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Guidance

GCSE subject-level conditions and requirements for geology (2022)

Published 11 November 2021

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Introduction



About this document

This document is part of a suite of documents which sets out the regulatory requirements for awarding organisations offering GCSE qualifications (graded from 9 to 1) in 2022.

We have developed these requirements with the intention that GCSE qualifications (graded from 9 to 1) should provide:

- evidence of students' achievements against demanding and fulfilling content
- a strong foundation for further academic and vocational study and for employment
- a basis for schools and colleges to be held accountable for the performance of all of their students, if required

Requirements set out in this document

This document sets out the GCSE Subject Level Conditions for Geology (2022). These conditions will come into effect at 09:30 on 12 November 2021 for all GCSE qualifications (graded from 9 to 1) in Geology for Learners completing the qualification in 2022, except where the General Qualifications Alternative Awarding Framework applies.

It also sets out our requirements in relation to:

- interpretation of the content document - an awarding organisation must comply with these requirements under Condition GCSE (Geology)1.1(c)
- assessment objectives - awarding organisations must comply with these requirements under Condition GCSE (Geology)1.2
- assessment - awarding organisations must comply with these requirements under Condition GCSE (Geology) 2.

With respect to GCSE qualifications (graded from 9 to 1) in Geology in 2022, awarding organisations must also comply with:

- our [General Conditions of Recognition](#), which apply to all awarding organisations and qualifications
- our [GCSE Qualification Level Conditions](#)
- all [relevant Regulatory Documents](#)

With respect to GCSE qualifications in Geology taken by Learners completing the qualification in 2023 and after, an awarding organisation must continue to comply with the [GCSE Subject Level Conditions and Requirements for Geology](#).

Subject Level Conditions

GCSE Subject Level Conditions for Geology

Condition GCSE (Geology) 1: Compliance with content requirements

GCSE (Geology) 1.1

In respect of each GCSE Qualification in Geology which it makes available, or proposes to make available, an awarding organisation must -

- comply with the requirements relating to that qualification set out in the document published by the Secretary of State entitled '[Geology GCSE subject content](#)', document reference DFE-00211-2015,
- have regard to any recommendations or guidelines relating to that qualification set out in that document, and
- interpret that document in accordance with any requirements, and having regard to any guidance, which may be published by Ofqual and revised from time to time.

GCSE(Geology)1.2

In respect of each GCSE Qualification in Geology which it makes available, or proposes to make available, an awarding organisation must comply with any requirements, and have regard to any guidance, relating to the objectives to be met by any assessment for that qualification which may be published by Ofqual and revised from time to time.

Condition GCSE (Geology) 2: Assessment

GCSE (Geology) 2.1

An awarding organisation must ensure that in respect of each assessment for a GCSE Qualification in Geology which it makes available it complies with any requirements, and has regard to any guidance, which may be published by Ofqual and revised from time to time.

Subject content requirements

Requirements in relation to subject content for GCSE Qualifications in Geology

The subject content for GCSE Qualifications (graded 9 to 1) in Geology is set out

in the Department for Education's [Geology GCSE subject content](#), document reference DFE- 00211-2015 (the 'Content Document').

Condition GCSE(Geology)1.1(c) requires awarding organisations to interpret the Content Document in line with any requirements, and having regard to any guidance, published by Ofqual.

We set out our requirements for the purposes of Condition GCSE(Geology)1.1(c) below.

Fieldwork and practical activities

An awarding organisation must interpret the Content Document as if paragraphs 8, 9 and 10 have been disapplied in so far as they require a Learner to undertake fieldwork and hands-on practical activities him- or herself.

Assessment objectives

Assessment objectives - GCSE Qualifications in Geology

Condition GCSE (Geology)1.2 allows us to specify requirements relating to the objectives to be met by any assessment for GCSE Qualifications in Geology.

The assessment objectives set out below constitute requirements for the purposes of Condition GCSE (Geology)1.2. Awarding organisations must comply with these requirements in relation to all GCSE Qualifications in Geology they make available.

| Assessment objective | Description | Weighting |
|-----------------------------|--|------------------|
| AO1 | Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of geological ideas, skills and techniques | 40% |
| AO2 | Apply knowledge and understanding of geological ideas, skills and techniques | 40% |
| AO3 | Analyse, interpret and evaluate geological ideas, information and evidence to make judgements and draw conclusions | 20% |

Assessment requirements

Assessment requirements - GCSE Qualifications in Geology

Condition GCSE (Geology) 2.1 allows us to specify requirements in relation to assessments for GCSE Qualifications in Geology.

We set out below our requirements for the purposes of Condition GCSE (Geology)2.1. Awarding organisations must comply with these requirements in relation to all GCSE Qualifications in Geology they make available.

Mathematical skills

The subject content for GCSE Qualifications in Geology is set out in the document published by the Secretary of State entitled '[Geology GCSE subject content](#)', document reference DFE-00211-2015 (the 'Content Document').

Appendix 1 to the Content Document specifies the mathematical knowledge, skills and understanding which Learners will be required to use and apply in GCSE Qualifications in Geology ('Mathematical Skills').

In designing and setting the assessments for a GCSE Qualification in Geology which it makes available, or proposes to make available, an awarding organisation must ensure that -

- (a) questions and tasks rewarding the use of Mathematical Skills assess those skills within the context of other areas of the subject content, and not in isolation,
- (b) in each set of assessments, [\[footnote 1\]](#) at least 10 per cent of the total marks for the qualification reward the use of Mathematical Skills at a Level of Demand which is not lower than that which is expected of Learners at Key Stage 3 as outlined in the Department for Education's document '[Mathematics programmes of study: key stage 3](#)', document reference DFE-00179-2013, and
- (c) without prejudice to the above requirements and those outlined in the Content Document, in each set of assessments Mathematical Skills are assessed

Assessment of Learners in relation to geological skills and techniques

In designing and setting the assessments for each GCSE Qualification in Geology which it makes available, or proposes to make available, an awarding organisation must ensure that, taking the assessments for that qualification together -

- (a) Learners' knowledge, skills and understanding in relation to geological skills and techniques is assessed across assessment objectives AO1, AO2 and AO3,
- (b) the number of marks used to credit such knowledge, skills and understanding is no less than 15 per cent of the total marks for the qualification,
- (c) the questions and tasks which test Learners' knowledge, skills and understanding in relation to geological skills and techniques draw on, and combine as appropriate, the theoretical and technical aspects of those skills and techniques, and
- (d) over the shortest period of time that is reasonably practicable, Learners are

assessed in relation to all of the skills and techniques specified in paragraphs 8 and 9 of the Content Document.

1. For the purposes of these requirements, a 'set of assessments' means the assessments to be taken by a particular Learner for a GCSE Qualification in Geology. For clarity, the assessments taken by Learners may vary, depending on any possible routes through the qualification.[↪](#)

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