



**Response of the Ulster Teachers' Union
on the CCEA Proposed Changes to CCEA Entry Level,
Vocationally Related and Occupational Studies
Qualifications for January and Summer 2021**

The Ulster Teachers' Union (UTU) welcomes the opportunity to furnish you with our views on your Consultation on Proposed Changes to CCEA Entry Level, Vocationally Related and Occupational Studies Qualifications for January and Summer 2021 by CCEA awarding organisation. The UTU represents approximately 6,500 members of the teaching profession including Principals, Vice-Principals, Teachers and Trainee Teachers. UTU members are employed across all the sectors in nursery, primary, post-primary and special schools.

Please complete this section to ensure that we handle your response appropriately. How are you responding?

On behalf of an organisation, the Ulster Teachers' Union.

Please indicate which of the following best describes you.

We are responding as a Teacher Trade Union representative of over 6500 teachers across Northern Ireland.

We intend to publish a list of the organisations that have responded to our feedback survey. If you consent to this, please provide the name of the organisation you are responding on behalf of.

The Ulster Teachers' Union consent to publishing us on the list of organisations that respond to CCEA. We will also be publishing our response on our website.

Q1. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposals to implement public health adaptations for Entry Level subjects in 2021?

The Ulster Teachers' Union do **agree** that adaptations are needed. Due to the closure of schools from March 2020 to June 2020 and the new normal that schools are now operating, this will be a challenging year and present significant challenges to teachers and pupils. We are now well into the autumn term, and there are many impacts being raised already regarding pupils, year groups and staff having to isolate and we agree that adaptations to qualifications are necessary, not only for the cohort of 2021 but also the cohort of 2022.

Q2. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposals to implement public health adaptations for Vocationally Related subjects in 2021?

The Ulster Teachers' Union agree with the proposals that adaptations are required for Vocationally Related Subjects in 2021. We would have wished for this consultation to have happened earlier as we have many members who have contacted us concerned about what and how these qualifications can be delivered. We also wish to place on record that we feel pupils undertaking these qualifications have been disadvantaged as this consultation is taking place much later than the GCSE and GCE consultation. Teachers would like detailed guidance around the vocational subjects and what to teach in practical situations.

Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposals to implement public health adaptations for Occupational Studies Levels 1 and 2 in 2021?

The Ulster Teachers' Union agree broadly with the proposals. However there appears to be little consideration of what may happen should pupils be isolating for long periods of time while undertaking these qualifications.

Q4 Do you have any comments on the proposed subject-specific public health amendments??

The Ulster Teachers' Union do not wish to make any comment on subject-specific amendments.

If yes, please indicate which qualification(s) you would like to comment on?

Not applicable.

Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that for all CCEA Entry Level qualifications in 2021 we should accept a reduction in the number of units to be moderated, up to a maximum of 50% of the qualification?

The Ulster Teachers' Union broadly accept that the reduction in moderated Entry Level Qualifications is needed at this time.

Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree that for all CCEA Vocationally Related qualifications in 2021 we should accept a reduction in the number of units to be moderated, up to a maximum of 50% of the qualification?

The Ulster Teachers' Union agree that it is necessary, to ensure confidence in the qualifications being undertaken, that units are moderated up to a maximum of 50%.

Q7. To what extent do you agree or disagree that for all CCEA Occupational Studies Level 1 or 2 qualifications we should accept a reduction in the number of units to be moderated up to a maximum of 50% of the qualification?

The UTU agree that under the current circumstances the Units moderated should be reduced up to the maximum 50%.

Q8. Do you have any comments on the proposed assessment arrangements for CCEA Entry Level, Vocationally Related and Occupational Studies qualifications?

The Ulster Teachers' Union agree that it is necessary, to ensure confidence in the qualifications being undertaken, that the practical and skills should continue to be assessed to ensure candidates have no negative implications when using these qualifications in relevant post-sixteen qualifications or future employment

If yes, please use the space below to comment.

The Ulster Teachers' Union would like to see extra clarity around the issues of practical work in the consultation. These are vocational qualification and as such the pupils undertaking them often enjoy and excel when doing these practical activities. At times the use of observations has been suggested in the proposed adaptations. There will be significant challenges in delivering the opportunities for practical work and as such consideration must be given to the candidates.

Q9. How far do you agree or disagree with the equality assessment outlined in the consultation document?

The Ulster Teachers' Union do have concerns that this consultation is too late and the impact that this is having on the health and well being of both teachers and pupils. We hope that any changes are communicated quickly with teacher, school leaders, pupils and parents.

Do you have any other comments you would like to make regarding our proposed changes to CCEA Entry Level, Vocationally Related and Occupational Studies qualifications?

If yes, please use the space below to comment.

The Ulster Teachers' Union would like CCEA to make all changes to specifications to be communicated quickly with teachers, school leaders, parents and pupils as soon as possible. We have serious concerns that now the academic year has begun the process is already taking too long.

CCEA must also consider carefully candidates who will be sitting examinations in 2022 and ensure that mechanisms are put in place so that they are not disadvantaged.

Regarding this, is there anything in your response that you would like to be kept confidential?

As part of this consultation process you are not required to provide your name or any personal information that will identify you however we are aware that some respondents may be happy to be contacted by CCEA in relation to their response.

If you or your organisation are happy to be contacted with regard to this consultation, please give your consent by providing your name and contact details below.

Response from Ulster Teachers' Union via office@utu.edu

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