

Board exams to be held after July 10 only for elective subjects: Shafqat Mahmood


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Minister for Education Shafqat Mahmood addresses a press conference in Islamabad on Wednesday. — DawnNewsTV

Minister for Education Shafqat Mahmood on Wednesday said that board exams for students of classes nine and 10 would be held after July 10 only for elective subjects and mathematics, while exams for students of classes 11 and 12 would be held for elective subjects only.



“This decision has been taken as students have different streams and directions so they will sit in exams related only to their particular subject of interest,” he said.

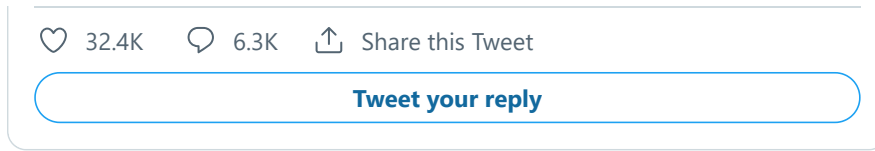


Shafqat Mahmood ✓
@Shafqat_Mahmood

We took some important decisions today Re exams. For 9/10, exam in elective subjects plus math. For 11/12 only elective subjects. Exams pushed to after July 10 with 10 and 12 grade exams on priority. These decisions are final. No change

6:12 PM · Jun 2, 2021





In April, the education ministry had **cancelled all exams** in the country till June 15. The only exception was granted to A2 students, who wanted to appear for the purpose of applying to foreign universities.

At the time, the minister had tweeted that the decision had been taken to address the "health concerns of students and parents".

"All exams cancelled till June 15 and depending on the spread of the disease may even go further," he wrote.

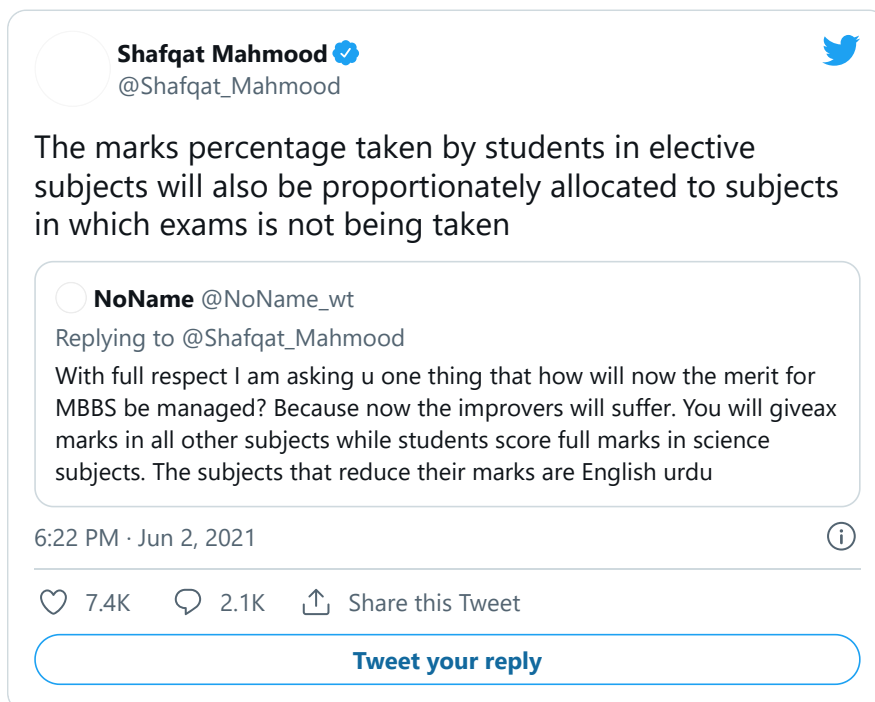
Addressing the press conference on Wednesday, Mahmood said the provincial education ministers wanted exam results to be finalised and released by the third week of September.

Acknowledging **students' grievances** regarding their course work being incomplete, Mahmood said this was a result of the frequent closure and reopening of schools. "It was necessary to shut schools in view of the Covid-19 situation. There was also a risk associated with reopening schools due to fear of students contracting the disease," he reasoned.

The federal minister reiterated the committee's earlier decision not to promote any student without exams, saying "we still stand by that decision".

"We then reduced the syllabus by 40 per cent," he said, adding that the overall curriculum and nature of assessments had been modified keeping the challenges in mind. "The 9th grade and 10th grade exams will be taken in elective subjects, and mathematics will also be a part of it. Therefore, exams will be held in four subjects," he said, while the exams of 11th and 12th grades will be held only in elective subjects.

In a tweet later, the minister explained that "the marks percentage taken by students in elective subjects will also be proportionately allocated to subjects in which exams is not being taken."



The federal minister further said that the exams will start after July 10 in order to give students at least three to four weeks to prepare. "We are taking this decision to make the most of the current situation when Covid-19 cases have dropped," he said, adding that the committee had also decided that all teachers would be vaccinated before the exams.

Mahmood also tweeted that all universities are allowed to open from Monday.



Mode of assessment

Speaking about the mode of assessment, Mahmood said that the committee was of the belief that an external examination was the fairest assessment.

"In England, parents are dissatisfied with assessed grades and are challenging them in court, but they have no reservation on external exams," he said. "In our context, the majority of students are the ones who study just before two months of exams. If we do not take exams, it means student won't study at all."

He said that A2 exams were also conducted, in which around 30,000 students had appeared from across Pakistan. "The next exams will be held from 26 July to August 6," he announced.

Besides, those students who will appear for their A2 exams in the October-November session will be considered for provisional admissions by different colleges, he said.

Students to get 5pc extra marks in compulsory subjects : Shafqat Mahmood

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Shafqat Mahmood says overall vaccination rate of education sector is around 83pc, but in higher education it is dismally low. — DawnNewsTV

Federal Education Minister Shafqat Mahmood on Wednesday announced that students will get five per cent extra marks in compulsory subjects — which will be in addition to proportionate marking they acquire through the results of elective subjects.

The government had decided there will be no exams for compulsory subjects, while students would only take exams for elective subjects. Retaining the earlier decision with a new insertion, the federal Education Ministry decided that marks acquired by students in elective subjects would proportionately be given in compulsory subjects, along with an addition of 5pc.

Briefing about the decisions taken by the education ministry, Mahmood said the huddle reviewed in detail the conduct of examinations of elective subjects for classes 9 to 12.

“It was earlier decided that marks of elective subjects would proportionately be given to students in compulsory subjects as well, but our research indicated that students usually get higher marks in the latter subjects, hence it has been decided to award 5pc extra marks to pupils on compulsory subjects,” said the minister.

Mahmood also underlined that exams in all provinces on the above classes will be held in accordance with the schedules announced by the respective provinces, while Sindh will soon share its new exam schedule, he added.

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He said it had also been decided that staggered opening of schools would continue with 50pc attendance countrywide except Sindh, where new lockdown restrictions had disrupted planned operations of educational institutions.

“Sindh education minister has informed us that they will review the situation in the province before Aug 8 and share their new schedule soon,” Mahmood said.

He also informed that the overall vaccination rate of the education sector stood at around 83pc, but in higher education it was dismally low.

In this regard, the minister said, we have requested respective ministers in all provinces to ensure vaccination of all students and teachers. “Similarly transport employees involved with educational institutions are also needed to be vaccinated by Aug 31”.

The next meeting of the education ministry with NCOC will be held on Aug 25. “We will again review the health situation in view of Covid-19.”

The minister also appealed school children to not fall for rumours on social media about government announcements, which were baseless.

“The announcements made by the education ministry and provincial education departments should only be paid heed to. We are taking decisions keeping in view the safety of our children,” he added.