarded centre-assessment grades (CAGs) submitted by their schools for GCSEs, A levels and Scottish Highers after the original standardisation process was judged to be unfair. Initially, grades submitted by schools were adjusted by an algorithm ensure the grades awarded remained consistent with previous years. However, this led to nearly 40% of A level entries in England being downgraded from CAGs. Similarly, around 125,000 results were downgraded in Scotland.

Concerns were raised about the use of data on schools' performance in previous years in the standardisation process and the awarding of CAGs without standardisation for small cohorts. This led to the decision to award students the CAGs in place of the calculated grades. In the minority of cases where the calculated grade was higher than the CAG, students retained their calculated grade.

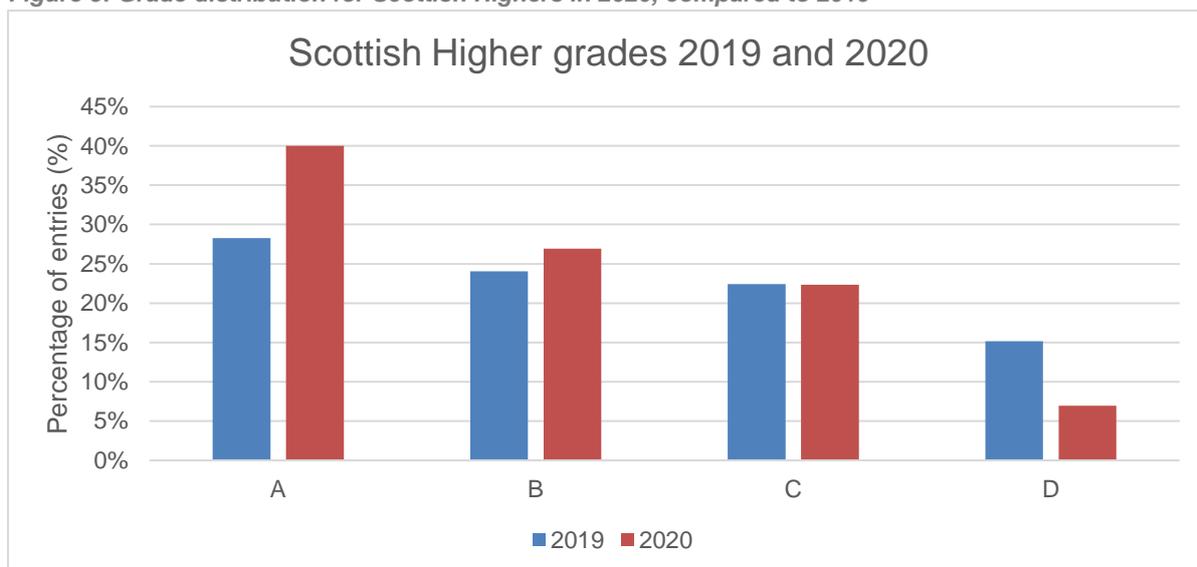
This change led to a different grade distribution to previous years for both qualifications.

Figure 4: Grade distribution for A levels (England, Wales and NI) in 2020, compared to 2019



Source: [Joint Council for Qualifications \(JCQ\)](#)

Figure 5: Grade distribution for Scottish Highers in 2020, compared to 2019

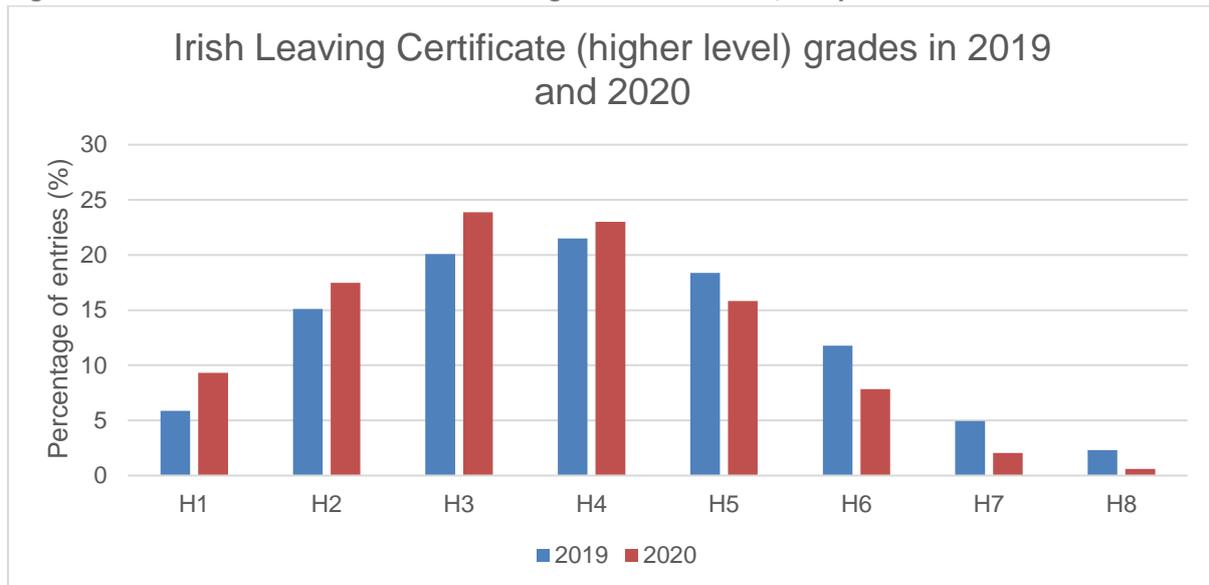


Source: [Scottish Qualifications Authority \(SQA\)](#)

The percentage of A grades awarded for Advanced Highers also increased: from 31.8% in 2019 to 46.3% in 2020.

In Ireland, the **Leaving Certificate** was awarded on the basis of calculated grades. Schools submitted estimated grades which were then adjusted for consistency. The majority (79%) of grades submitted by schools remained unchanged following the standardisation process. Overall grades were higher than previous years; at higher level, 9.3% of entries received the top grade of H1, compared to 5.9% in 2019. Around 60% of estimated grades at higher level would need to have been lowered to bring results in line with previous years.

Figure 6: Grade distribution for the Irish Leaving Certificate in 2020, compared to 2019



Source: [Irish Times](#)

The **Netherlands** saw an increase in the pass rate this year, with all final year students graduating from a third of secondary schools³. **HAVO** and **VWO** diplomas were awarded based on school exams after external exams were cancelled. School exams usually account for 50% of final grade, with results in external national making up the other 50%.

In-person written final exams were also cancelled for grade 12 students in Kuwait, and their performance evaluated by other means. There was a large increase in the number of students who passed, compared to the previous year.

The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) in **India** cancelled final exams for Standard 12 and awarded grades based on previous performance. The pass rate was 88.8%, 5.4 percentage points higher than 2019⁴.

POSTPONED EXAMINATIONS

In most cases, holding examinations at a later date did not appear to have a significant impact on grades.

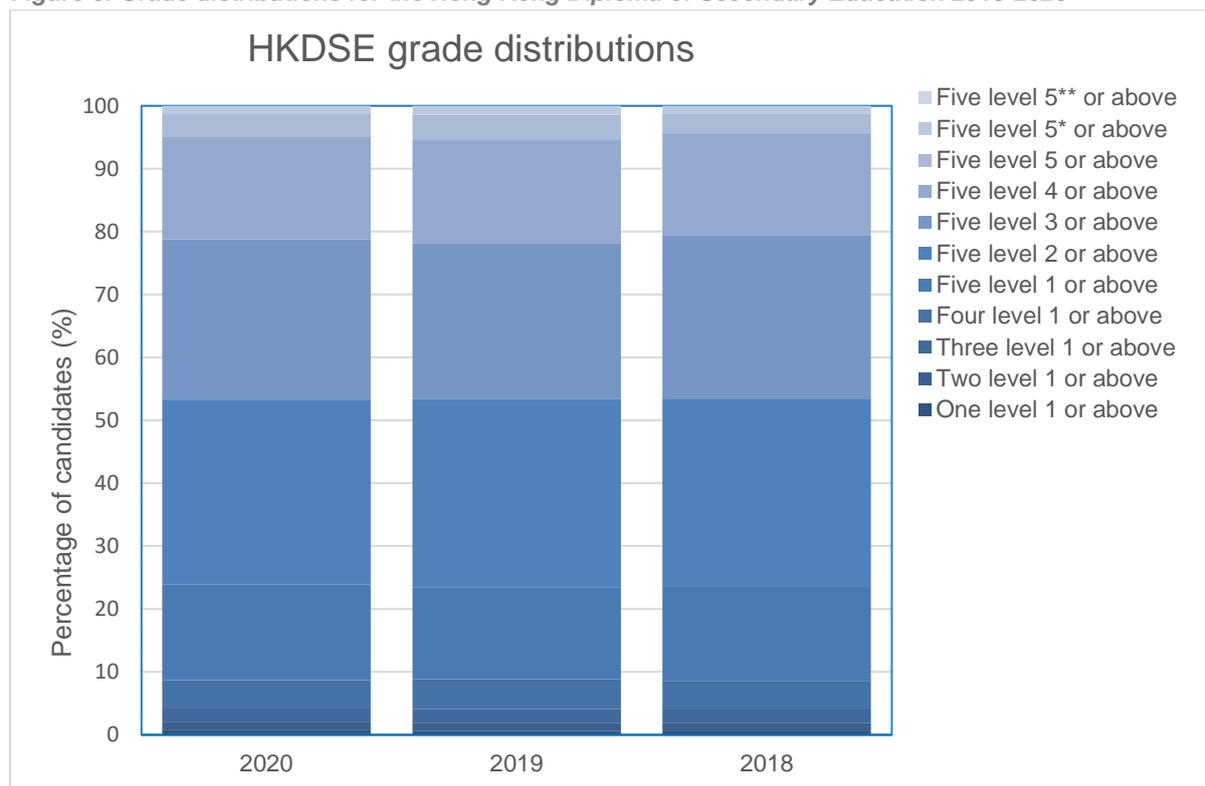
In **Spain**, the pass rate for the *Evaluación de Bachillerato para el Acceso a la Universidad (EBAU)* was very similar to 2019. The pass rate for Grade 12 exams in **Egypt** was also similar to previous years.

Exams for the **Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE)** were held in April and May, after being postponed by one month. Results were in line with previous years.

³ <https://nltimes.nl/2020/07/27/scraping-final-exam-resulted-significantly-high-school-graduates-report> ; <https://www.aob.nl/en/nieuws/slagingspercentages-hoger-op-havo-en-vwo/>

⁴ <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/home/education/board-exams/38686-score-over-95-in-cbse-class-xii-119-jump-over-last-yr/articleshow/76949288.cms>

Figure 6: Grade distributions for the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education 2018-2020



Source: [Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority \(HKEAA\)](https://www.hkeaa.edu.hk/)

In **Bulgaria**, state matriculation exams were held slightly later than usual, in June. The results indicate that students performed better than in 2019 in 9 out of the 14 subjects offered⁵.

Exams for the **West African Senior Secondary Certificate** began around two months later than usual. In **Nigeria**, overall results were slightly better than 2019: 65.24% of candidates achieved a grade of credit or above in at least five subjects including English and mathematics, compared to 64.18%.

Postponed exams for the **Baccalauréat** in **Algeria** held in September had a pass rate of 55.30%, very similar to the 2019 pass rate of 54.56%⁶. Neighbouring **Tunisia** also postponed **Baccalauréat** exams, but only by one month to July, and saw a fall in the pass rate to 27.73% (compared to 31.96% in 2019 and 29.88% in 2018)⁷. The **Moroccan Baccalauréat** exams, also held in July, had a pass rate of 63.08%, compared to 65.55% in 2019⁸.

⁵ <https://www.enneproject.eu/the-pandemic-did-not-have-a-negative-impact-on-the-matriculation-exam-results-in-bulgaria/>

⁶ <https://www.aps.dz/en/algeria/36130-baccalaureate-2020-55-30-success-rate>
<https://www.aps.dz/en/algeria/30098-baccalaureate-exam-54-56-success-rate>

⁷ <https://news-tunisia.tunisienumerique.com/tunisia-this-is-the-passing-percentage-in-the-2019-baccalaureate-examination-main-session/>

<https://www.bna.bh/en/news?cms=q8FmFJgiscL2fwlzON1%2BDie21jk46akocq8UaM97%2Fnk%3D>

⁸ <https://theworldnews.net/ma-news/moroccan-baccalaureate-results-196-664-candidates-pass-the-exam>

EXAMINATIONS THAT WENT AHEAD AS SCHEDULED

Some countries went ahead with exams as originally planned. In most of the countries which took this approach, students' grades were in line with those awarded in previous years. However, there were a few instances in which pass rates fell.

In **Germany**, exams went ahead for the *Abitur* in all states and results were similar to, or slightly better than, previous years. Overall performance in the *Atestāts par vispārējo vidējo izglītību* exams in **Latvia** was also in line with 2019⁹.

However, the pass rate for **Romanian Bacalaureat** fell from 67.2% in 2019 to 62.9% in 2020¹⁰, the lowest rate for six years.

Standard 12 board exams were completed in a number of states across India prior to lockdown restrictions being introduced. With the exception of Andhra Pradesh, pass rates were higher than 2019:

State	Examination	Overall pass rate	
		2020	2019
Bihar	Intermediate Examination	80.44%	79.76%
Andhra Pradesh	Intermediate Public Examination	63%	72%
Karnataka	Second Year Pre-University Examination	69.2%	61.73%
Gujarat	Higher Secondary Certificate Examination	76.29%	73.27%
Maharashtra	Higher Secondary Certificate Examination	90.57%	85.79%

Many exams scheduled for later in the year also went ahead as originally scheduled.

Zambia held exams for the **General Certificate of Education** in September. The overall pass rate was 89.5%, an increase from 80.9% in 2019¹¹.

A level exams in **Brunei** were held in October and November; 89.05% of students passed at least one A level subject, a slight increase on the percentage who achieved this in 2019¹².

Results for the **Year 12** exams across **Australia** and the **NCEA Level 3** in **New Zealand** were also both similar to previous years.

ADAPTED EXAMINATIONS

There were a number of qualifications for which the format of the examinations was adapted. In some cases, these changes led to some differences compared to the distribution of grades awarded in previous years.

One example is the **Italian Esame di Stato**, which was assessed by an oral exam alone, in place of the usual combination of written exams and an oral exam. The oral exam usually makes up a maximum of 35 points of the overall grade out of 100. The overall pass rate for the *Esame di Stato* in 2020 was almost to 2019; 99.5% of candidates achieved the

⁹ <http://www.baltic-course.com/eng/education/?doc=157709>

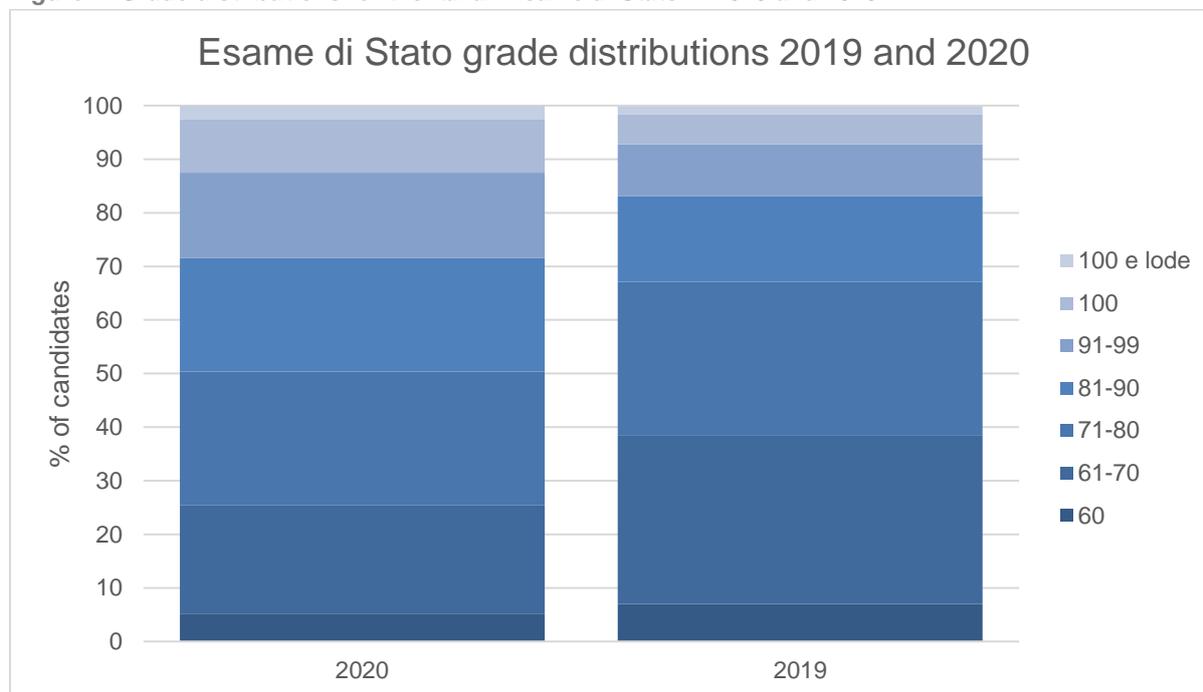
¹⁰ <https://www.romania-insider.com/low-baccalaureate-pass-rate-2020>

¹¹ <https://www.exams-council.org.zm/ministerial-statement-on-the-2020-g9-external-and-gce-examination-results/>

¹² <https://www.moe.gov.bn/SitePages/NewsArticle.aspx?AID=744>

qualification, compared to 99.7% the previous year. However, there were some differences between the distribution of grades, with a significant increase in the proportion of students achieving grades of 80 or higher out of 100 from 32.8% in 2019 to 49.6%.

Figure 7: Grade distributions for the Italian Esame di Stato in 2019 and 2020



Source: [Ministero dell'Istruzione](#)

For the **Advanced Placement (AP)**, which was conducted as a shorter online exam, the overall grade distribution did not differ greatly from previous years.

Grade	Percentage of entries (%)	
	2020	2019
5	15.88	14.34
4	21.91	20.06
3	26.55	25.24
2	20.7	22.83
1	14.96	17.53

Source: [College Board \(2020\)](#); [College Board \(2019\)](#)

However, there was some variation at the level of individual subjects. Most non-STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) subjects saw an increase in the percentage of students achieving a 3 or above compared to 2019, with English language, English literature and human geography recording among the largest increases. For STEM subjects, results were very similar to previous years.

Impact on higher education admissions

DISRUPTION TO ADMISSIONS CYCLES

In countries where exams and results were significantly delayed, this affected university admissions and, in some cases, led to a delayed start to the new academic year. There were particular challenges for international admissions, due to the variety of different approaches adopted for national exams.

FLEXIBILITY

In some countries, there was more flexibility applied to higher education admissions to ensure that students were not disadvantaged.

In the **US**, in recent years, an increasing number of colleges have adopted 'test-optional' admissions policies, so students are not required to submit the results of standardised tests, the SAT or ACT, as part of their applications. The number of institutions taking this approach increased dramatically in 2020, as many students were unable to take the tests due to the pandemic.

In **Australia**, a number of universities offered places to students based on their year 11 results.

In **Estonia**, state examinations were optional in 2020 and not a requirement for admission to higher education.

INCREASED DEMAND FOR PLACES

In a number of countries, an increase in the pass rate at upper secondary level or a higher proportion of students achieving top grades had an impact on admissions to higher education as demand for places was higher than previous years.

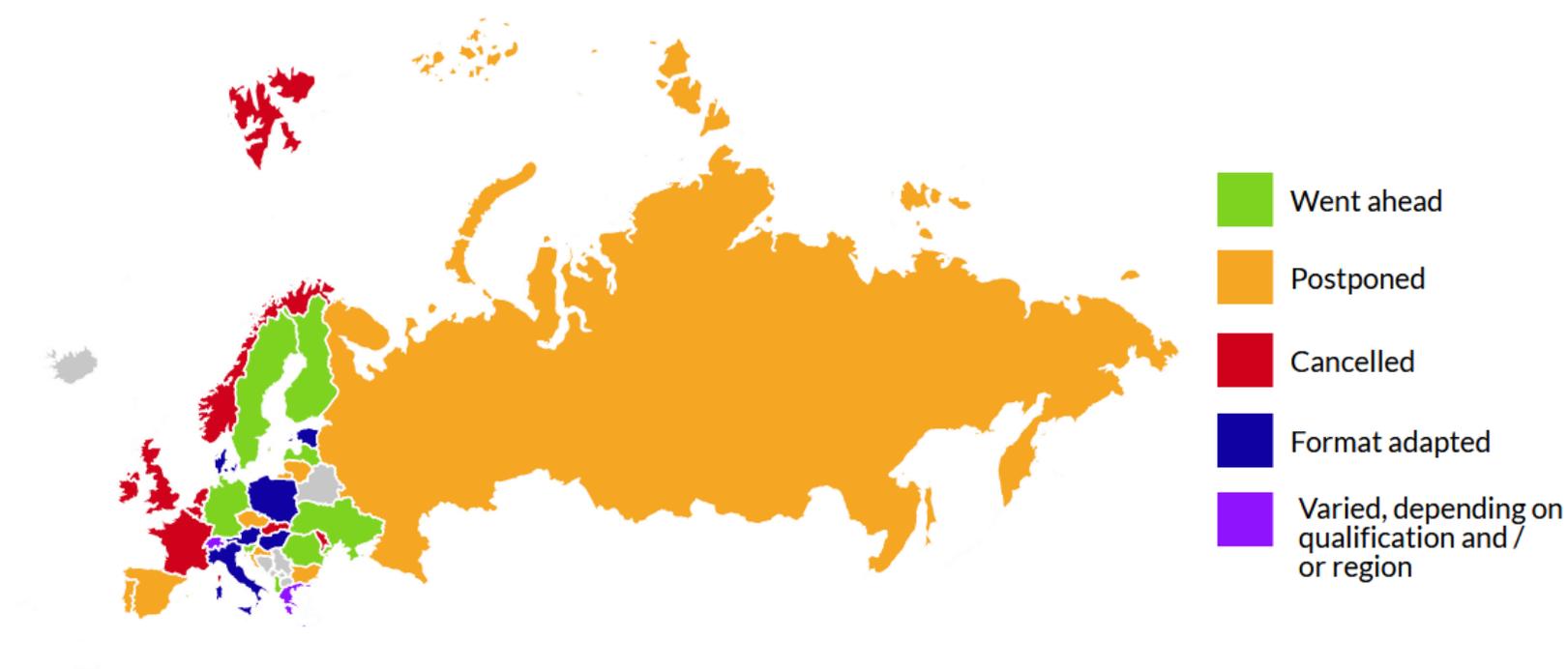
For example, in **Kuwait**, the number of students who passed the General Secondary Education Certificate and were therefore eligible to apply for admission to higher education was much higher than previous years. As a consequence, there was a 44% increase in the number of government scholarships made available, and Kuwait University enrolled 9,500 students, far exceeding its capacity of around 6,300 students.

Similarly, in the **French system**, every student who passes the *Baccalauréat* is entitled to a place at a public university, so the Ministry of Higher Education worked with institutions to make additional places available. In **Ireland**, admission requirements (CAO points) for many courses were higher than in previous years despite extra places being created. Many **UK** universities also accepted higher numbers of students than usual and extra places were created on courses that are capped by the government, such as medicine, dentistry and nursing.

4. Summary of exam arrangements by region

The following sections provide information on when exams took place and when results were made available to students. Information on exam cancellations is also included, with details of how grades were awarded in those cases. Any changes to the format of exams are also noted.

Europe



Country	Examination	Awarding body	Examination dates	Results released	Notes
Albania	<i>Diplomë e Maturës Shtetërore</i>	Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth	8 th – 18 th June 2020	July 2020	
Austria	<i>Reifeprüfung / Matura</i>	University preparatory schools (<i>Allgemeinbildende Höhere Schulen</i>)	25 th May - 3 rd June 2020	Results and certificates were issued by the end of June 2020.	
Belgium (French-speaking community)	<i>Certificat d'enseignement secondaire supérieur (CESS)</i>	<i>Communauté Française de Belgique</i>	Exams cancelled	June 2020	Results were based on students' achievement throughout the school year.
Bulgaria	Диплома за средно образование (Diploma of Completed Secondary Education) - State Matriculation Examinations (<i>Държавни зрелостни изпити - Dürzhavni zrelostni izpiti</i>)	Ministry of Education and Science	1 st - 4 th June 2020	26 th June 2020	
Croatia	<i>Svjedodžba o maturi / Svjedodžba o državnoj maturi / Potvrda o položenim ispitima državne mature</i> (Matura Certificate / State Matura Certificate)	National Centre for External Evaluation of Education	8 th - 29 th June	22 nd July 2020	

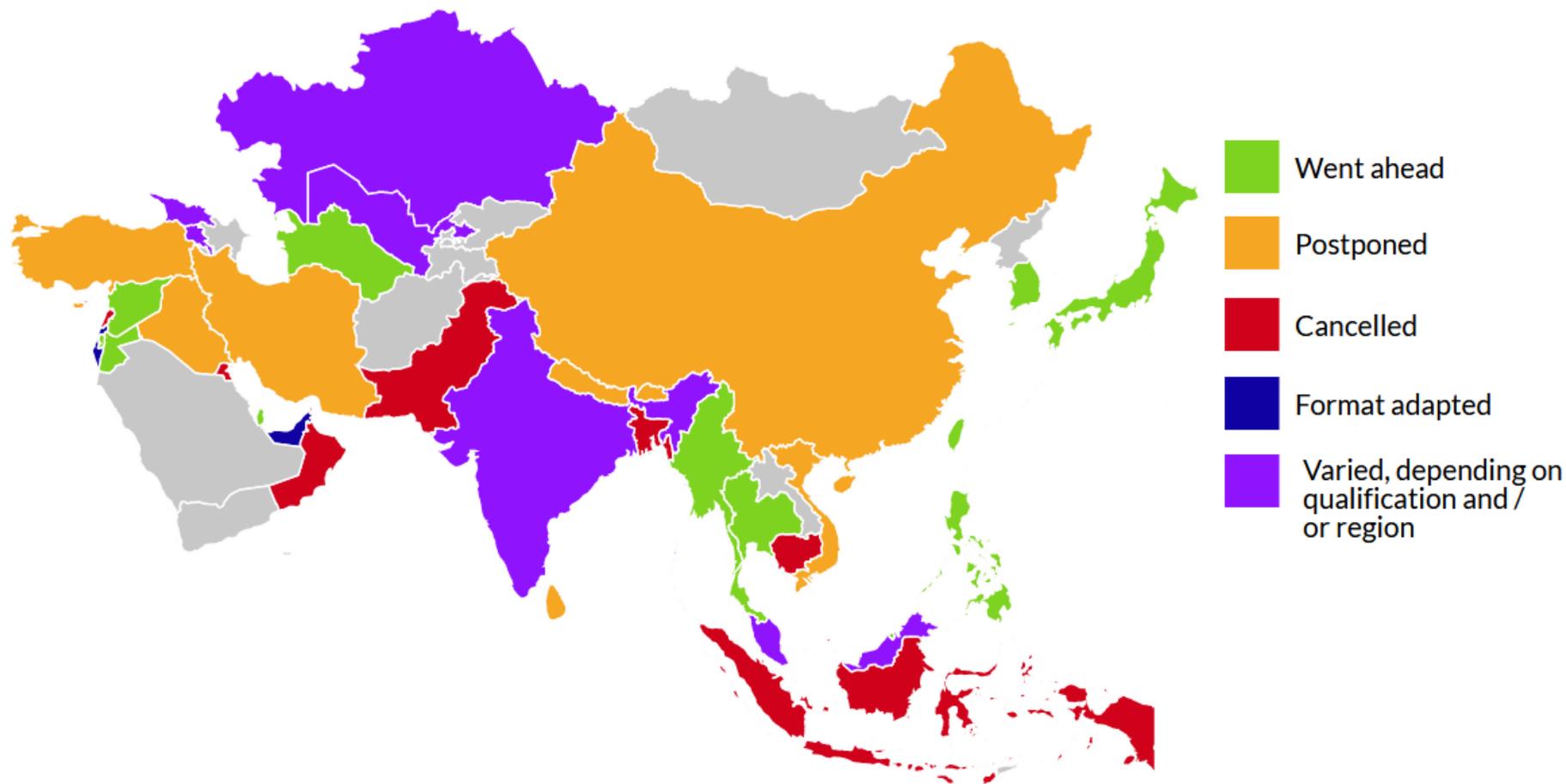
Czech Republic	<i>Vysvědčení o maturitní zkoušce</i> (Secondary School Leaving Certificate)	<i>Centrum pro zjišťování výsledků vzdělávání</i> (CERMAT)	June 2020	July 2020	
Cyprus	Panyprian Examinations (Παγκύπριες Εξετάσεις)	Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport and Youth	Late June	12 th July 2020	
Denmark	<i>Bevis for Højere Forberedelseksamen</i> (Higher Preparatory Examination Certificate)	Schools	May 2020	5 th July 2020	Upper secondary exams went ahead, but the number of exams was reduced.
Estonia	<i>Riigieksamid</i> (State examinations)	Foundation Innove	29th May - 5th June (C1 English exams 12th - 22nd June)	30 th June 2020	State examinations were optional.
Finland	<i>Ylioppilastutkintodistus / Studentexamensbetyg</i> (Matriculation Examination)	Matriculation Examination Board	March 2020	End of May 2020	
France	<i>Baccalauréat general / technologique / professionnel</i>	Ministère de l'Éducation nationale	Exams cancelled	7 th July 2020	Results were based on continuous assessment throughout the final year.
Germany	<i>Zeugnis der Allgemeinen Hochschulreife / Abitur</i>	Schools	May 2020 (written exams) Late May / June (oral exams) Exact dates vary by state.	Between the end of June and end of July, depending on the state.	
Greece	Panhellenic Examinations (Πανελλαδικές Εξετάσεις)	Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs	From 15 th June 2020	July 2020	

Hungary	<i>Erettségi Bizonyítvány</i> (Secondary Education Graduation Certificate)	Schools	May 2020	Mid-June 2020	Written exams only; oral exams were cancelled.
Ireland	Leaving Certificate	State Examinations Commission	Exams cancelled	7 th September 2020	Students received calculated grades, based on marks submitted by teachers.
Italy	<i>Esame di Stato</i>	<i>Ministero dell'Istruzione, dell'Università e della Ricerca</i>	From 17 th June 2020	16 th July 2020	Written exams were cancelled; students only took an oral exam.
Latvia	<i>Atestāts par vispārējo vidējo izglītību</i> (Certificate of General Secondary Education)	<i>Valsts Izglītības Saturs Centrs</i> (National Centre for Education)	2 nd June – 3 rd July 2020	25 th July 2020	
Lithuania	<i>Brandos Atestatas</i>	Republic of Lithuania	22 nd June – 21 st July 2020	7 th August 2020	
Luxembourg	<i>Diplôme de fin d'études secondaires</i>	<i>Ministère de l'Éducation nationale et de la Formation professionnelle</i>	From 25 th May 2020	5 th July 2020	
Malta	Matriculation Certificate Examination	MATSEC Examinations Board	31 st August - 10 th October 2020	6 th November 2020	Exams were originally scheduled for May 2020.
Moldova	<i>Diploma de Bacalaureat</i>	Ministry of Education	Exams cancelled	July 2020	Grades were based on average marks achieved in grades 10-12.
Netherlands	<i>Hoger Algemeen Voortgezet Onderwijs (HAVO) diploma / Voorbereidend Wetenschappelijk Onderwijs (VWO)</i>	Schools	External exams cancelled	June 2020	Students obtained their school leaving certificates based on their results in the school exams.
Norway	<i>Vitnemål for videregående opplæring</i> (Leaving Certificate from Upper Secondary School)	<i>Utdanningsdirektoratet</i> (Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training)	Exams cancelled	End of June 2020	Grades were based on achievement over the academic year.

Poland	<i>Świadectwo Dojrzałości</i> (Certificate of Maturity)	Central Examination Board / regional examination boards	8 th - 29 th June	By 11 th August	Written exams only; oral exams were cancelled.
Portugal	<i>Diploma Nível Secundário de Educação / Certificado Nível Secundário de Educação</i>	<i>Ministério da Educação</i>	6 th – 23 rd July 2020	3 rd August 2020	Exams were for higher education admission only; diploma was awarded on basis of school assessment.
Romania	<i>Diploma de Bacalaureat</i>	Ministry of Education and Research	From 22 nd June	July 2020	
Russia	Единого государственного экзамена (ЕГЭ) (Unified State Examination)	Departments of education	3 rd - 23 rd July	July 2020	Students were not required to pass these exams to obtain the Certificate of Secondary General Education; this was issued to all students in June.
Slovakia	<i>Vysvedčenie o maturitnej skúške</i> (Secondary School Leaving Certificate)	<i>Národný ústav certifikovaných meraní vzdelávania (NÚCEM)</i> (National Institute for Certified Educational Assessments)	Exams cancelled.	July 2020	The external written part of the <i>Maturita</i> exam was cancelled.
Slovenia	<i>Aturitetno spričevalo</i> (Matura Certificate) Also known as: <i>Splošna Matura</i> (General Matura Certificate) / <i>Spričevalo o splošni maturi</i> (Certificate of General Matura Examination))	National Committee for the General Matura	June 2020	13 th July 2020	
Spain	<i>Evaluación de Bachillerato para el Acceso a la Universidad (EBAU)</i>	Councils of education	22 nd June – 10 th July 2020	17 th July 2020	Material covered after schools were closed was not included in the exams. A second exam session was held in September 2020.

Switzerland	<i>Maturitätszeugnis / Certificat de maturité / Attestato di maturità</i>	<i>Schweizerische Eidgenössenschaft / Confédération Suisse / Confederazione Svizzera (Swiss Confederation) or Cantons</i>	Various	By the end of July 2020	The Federal Council decided that Maturity exams could be cancelled; decisions were taken by individual cantons. Exams were cancelled in some cantons.
Turkey	<i>Yükseköğretim Kurumları Sınavı (YKS) (university entrance exam)</i>	Center for Measurement, Selection and Placement (ÖSYM)	27 th -28 th June 2020	27 th July 2020	The exam was held one week later than the original date.
Ukraine	Сертифікат зовнішнього незалежного оцінювання (Certificate of Independent External Examination)	Ukrainian Centre for Educational Quality Assessment	25 th June – 17 th July 2020	July 2020	
United Kingdom	General Certificate of Education (GCE) Advanced Levels (A levels)	AQA; Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessments (CCEA); OCR; Pearson Edexcel; Welsh Joint Education Committee (WJEC)	Exams cancelled.	13 th August 2020	Results were based on Centre Assessed Grades submitted by schools.
	Highers / Advanced Highers	Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA)	Exams cancelled.	4 th August 2020	Grades were awarded based on teacher judgement.
Various	European Baccalaureate	European Schools	Exams cancelled.	July 2020	The final grade was awarded based on internal assessment.

Asia



Country	Examination	Awarding body	Examination dates	Results / grades released	Notes
Armenia	Միջնակարգ (ընդհանուր) կրթության ատեստատ (Certificate of Secondary General Education)	Schools	Exams cancelled	July 2020	Results were based on students' performance up until March.
	ՎԿԱՅԱԳԻՐ (Certificate of Unified Examination)	Assessment and Testing Centre	From 3 rd July 2020	July 2020	Students took one exam of their choice; three subjects are usually required for university admissions.
Bahrain	شهادة الثانوية العامة (General Secondary Education Certificate)	Ministry of Education	Exams cancelled	June 2020	
Bangladesh	Higher Secondary Certificate	Boards of intermediate and secondary education	Exams cancelled	30 th January 2021	Students were awarded grades based on their previous performance in the Secondary School Certificate and Junior School Certificate.
Cambodia	Diploma of Upper Secondary Education	Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport	Exams cancelled	January 2021	Students were automatically given a pass grade.
China	普通高等学校招生全国统一考试 (高考) (National College Entrance Examination (NCEE) (<i>Gaokao</i>))	Provincial examinations authorities	7 th - 8 th July 2020	Late July 2020	<i>Gaokao</i> exams were postponed by one month.
Hong Kong	Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE)	Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority (HKEAA)	24 th April – 27 th May 2020	22 nd July 2020	Speaking exams for English and Chinese were cancelled. Other exams were postponed by one month.
India	Indian School Certificate	Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations (CISCE)	Exams cancelled	10 th July 2020	Results were based on students' past performance.

All India Senior School Certificate Examination / Delhi Senior School Certificate Examination	Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE)	Exams cancelled	13 th July 2020	Results were based on students' past performance.
Senior Secondary School Examination	National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS)	Exams cancelled	5 th August 2020	Results were based on students' past performance.
Intermediate Public Examination	Board of Intermediate Education Andhra Pradesh	4 th – 21 st March	12 th June 2020	
Intermediate Examination	Bihar School Examination Board	February 2020	24 th March	
Higher Secondary School Certificate Examination	Chhattisgarh Board of Secondary Education	March 2020; some exams cancelled	23 rd June 2020	Grades for subjects in which exams were cancelled were based on internal assessment.
Higher Secondary Certificate Examination	Gujarat Secondary and Higher Secondary Education Board	March 2020	15 th June 2020	
Higher Secondary School Certificate Examination	Goa Board of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education	March / May 2020	26 th June 2020	Most exams went ahead in March, with a small number of papers postponed until May.
Senior Secondary (12th Class) Examination Certificate	Punjab School Education Board	March 2020; some exams cancelled	21 st July 2020	Grades for cancelled exams were awarded according to 'best performing subjects formula' – the average of the best three results in exams that went ahead.
Higher Secondary Examination Certificate	Government of Kerala Board of Higher Secondary Examinations	21 st - 29 th May 2020	15 th July 2020	Exams were originally due to held in March.
Second Year Pre-University Examination	Government of Karnataka Department of Pre-University Education	March 2020	14 th July 2020	One exam was delayed and taken in June.

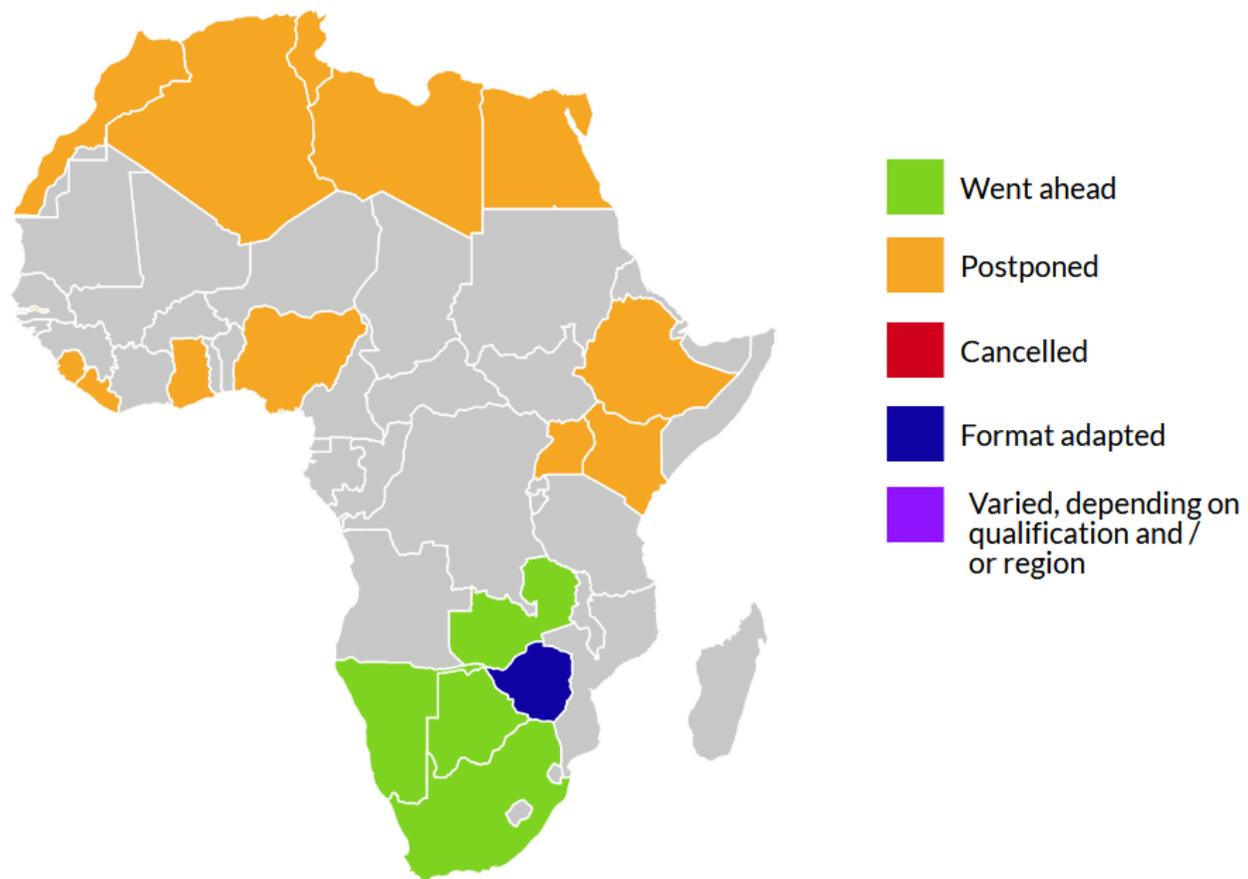
	Higher Secondary Certificate Examination	Maharashtra State Board of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education	February / March 2020	16 th July 2020	
	Higher Secondary Course Certificate	State Board of School Examinations, Tamil Nadu	March 2020; some exams cancelled	16 th July 2020	
	Higher Secondary Examination	West Bengal Council of Higher Secondary Education	March 2020; some exams cancelled	17 th July 2020	Grades for cancelled exams were awarded based on the best marks achieved in exams in other subjects.
Indonesia	Ijazah - Sekolah Menengah Atas / Madrasah Aliyah (SMA / MA) (Certificate of Graduation from Academic / Islamic Secondary School)	Ministry of Education and Culture	Exams cancelled	June 2020	National exams were due to be discontinued from 2021 but ended a year earlier due to the pandemic.
Iran	<i>Konkur</i> (university entrance examination)	National Organisation of Educational Testing	August 2020	30 th October 2020	The exam took place later than usual.
Iraq	شهادة الدراسة الإعدادية / الثانوية Certificate of Preparatory Education / Secondary School Certificate / Baccalaureat)	Ministry of Education	September 2020	7 th October 2020	Exams were delayed by three months.
Israel	תעודת בגרות (Matriculation Certificate). Also known as: 'Te'udat Bagrut' or 'Bagrut'.	Ministry of Education	From 22 nd June 2020	July 2020	Students only took exams in up to five subjects, instead of the usual six or seven.
Japan	National Centre Test for University Admissions (大学入試センター試験)	National Centre for University Admissions	From 18 th January 2020	February 2020	Not affected by COVID-19.
Jordan	شهادة الدراسة الثانوية العامة (Certificate of General Secondary Education)	Ministry of Education	June 2020	15 th August 2020	

Kazakhstan	Орта білім туралы аттестат (Certificate of Completed Secondary Education)	Ministry of Education and Science	Exams cancelled	June 2020	
	Сертификат ЕНТ (Единое Национальное Тестирование) (Certificate of UNT (Unified National Testing))	Ministry of Education and Science	20 th June – 5 th July 2020	July 2020	
Kuwait	شهادة الثانوية العامة (General Secondary Education Certificate)	Ministry of Education	Exams cancelled	October 2020	
Lebanon	<i>Baccalauréat</i>	Ministry of Education and Higher Education	Exams cancelled	TBC	Students issued with a certificate of completion for the final year of secondary education, which will enable them to access higher education.
Malaysia	STPM (<i>Sijil Tinggi Persekolahan</i>) Malaysia (Malaysia Higher School Certificate)	Malaysian Examinations Council	Semester 2: 12 th - 18 th August 2020 Semester 3: March 2021	Semester 2: October 2020 Semester 3: TBC	
	<i>Matrikulasi</i> (Matriculation Certificate)	Ministry of Education	Exams cancelled	May 2020	Grades were based on semester 1 exams and continuous assessment.
	UEC (Unified Examination Certificate) Senior Middle Level	Unified Chinese School Committee Association of Malaysia (<i>Dong Zong</i>)	December 2020	17 th February 2021	Exams are usually held in October / November.
Myanmar	Basic Education High School Examination / Matriculation Examination	Ministry of Education	March 2020	9 th August 2020	Exams went ahead in March, but results were delayed until August.
Nepal	Secondary Education Examination (SEE)	National Examinations Board (NEB)	November 2020	1 st February 2021	Exams were due to be held in March / April 2020 and postponed by eight months. The weighting of the final exam was reduced, with

					Grade 11 marks and teacher assessment also counting towards the final grade.
Pakistan	Intermediate / Higher Secondary Certificate	Boards of intermediate and secondary education	Exams cancelled.	30 th July 2020	
Palestine	شهادة الثانوية العامة (General Secondary Education Certificate)	Ministry of Education	June 2020	12 th July 2020	
Philippines	Senior High School Certificate / Diploma	Schools	12 th – 13 th March 2020	March 2020	No change.
Singapore	Singapore / Cambridge GCE A level	Singapore Ministry of Education / University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate	October 2020	February 2021	Mid-year exams in May / June 2020 were postponed or cancelled.
South Korea	대학수학능력시험 (College Scholastic Ability Test) (CSAT)	Korea Institute of Curriculum and Evaluation (KICE - 한국교육과정평가원)	3 rd December 2020	23 rd December 2020	Exams are usually held in November.
Sri Lanka	Sri Lankan General Certificate of Education (Advanced level)	Department of Examinations	October 2020	April 2021	A level exams were postponed from August.
Syria	شهادة الدراسة الثانوية العامة (General Secondary Certificate)	Ministry of Education	June 2020	July 2020	
Taiwan	指定科目考試 (Advanced Subjects Test) (AST)	College Entrance Examination Center (CEEC) (大學入學考試中心)	3 rd - 5 th July 2020	August 2020	No change.
United Arab Emirates	شهادة الدراسة الثانوية العامة General Secondary Education Certificate Examination	Ministry of Education	21 st – 29 th June 2020	July 2020	Exams were held online.

Uzbekistan	<i>O'rta Ma'lumot To'g'risida Shahodatnoma</i> (Certificate of Completed Secondary Education)	Schools	June 2020	June 2020	Exams were taken online.
	National university entrance examination	State Testing Centre	2 nd September 2020	3 rd September 2020	The exam is usually held on 1 st August.
Vietnam	<i>Bằng Tốt Nghiệp Trung Học Phổ Thông (THPT)</i> (Senior Secondary School Graduation Diploma)	Ministry of Education and Training (MOET)	7 th - 11 th August 2020	27 th August 2020	The school year was extended into July and exams postponed until August.

Africa



Country	Examination	Awarding body	Examination dates	Results / grades released	Notes
Algeria	<i>Baccalauréat de l'Enseignement Secondaire</i>	Ministry of National Education	September 2020	14 th October 2020	Exams usually take place in June.
Botswana	Botswana General Certificate of Secondary Education	Botswana Examinations Council / University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate	October / November 2020	February 2021	Exams in May / June were cancelled.
Egypt	Certificate of General Secondary Education (<i>Thanawaya Amma</i>)	Ministry of Education	21 st June – 21 st July 2020	4 th August 2020	
Ethiopia	University Entrance Examination	National Educational Assessment and Examinations Agency (NEAEA)	February 2021	TBC	The University Entrance Examination was due to be held in June 2020 but was postponed.
Gambia	West African Senior School Certificate Examination	West African Examinations Council (WAEC)	17 th August – mid-September	Mid-November 2020	Exams were originally scheduled for June.
Ghana	West African Senior School Certificate Examination	West African Examinations Council (WAEC)	3 rd August – 5 th September 2020	Mid-November 2020	Exams were originally scheduled for June. Results are available on the results checker, but, as of February 2021, final certificates had not been issued.
Kenya	Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education	Kenya National Examinations Council	26 th March – 21 st April 2021	TBC	Exams were due to take place in November.
Liberia	West African Senior School Certificate Examination	West African Examinations Council (WAEC)	17 th August – mid-September	Mid-November 2020	Exams were originally scheduled for June.
Libya	شهادة الدراسة الثانوية العامة (Secondary Education Certificate)	Ministry of Education	October 2020	December 2020	Exams were postponed until schools were able to partially reopen.
Morocco	شهادة البكالوريا (<i>Attestation du Baccalauréat</i>)	<i>Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale</i>	Early July 2020	15 th July 2020	

Nigeria	Senior School Certificate	National Examinations Council (NECO)	November 2020	13 th January 2021	Exams were originally scheduled for June, then postponed until October. They were later rescheduled for November after being disrupted by the End SARS protests.
	West African Senior School Certificate Examination	West African Examinations Council (WAEC)	17 th August – mid-September	2 nd November 2020	Exams were originally scheduled for June. Results are available on the results checker, but, as of February 2021, final certificates had not been issued.
Sierra Leone	West African Senior School Certificate Examination	West African Examinations Council (WAEC)	17 th August – mid-September	Mid-November 2020	Exams were originally scheduled for June.
South Africa	National Senior Certificate	UMALUSI Council for Quality Assurance in General and Further Education and Training South Africa	November 2020	22 nd February 2021	Resits scheduled for May / June were postponed and students sat the November exams.
Tunisia	<i>Baccalauréat</i>	Ministry of Education	July 2020	24 th July 2020	Exams are usually held in June.
Zambia	General Certificate of Education	Examinations Council of Zambia	31 st August – 15 th September 2020	30 th October 2020	
	School Certificate	Examinations Council of Zambia	December 2020	February 2021	
Zimbabwe	A Level	Zimbabwe Schools Examinations Council (ZIMSEC)	December 2020 / January 2021	February 2021	

The Americas



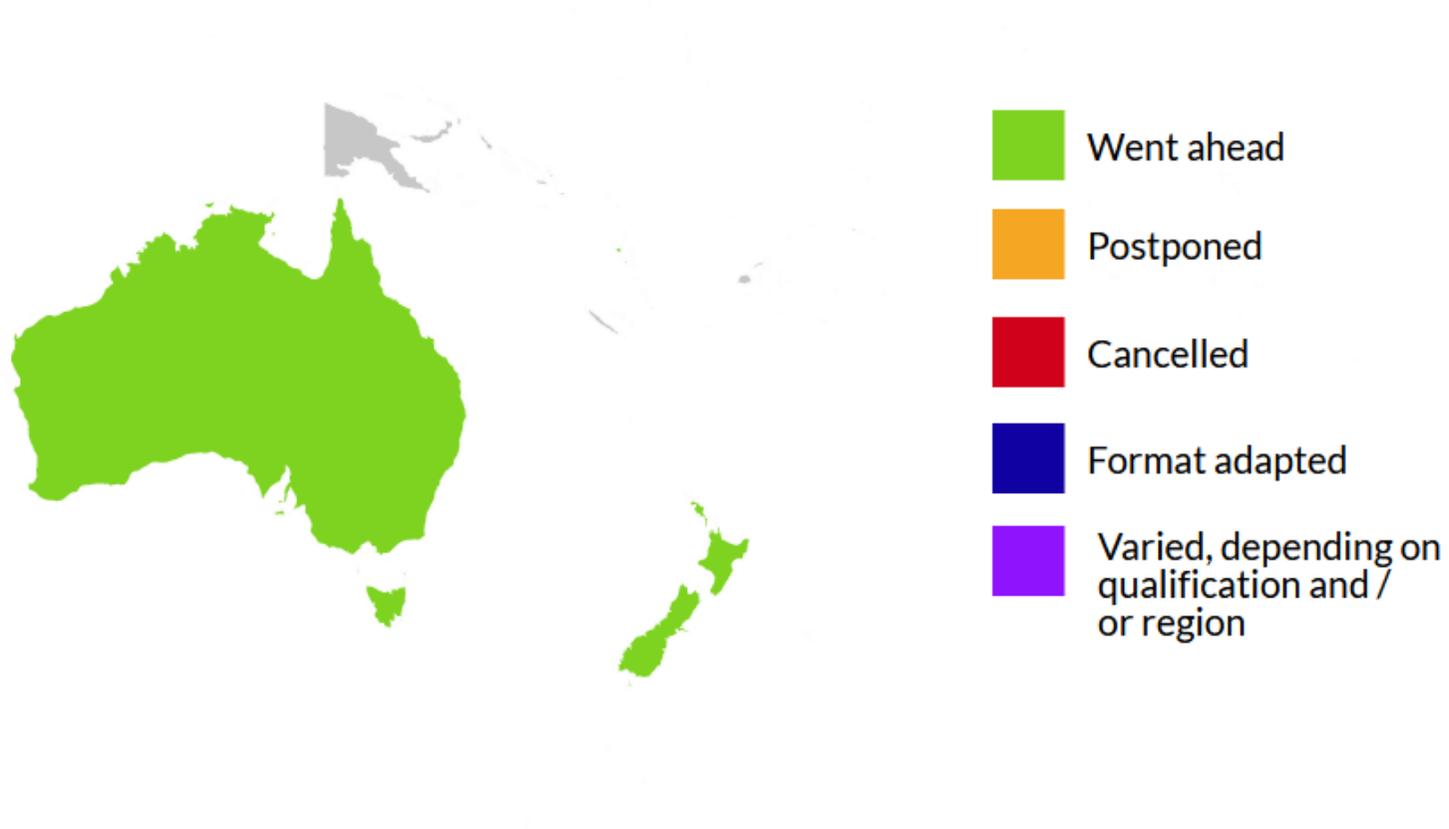
-  Went ahead
-  Postponed
-  Cancelled
-  Format adapted
-  Varied, depending on qualification and / or region



Country	Examination	Awarding body	Examination dates	Results / grades released	Notes
Anguilla	Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE)	Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC)	From 13 th July 2020	22 nd September 2020	The format of the exams was modified. Exams consisted of multiple-choice questions and were marked electronically.
Antigua and Barbuda					
Barbados					
Belize					
British Virgin Islands					
Cayman Islands					
Dominica					
Grenada					
Guyana					
Jamaica					
Montserrat					
St. Kitts and Nevis					
St. Lucia					
St. Vincent and the Grenadines					
Trinidad and Tobago					
Turks and Caicos Islands					
Brazil	Exame Nacional do Ensino Médio (ENEM)	<i>Instituto Nacional de Estudos e Pesquisas Educacionais (INEP)</i>	January / February 2021	February 2021	The ENEM was originally due to take place at the start of November. Some

					students sat a new digital version of the exam.
Canada	Alberta High School Diploma	Alberta Education	November 2020	Diploma awarded as usual.	Diploma exams were optional.
	British Columbia Certificate of Graduation	British Columbia Ministry of Education	N/A	Diploma awarded as usual.	No change as there are no external exams for this qualification.
	Manitoba High School Diploma	Ministry of Education, Manitoba	Exams cancelled	Diploma awarded as usual.	The majority of courses for these qualifications are internally assessed, with only a small number of provincial exams in specific subjects.
	New Brunswick High School Diploma	New Brunswick Ministry of Education	Exams cancelled	Diploma awarded as usual.	
	Newfoundland and Labrador High School Graduation Diploma	Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Education	Exams cancelled	Diploma awarded as usual.	
	Nova Scotia High School Graduation Diploma	Nova Scotia Department for Education	Exams cancelled	Diploma awarded as usual.	
	Ontario Secondary School Diploma	Ministry of Education, Ontario	Exams cancelled	Diploma awarded as usual.	
USA	ACT	ACT	13 th June 2020	23 rd June – 7 th August 2020	The tests due to take place in April were rescheduled for June. Some test centres remained closed.
	SAT	College Board	Exams cancelled (May and June)	N/A	The exams scheduled for May and June were cancelled.
	Advanced Placement (AP)	College Board	11 th – 22 nd May 2020: 1 st – 5 th June 2020	15 th – 17 th July 2020	Exams were taken online in an adapted format.

Australasia



Country	Examination	Awarding body	Examination dates	Results / grades released	Notes
Australia	Australian Capital Territory Year 12 Certificate	ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies (BSSS)	November 2020	18 th December 2020	
	Higher School Certificate (New South Wales)	Board of Studies Teaching and Educational Standards NSW (BOSTES)	From 20 th October 2020	18 th December 2020	Exams started five days later than originally planned.
	Northern Territory Certificate of Education and Training	Department of Education - Northern Territory Board of Studies (NTBOS)	Late October – November 2020	15 th December 2020	
	Queensland Certificate of Education	Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority (QCAA)	26 th October – 17 th November 2020	19 th December 2020	
	South Australian Certificate of Education	South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE) Board of South Australia	Late October – November 2020	15 th December 2020	
	Tasmanian Certificate of Education	Office of Tasmanian Assessment, Standards and Certification (TASC)	9 th – 19 th November 2020	18 th December 2020	
	Victorian Certificate of Education	Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA)	10 th November - 1 st December 2020	30 th December 2020	Exams took place slightly later than usual.
	Western Australia Certificate of Education	WA School Curriculum and Standards Authority	November 2020	20 th December 2020	
Kiribati, Tuvalu, Vanuatu	South Pacific Form Seven Certificate (SPFSC)	Educational Quality and Assessment Programme (EQAP)	November 2020	8 th January 2021	These exams went ahead as planned.
New Zealand	National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) Level 3	New Zealand Qualifications Authority	16 th November – 9 th December 2020	21 st January 2021	

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Key:

-  Exams went ahead
-  Exams were postponed or delayed*
-  The format of the exams was adapted
-  Exams were cancelled

*compared to dates originally announced, or compared to the usual timetable

Country	Qualification	Status
Albania	<i>Diplomë e Maturës Shtetërore</i>	
Algeria	<i>Baccalauréat de l'Enseignement Secondaire</i>	 
Anguilla	Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE)	  
Antigua and Barbuda	Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE)	  
Armenia	Միջնակարգ (ընդհանուր) կրթության ատեստատ (Certificate of Secondary General Education)	
	ՎԿԱՅԱԳԻՐ (Certificate of Unified Examination)	 
Australia	Australian Capital Territory Year 12 Certificate	
	Higher School Certificate (New South Wales)	
	Northern Territory Certificate of Education and Training	
	Queensland Certificate of Education	
	South Australian Certificate of Education	
	Tasmanian Certificate of Education	

Country	Qualification	Status
	Victorian Certificate of Education	
	Western Australia Certificate of Education	
Austria	<i>Reifeprüfung / Matura</i>	  
Bahrain	شهادة الثانوية العامة (General Secondary Education Certificate)	
Bangladesh	Higher Secondary Certificate	
Barbados	Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination	  
Belgium – French speaking community	<i>Certificat d'enseignement secondaire supérieur (CESS)</i>	
Belize	Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination	  
Bhutan	Bhutan Higher Secondary Education Certificate	 
Botswana	Botswana General Certificate of Secondary Education	
Brazil	<i>Exame Nacional do Ensino Médio (ENEM)</i>	 
British Virgin Islands, the	Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination	  
Brunei	Brunei / Cambridge GCE A Level	
Bulgaria	Диплома за средно образование (Diploma of Completed Secondary Education)	 
Cambodia	Diploma of Upper Secondary Education	
Canada	Alberta High School Diploma	 
	British Columbia Certificate of Graduation	No change (no external provincial exams)
	Manitoba High School Diploma	

Country	Qualification	Status
	New Brunswick High School Diploma	
	Newfoundland and Labrador High School Graduation Diploma	
	Nova Scotia High School Graduation Diploma	
	Ontario Secondary School Diploma	
Cayman Islands	Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination	  
Chile	<i>Prueba de Selección Universitaria</i> (PSU)	 
China	高中毕业证书 (Senior Secondary School Graduation Certificate)	 
	普通高等学校招生全国统一考试 (高考) (Gaokao – National College Entrance Examination (NCEE))	 
Croatia	<i>Svjedodžba o maturi / Svjedodžba o državnoj maturi / Potvrda o položenim ispitima državne mature</i> (Matura Certificate / State Matura Certificate)	 
Cyprus	Pancyprian Examinations (Παγκύπριες Εξετάσεις - <i>Pankýpries Exetáseis</i>)	 
Czech Republic, the	<i>Vysvědčení o maturitní zkoušce</i> (Secondary School Leaving Certificate)	 
Denmark	<i>Bevis for Højere Forberedelseksamen</i> (Higher Preparatory Examination Certificate)	 
Dominica	Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE)	  
Egypt	شهادة الثانوية العامة (Certificate of General Secondary Education)	 
Estonia	<i>Gümnaasiumi lõputunnistus with the Riigieksamitunnistus</i> (Secondary School Leaving Certificate with the State Examination Certificate)	  

Country	Qualification	Status
Ethiopia	University Entrance Examination	 
Finland	<i>Ylioppilastutkintotodistus / Studentexamensbetyg</i> (Matriculation Examination)	
France	<i>Diplôme du baccalauréat général</i>	
Gambia, the	West African Senior School Certificate Examination	 
Georgia	სრული ზოგადი განათლების ატესტატი (General Education Diploma)	
	Unified National Examinations	
Germany	<i>Zeugnis der Allgemeinen Hochschulreife / Abitur</i>	
Ghana	West African Senior School Certificate Examination	 
Greece	ΑΠΟΛΥΤΗΡΙΟ ΓΕΝΙΚΟΥ ΛΥΚΕΙΟΥ (Upper Secondary School Leaving Certificate)	
	Panhellenic Examinations	 
Grenada	Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE)	  
Guyana	Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE)	  
Hong Kong	Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education	  
Hungary	<i>Érettségi Bizonyítvány</i> (Secondary Education Graduation Certificate). Also known as: Matura	 
India	Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations (CISCE) - Indian School Certificate	
	Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) - All India Senior School Certificate Examination / Delhi Senior School Certificate Examination	

Country	Qualification	Status
	National Institute of Open Schooling - Senior Secondary School Examination	
India – Andhra Pradesh	Intermediate Public Examination	
India - Bihar	Intermediate Examination	
India - Chhattisgarh	Higher Secondary School Certificate Examination	 
India - Goa	Higher Secondary School Certificate Examination	 
India - Gujarat	Higher Secondary Certificate Examination	
India - Karnataka	Second Year Pre-University Examination	
India - Kerala	Higher Secondary Examination Certificate	 
India - Maharashtra	Higher Secondary Certificate Examination	
India - Punjab	Senior Secondary (12th Class) Examination Certificate	 
India – Tamil Nadu	Higher Secondary Course Certificate	 
India – West Bengal	Higher Secondary Examination	 
Indonesia	<i>Ijazah - Sekolah Menengah Atas / Madrasah Aliyah (SMA / MA)</i> (Certificate of Graduation from Academic / Islamic Secondary School)	
International	International AS & A Levels	
	International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme	
Iran	<i>Konkur</i>	 
Iraq	شهادة الدراسة الإعدادية /الثانوية Certificate of Preparatory Education / Secondary School Certificate / Baccalaureat)	 

Country	Qualification	Status
Ireland	Leaving Certificate	
Israel	בגרות תעודת (Matriculation Certificate). Also known as: 'Te'udat Bagrut' or 'Bagrut'.	 
Italy	<i>Diploma di Esame di Stato</i>	 
Jamaica	Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE)	  
Japan	高等学校卒業証書 (Upper Secondary School Leaving Certificate)	No change (no external national exams)
	National Centre Test for University Admissions (大学入試センター試験)	
Jordan	شهادة الدراسة الثانوية العامة (Certificate of General Secondary Education)	
Kazakhstan	Сертификат ЕНТ (Единое Национальное Тестирование) (Certificate of UNT (Unified National Testing))	
	Орта білім туралы аттестат (Certificate of Completed Secondary Education)	
Kenya	Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education	 
Kuwait	شهادة الثانوية العامة (General Secondary Education Certificate)	
Latvia	Atestāts par vispārējo vidējo izglītību (Certificate of General Secondary Education)	
Lebanon	<i>Baccalauréat</i>	
Liberia	Senior School Certificate	 
Libya	شهادة الدراسة الثانوية العامة (Secondary Education Certificate)	 
Lithuania	<i>Brandos Atestatas</i> (Secondary School Leaving Certificate)	
Luxembourg	<i>Diplôme de fin d'études secondaires</i>	

Country	Qualification	Status
Malaysia	STPM (<i>Sijil Tinggi Pelajaran Malaysia</i>) (Malaysia Certificate of Education)	 
	UEC (Unified Examination Certificate) Senior Middle Level	 
	<i>Matrikulasi</i> (Matriculation Certificate)	
Malta	Matriculation Certificate Examination	 
Moldova	<i>Diplomă de Bacalaureat</i>	
Montserrat	Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE)	  
Morocco	شهادة البكالوريا (Attestation du Baccalauréat)	 
Myanmar	Basic Education High School Examination / Matriculation Examination	
Namibia	Namibia Senior Secondary Certificate	
Nepal	School Leaving Certificate Examination (Grade XI & XII)	 
Netherlands, the	<i>Hoger Algemeen Voortgezet Onderwijs</i> (HAVO) diploma	
	<i>Voorbereidend Wetenschappelijk Onderwijs</i> (VWO)	
New Zealand	National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) Level 3	
Nigeria	Senior School Certificate	 
	West African Senior School Certificate	 
Norway	<i>Vitnemål for videregående opplæring</i> (Leaving Certificate from Upper Secondary School)	
Oman	دبلوم التعليم العام (General Education Diploma)	
Pakistan	Intermediate / Higher Secondary Certificate	

Country	Qualification	Status
Philippines	Senior High School Certificate / Diploma	
Poland	<i>Świadectwo Dojrzałości</i> (Certificate of Maturity)	  
Portugal	<i>Diploma Nível Secundário de Educação / Certificado Nível Secundário de Educação</i>	  
Qatar	شهادة الثانوية العامة (General Secondary Education Certificate)	
Romania	<i>Diplomă de Bacalaureat</i>	
Russia	Единый государственный экзамен, ЕГЭ (Unified State Examination)	 
Sierra Leone	West African Senior School Certificate	 
Singapore	Singapore GCE A level	
Slovakia	<i>Vysvedčenie o maturitnej skúške</i> (Secondary School Leaving Certificate)	
Slovenia	<i>Aturitetno spričevalo</i> (Matura Certificate) Also known as: <i>Splošna Matura</i> (General Matura Certificate) / <i>Spričevalo o splošni maturi</i> (Certificate of General Matura Examination))	
South Africa	National Senior Certificate	
South Korea	고등학교 졸업증명서 / 고등학교 졸업장 (High School Diploma / High School Certificate of Graduation)	No change (no external national examinations).
	대학수학능력시험 (College Scholastic Ability Test (CSAT)) Also known as: 수능 (<i>Suneung</i>)	
Spain	<i>Título de Bachiller</i>	No change (no external national examinations).

Country	Qualification	Status
	<i>Evaluación de Acceso a la Universidad (EvAU)</i> (university entrance exam)	 
Sri Lanka	Sri Lankan General Certificate of Education (Advanced level)	 
St Kitts and Nevis	Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE)	  
St Lucia	Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE)	  
St Vincent and the Grenadines	Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE)	  
Sweden	<i>Avgångsbetyg / Slutbetyg från Gymnasieskola</i> (Upper Secondary School Leaving Certificate)	
	<i>Högskoleförberedande Examen</i> (Higher Education Preparatory Diploma)	
Switzerland	<i>Maturitätszeugnis / Certificat de maturité / Attestato di maturità</i>	Varied by canton. Cancelled in some cantons.
Syria	شهادة الدراسة الثانوية العامة (General Secondary Certificate)	
Taiwan	Advanced Subjects Test (AST) (指定科目考試)	
	General Scholastic Ability Test (GSAT) (學科能力測驗)	
Thailand	Ordinary National Test (O-NET) – Grade 12	
Trinidad and Tobago	Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE)	  
Tunisia	<i>Baccalauréat</i>	 
Turkey	<i>Yükseköğretim Kurumları Sınavı (YKS)</i> (university entrance exam)	
Turks and Caicos Islands	Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE)	  
Uganda	Uganda Advanced Certificate of Education	 

Country	Qualification	Status
Ukraine	Свідоцтво про здобуття повної загально (Certificate of Complete General Secondary Education)	
	Сертифікат зовнішнього незалежного оцінювання (Certificate of Independent External Examination)	
United Arab Emirates	شهادة الدراسة الثانوية العامة General Secondary Education Certificate Examination	 
United Kingdom, the	General Certificate of Education (GCE) Advanced Levels (A levels)	
	Highers / Advanced Highers	
United States of America, the	ACT	 
	Advanced Placement (AP)	 
	SAT	 
Uzbekistan	<i>O'rta Ma'lumot To'g'risida Shahodatnoma</i> (Certificate of Completed Secondary Education)	 
	National university entrance examination	
Vietnam	<i>Bằng Tốt Nghiệp Trung Học Phổ Thông (THPT)</i> (Senior Secondary School Graduation Diploma)	 
Zambia	General Certificate of Education	
	School Certificate	
Zimbabwe	A Level	

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