

18 May 2021



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AQE Announces Details Of 2021/22 Entrance Assessment

Following extensive engagement with its 34-member grammar schools and through them a large number of local primary schools, the Association for Quality Education Ltd. (AQE) can announce that applications for the 2021/22 Entrance Assessment will open on Tuesday 25th May 2021.

Given the impact that Covid-19 has had on schooling, and on the children, AQE has engaged with schools and other stakeholders to ensure that its plans reflect the needs of the schools and, above all, the participating pupils. The AQE has listened to the feedback from the schools and parents and can announce that amendments have been made to reflect the impact of the pandemic and to make these assessments more accessible.

The recommendations from the schools were to hold the assessments before the Christmas 2021 break and to retain the three assessments to ensure maximum fairness for each pupil. As results are based on the two best papers out of the three, this allows room for a child to have an 'off day' without it impacting their result.

The Entrance Assessment papers will be held on the following dates:

- Saturday 20th November 2021
- Saturday 27th November 2021
- Saturday 4th December 2021

Due to the unprecedented circumstances, AQE has made revisions to this year's assessment in order to recognise the disruption that Covid-19 has had on schooling. The assessments will follow the same general format as the past papers that many will be using for practice.

Outlining this year's approach, AQE Co-CEO Dr Darrin Barr said:

"The Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the education of young people since March 2020. Their learning has been disrupted and the children hoping to take the AQE assessment in the autumn are understandably needing clarity and certainty. We have sought to revise the assessment accordingly, putting their best interests at the heart of our approach.

"We also know that schools, parents and pupils are working off our past papers, available free of charge on the AQE website, for practice for this year's assessment. It is essential that we provide consistency whilst making it more straightforward and accessible for the children." said Dr Barr.

AQE has made modifications for this assessment, including:

- The provision of detailed English and mathematics support documents for the 2021/22 CEA papers which will be made available on the AQE website for parents and teachers to access.

- Some mathematics topic areas included in previous years will not be assessed in the 2021/22 assessment. Details of these topic areas will be available on the AQE website for parents and teachers to access.
- Some of the English passages have been shortened where appropriate.
- The mathematics and English questions have been revised to make them more accessible for this year's assessment.
- Access has been provided free of charge to a large selection of past papers on the AQE website and others are available for purchase so that children can prepare thoroughly for the assessment (AQE will be providing a guide showing which individual questions will not be relevant for this year's assessment due to the revisions described above).
- A new sample paper, reflecting the 2021/22 assessment, will be provided free of charge on the AQE website.
- Children will have an additional ten minutes to complete each paper.

The entrance assessments are due to be held in participating grammar schools, however, the AQE has been engaging with key stakeholders and interested parties to discuss the potential of the assessments being hosted in the children's Primary Schools.

Dr Barr continued:

"We have heard the calls from many parents and guardians to enable some pupils to sit the assessment in their own schools. As an organisation, we are very sympathetic to this, however, as a private body it is not within our power to do this. We have no remit or authority on this area but have been engaging with the Department, representative groups and schools to see if it is possible. These discussions remain ongoing and we will provide updates if there is any movement on this issue."

"Given the unprecedented nature of the last year we want to make these assessments as accessible and straightforward as possible for each child, to ensure fairness and equality for all. As a body, we exist solely to serve our 34 member schools and we have listened to their views on how to ensure the best and fairest possible assessment process for those pupils who wish to transfer to their schools." said Dr Barr.

Registrations will be available via www.aqe.org.uk and the closing date for all applications will be 5pm on 24th September.

Ends.