



Pearson

## Notice for Candidates regarding the Edexcel International GCSE 9-1 grading scale change

We have made some updates to our suite of Edexcel International GCSE qualifications for first teaching in September 2016 and 2017, based on feedback from teachers, higher education representatives, subject expert groups and other key stakeholders.

The following information outlines some of the key features and benefits of the new 9-1 grading scale.

### New 9-1 grading scale

|                       | Current Grading Structure |   |   |   |   |             |   |   |   |   |   |             |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|---|---|---|---|-------------|---|---|---|---|---|-------------|
|                       | A*                        |   | A | B |   | C           |   | D | E | F | G | U           |
| New Grading Structure | 9                         | 8 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 4           | 3 | 2 | 1 | U |   |             |
|                       |                           |   |   |   |   | 4 and above | = |   |   |   |   | C and above |

Ofqual (The Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation in England) announced a number of reforms to GCSE and GCE A level qualifications in England, including the introduction of a new 9-1 grading scale for GCSEs, with 9 as the top grade. As a result of education reform, all UK GCSE qualifications regulated by Ofqual will be following the new 9-1 grading scale, including Pearson, from September 2015 onwards.

To ensure continued comparability to the new reformed GCSEs in England in terms of content and assessment standards, we made the decision to introduce a 9-1 grading scale for our updated suite of Edexcel International GCSEs also.

### Rewarding outstanding academic achievement

With 9 levels of attainment, rather than 8 in the current A\*-G grading scale, the new 9-1 grading scale offers greater differentiation of the most able at the top end of the grading scale, recognizing outstanding academic achievement. There is also greater differentiation in the middle of the scale, with three grades (4, 5 and 6) aligned to the current C and B grades, motivating students and supporting progression.

### Awarding

On the new grading scale, a grade 7 will be broadly equivalent to a grade A, a grade 4 will be broadly equivalent to a grade C, and a grade 1 will be broadly equivalent to a grade G. All other grade boundaries will be set arithmetically, as they are now- for example, the boundaries at grades 5 and 6 will be set based on the different in marks between the grade 4 and 7. Grade 9 represents a new level of attainment for the very top performers.

Our commitment to award grades that accurately reflect exam performance remains the same. This means that we will continue to set new grade boundaries (the minimum number of marks needed to



# Pearson

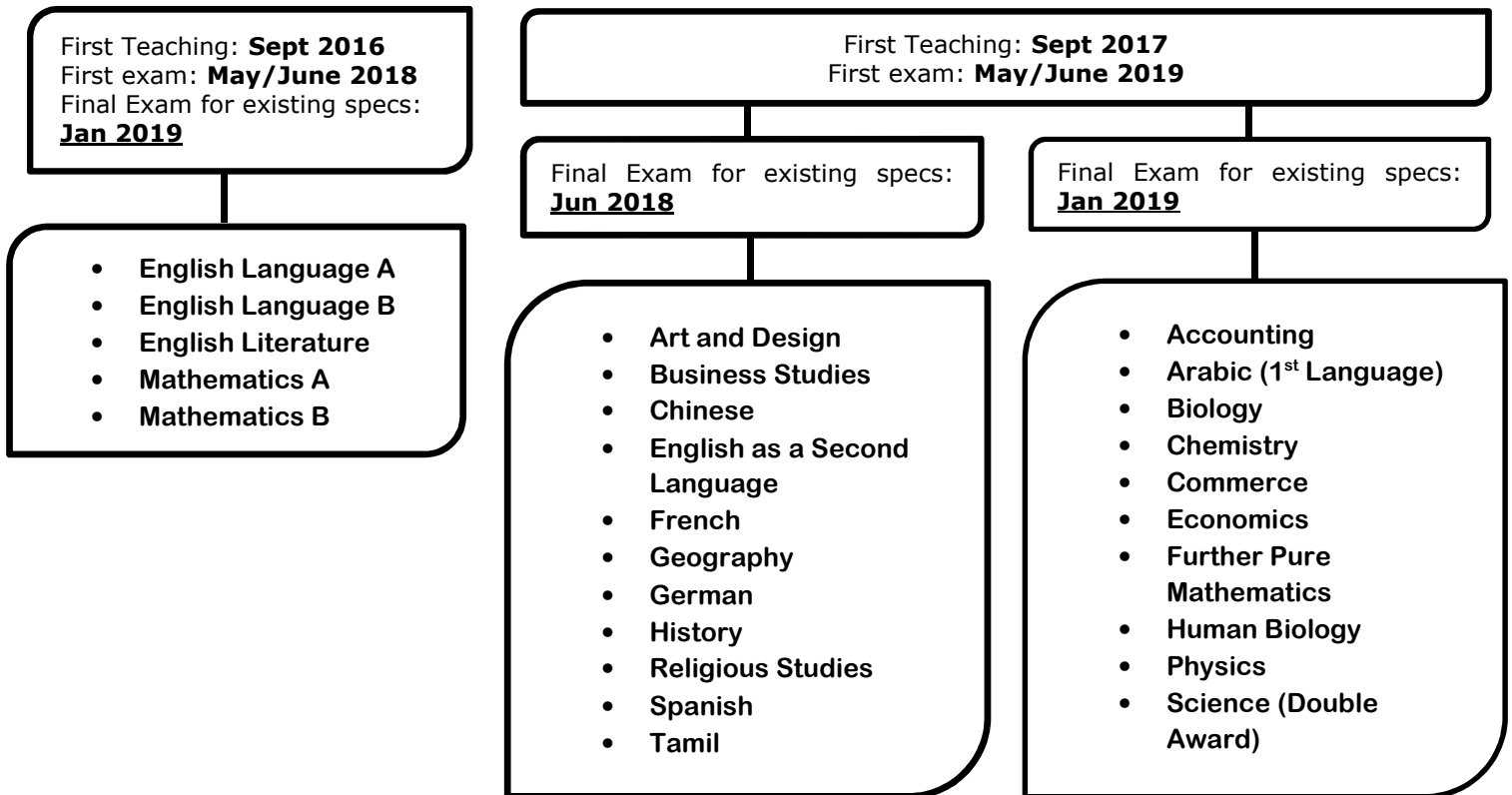
achieve each grade) for each assessment of each qualifications. This means that small variations in exam difficulty each year do not impact student outcomes.

## University recognition

Global Higher Education Institutions are becoming familiar with the new 9-1 grading scale for new reformed GCSEs in England. They will therefore understand how the numeric grading scale works when it is introduced for Edexcel International GCSEs, and continue to recognise these qualifications along with A levels for university entry.

## Subject availability and timeline

### International GCSE



### GCSE – Chinese

First Teaching: **Sept 2017**  
First exam: **May/June 2019**  
Final Exam (existing specs): **May/June 2018**

Yours faithfully

**Derek Richardson**  
Director of Qualification Development, Assessment & Awarding