

WJEC GCSE English Language Online Briefing Q&A Report

03/09 & 04/09

Q: Will the group discussion task for the November 2020 series be the same as last summer or is there a new task?

The same group discussion stimulus materials for entry in summer 2020 are to be used for entry in November 2020.

Q: Will the March deadline for Unit 1 be pushed back?

The Unit 1 submission deadline for summer 2021 is 24th March.

Q: Are there any adaptations at all for November resit?

There are no adaptations for the November 2020 series.

Q: Will there still be a maximum file size restriction, given files recorded via teams may be a larger file size?

As yet, there are no changes to the maximum file sizes for Surpass upload for November 2020 and summer 2021, however this will be reviewed by our e-Submissions team with any changes made communicated to centres.

Q: Is Oracy still worth 20%?

Yes, the weighting of Unit 1 remains at 20%.

Q: Can presentations already recorded by students during lockdown (while at home and not via Teams) period be submitted?

This practice will only be permitted where the controlled conditions outlined in the specification have been followed and the presentation has been delivered to the teacher.

Q: Can a student's presentation be used for entry in summer 2021 if it was recorded for entry in summer 2020?

Yes, this is completely fine.

Q: When students are presenting their IRPs remotely, do they need to provide their name and candidate no on the recording?

Yes, as it is helpful with candidate identification during the external moderation process.

Q: Is it possible for all students to remotely record their presentations, or is this just an option for those with attendance issues?

This adaptation has been designed to support centres where there are attendance issues affecting staff and students during the pandemic i.e. self-isolating, quarantine, closure.

Q: If they are recorded remotely, are you expecting them to be video files? Or will audio only still be acceptable?

Audio-only recordings will still be permitted.

Q: If performing solo presentations in a school setting, how many pupils should make an audience (in addition to the teacher) please?

An audience can consist of just the teacher if necessary.

Q: Will it be possible for FE centres to obtain the oracy tasks that were recorded in the schools where the students have come from?

Yes, schools should provide these recordings along with the cover sheets and notes for each of the students requested by FE centres.

Q: As a Further Education Centre we did upload marks onto the WJEC system for Unit 1 prior to the college closing in the wake of the nationwide lockdown. On the basis we effectively 'banked' those marks and submitted a sample for moderation can our learners carry those marks forward for the November series?

As the summer 2020 exam series was cancelled and replaced with centre assessed grading, no Unit 1 mark exists for candidates that were entered in summer 2020.

Q: In light of Unit 1 (I.R.P.) now being worth double at 20%, could preparation time be doubled to two weeks? It seems unfair to pupils who struggle to speak in front of a camera to be penalised by having this unit be worth so much.

As the presentation is still marked out of 40 marks and the recommended timing remains at 5-7 minutes, the week's preparation will continue to stand.

Q: With regards to carry-forwards, will learners resitting in 2021/22 be able to take marks from the previous academic year in light of this year's changes? Or is it too premature to ask? This is a very common practice in FE.

A carry-forward of the Unit 1 mark for re-sit candidates will continue as normal, however, as no marks were accepted in summer 2020, this is the only exam series where this practice will not be permitted.

Q: I understand that the adaptations are only applicable to the June 2021 exam and not November 2020 and I wonder why are the adaptations not applicable for the November exam when the learners have still been disadvantaged by the same set of circumstances?

Qualifications Wales requested that adaptations be applied to the summer 2021 exam series only.

Q: Regarding Unit 3, could we have more clarity on which text types will be assessed? By this I mean, argumentation and persuasion writing still means lots of different text types need to be covered. I appreciate you can't tell us which actual text types are on the exam but if we could have a limited range of text types, e.g. leaflet, etc., then I feel we would all feel more comfortable. I don't believe this request affects the integrity of the exam.

The only adaptation to unit 3 was to provide a choice of writing task in Section B as opposed to both being compulsory.

Q: Are these the final proposed changes, and can we make them public to our learners please?

The proposed adaptation stage concluded last term. The four adaptations that have been communicated to centres can be share with all concerned.

Q: What was the rationale behind the removal of narration writing over the others?

Each Unit 2 question paper features two writing types from three. Next summer's Unit 2 doesn't feature narration writing.