

Qualification Reforms – The RVC’s policy

GCSE and A-levels

The following information provides information and guidance on the RVC’s approach to the admission of applicants to its undergraduate courses in light of the GCSE and A-level reforms. A synopsis of the reforms can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/reform-of-as-and-a-level-qualifications-by-ofqual>

The RVC will be accepting the new A-level and GCSE qualifications, and will determine offer levels on an equivalent basis to the current qualifications. Based on the information currently available (as at May 2016), we do not plan to make major changes to programme entry requirements. However, we may need to make some adjustments to our subject specific requirements after the first round of delivery of the new A-levels.

Specific programme requirements for GCSE achievement will be adjusted to fit the new grading format, using guidance from Ofqual on grade equivalences. A grade C will be aligned to a grade 4 under the new grading system and a grade A will be aligned to a grade 7. The RVC does not require English applicants to offer the English Baccalaureate (EBacc). GCSE Mathematics-Numeracy will not be accepted instead of GCSE Mathematics but is welcomed alongside it.

We will continue to expect applicants to take three A-levels and our standard offers will continue to be made on this basis. We appreciate that some applicants, during the transition phase, may apply with a mixture of ‘old’ and ‘new’ A-levels and we will not penalise applicants in this situation. We also appreciate that changes in different countries within the UK mean that applicants may be taking either modular or linear qualifications or a combination of both. The RVC will not give any preference or additional value to applicants who are studying linear qualifications over those who are studying a modular version. An A-level in any given subject will be treated equally regardless of the examination method or country in which it was attained.

Whilst we value the breadth which comes with studying 4 subjects, supplementary AS-level(s) are not part of our assessment criteria and taking an additional AS-level alongside three A-level subjects will confer no advantage over an applicant who has taken three A-levels. This principle also applies to applicants who have taken the Extended Project. Our offer making processes and decisions do not take into account grades achieved at AS-level and therefore applying with AS-levels in any particular subjects that are also being taken at A-level will not offer any advantage.

Given the nature of the degrees offered at the RVC, we view achievement in the practical element of science A-levels as crucial. We will therefore expect students to pass the practical element of any science A-levels taken and offers will be made to reflect this.

Where the Welsh Baccalaureate Core (Level 3) is accepted in lieu of a third A-level, the RVC will require it to be passed at the same grade as from an A-level.

The RVC will not require applicants to offer the new Core Maths qualification and applicants who do offer this will not receive any advantage over those who do not.

Level 3 Extended Diplomas

The RVC has reviewed the changes to both the Pearson and City and Guilds Level 3 Extended Diploma provision. As a result changes have been made to our entry requirements for applicants taking these courses (taught from September 2016). Our entry requirements for these courses have been published on the relevant entry requirement pages on our website.

We are happy to answer any specific questions or concerns any applicants, schools/colleges, parents or advisors may have. Please contact our admissions office email: admissions@rvc.ac.uk or telephone: +44 (0)20 7468 5147.