

GCE Subject Level Guidance for Geography

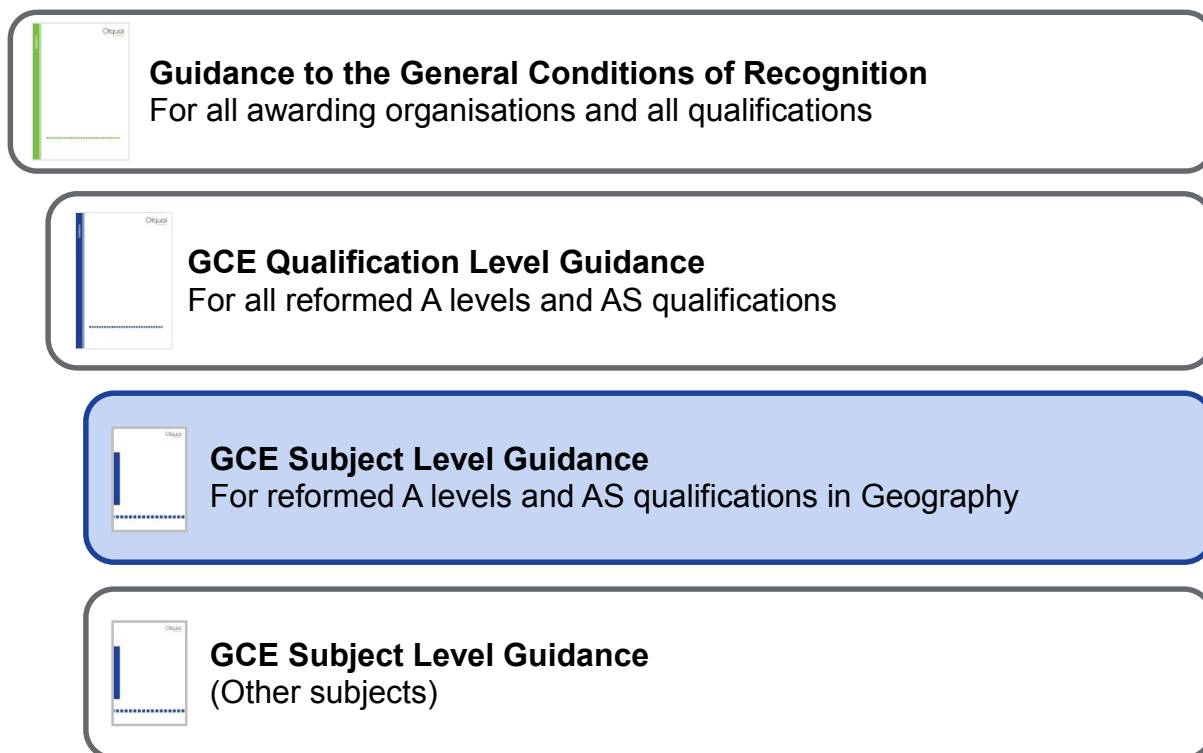
March 2015

Contents

Introduction.....	2
Guidance set out in this document.....	3
Guidance on assessment objectives for GCE Qualifications in Geography	4

Introduction

This document (highlighted in the figure below) is part of a suite of documents which outlines our guidance for awarding organisations offering GCE Qualifications.



This document sets out guidance which applies to the following qualifications:

- all GCE A levels in Geography awarded on or after 1 April 2018; and
- all stand-alone GCE AS qualifications in Geography awarded on or after 1 April 2017.

This guidance supports the *GCE Subject Level Conditions and Requirements for Geography*.¹

This document constitutes guidance for the purposes of section 153 of the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 (the '2009 Act') and Condition GCE(Geography)1.2.

An awarding organisation has a legal obligation under the 2009 Act to have regard to this guidance in relation to each GCE Qualification in Geography that it makes available or proposes to make available. Condition GCE(Geography)1.2 imposes the

¹ www.gov.uk/government/publications/gce-subject-level-conditions-and-requirements-for-geography

same obligation in respect of the guidance below which is issued under that Condition.

An awarding organisation should use the guidance to help it understand how to comply with the *GCE Subject Level Conditions and associated requirements for Geography*.

Guidance set out in this document

This document provides guidance on assessment objectives for GCE Qualifications in Geography.

Guidance on assessment objectives for GCE Qualifications in Geography

Condition GCE(Geography)1.2 allows us to specify requirements and guidance relating to assessment objectives for GCE Qualifications in Geography.

We published our requirements in relation to assessment objectives in *GCE Subject Level Conditions and Requirements for Geography*, and reproduce them in the table below.

	Objective	Weighting (A level)	Weighting (AS)
AO1	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of places, environments, concepts, processes, interactions and change, at a variety of scales	30–40%	30–40%
AO2	Apply knowledge and understanding in different contexts to interpret, analyse and evaluate geographical information and issues	30–40%	30–40%
AO3	Use a variety of relevant quantitative, qualitative and fieldwork skills to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ investigate geographical questions and issues ■ interpret, analyse and evaluate data and evidence ■ construct arguments and draw conclusions 	20–30%	20–30%

We set out below our guidance for the purposes of Condition GCE(Geography)1.2. This guidance explains how we expect awarding organisations to interpret these assessment objectives in terms of:

- the different 'strands' within each of the assessment objectives;
- the discrete 'elements' within each assessment objective and its strands that questions and tasks could target and/or seek to credit – our expectation is that each and every question/task should target or seek to credit at least one of these elements, and may target or seek to credit multiple elements across one or more assessment objectives;
- the coverage expectations, such as in relation to the different elements within each assessment objective and how those elements should be sampled over time; and

- the key areas of emphasis in each assessment objective and the particular meaning for the subject of any key terms and phrases used; defined terms are shown in bold text, followed by their definitions.

In line with the obligations set out in Condition GCE(Geography)1.2, we expect awarding organisations to be able to demonstrate how they have had regard to this guidance. For example, an awarding organisation could map how it has regard to the guidance as it:

- develops its sample assessment materials;
- delivers the qualification;
- develops and applies its approach to sampling the elements into which the assessment objectives are divided; and
- monitors the qualification to make sure it addresses all elements appropriately.

AO1: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of places, environments, concepts, processes, interactions and change, at a variety of scales.		30–40% (A level) 30–40% (AS)	
Strands	Elements	Coverage	Interpretation and definitions
n/a	This AO is a single element.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Full coverage in each set of assessments² (but not every assessment). ■ No more than 15% of the total marks for the qualification should reward demonstrating knowledge in isolation.³ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Places, environments, concepts, processes, interactions and change are aspects of subject content. Awarding organisations should explain their approach to targeting them in their assessment strategies. ■ Scales relate to places, environments, concepts, processes, interactions and change. There is not a specific defined set of scales, but they should range, as appropriate, from local to global in each set of assessments. ■ We do not expect every set of assessments to cover each aspect of subject content across all scales, or every aspect of subject content at the same scale.

² For the purposes of this guidance, a 'set of assessments' means the assessments to be taken by a particular Learner for a GCE Qualification in Geography. For clarity, the assessments taken by Learners may vary, depending on any possible routes through the qualification.

³ Marks which 'reward demonstrating knowledge in isolation' include any mark awarded solely for recalling facts or other knowledge that is part of the specification, whether in a stand-alone question/task or as part of a larger question/task. It does not include marks awarded for selecting appropriate knowledge (for example to evidence an argument), or for applying knowledge to a particular context.

AO2: Apply knowledge and understanding in different contexts to interpret, analyse and evaluate geographical information and issues.			30–40% (A level) 30–40% (AS)
Strands	Elements	Coverage	Interpretation and definitions
n/a	1a – Apply knowledge and understanding in different contexts to analyse geographical information and issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Full coverage in each set of assessments (but not every assessment). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Different contexts relates to situations and sets of circumstances or combinations of these. This will include a context or more than one context not in the specification. ■ Analyse means finding connections and causes and/or effects as well as deconstructing concepts, information and/or issues. ■ Interpret means ascribing meaning. ■ Evaluate means appraising and judging utility (that is usefulness, particularly with respect to suitability for a particular function) and validity, synthesising information, and coming to rational conclusions that are evidence based. ■ Geographical information and issues are aspects of subject content. Awarding organisations should explain their approach to targeting them in their assessment strategy. ■ The emphasis in this assessment objective is on application. For each set of assessments, this should involve the Learner working with their knowledge and understanding as well as showing critical thinking skills, by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ relating them to novel situations that are not clearly indicated in the specification; □ developing further material that is covered in the specification; or □ making links between such types of material, which are not signalled in the specification
	1b – Apply knowledge and understanding in different contexts to interpret geographical information and issues.		
	1c – Apply knowledge and understanding in different contexts to evaluate geographical information and issues.		

AO3: Use a variety of relevant quantitative, qualitative and fieldwork skills to:			20–30% (A level) 20–30% (AS)
Strands	Elements	Coverage	Interpretation and definitions
1 – investigate geographical questions and issues	This strand is a single element.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Full coverage of the three strands in each set of assessments (but not every assessment) ■ Reasonable coverage of geographical questions and geographical issues in each set of assessments (but not every assessment). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The emphasis in this assessment objective is on the use of geographical skills – these can be overarching methods and/or specific techniques. ■ Interpret, analyse and evaluate are intrinsically linked in this assessment objective; taken together they mean to critically investigate. ■ In this assessment objective, data and evidence means stimulus materials collected by, or provided for, the Learner. ■ There are a number of ways in which arguments and conclusions can be communicated. This may include written responses or data responses.
2 – interpret, analyse and evaluate data and evidence	This strand is a single element.		
3 – construct arguments and draw conclusions	This strand is a single element.		

We wish to make our publications widely accessible. Please contact us at publications@ofqual.gov.uk if you have any specific accessibility requirements.



© Crown copyright 2015

This publication is licensed under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0 except where otherwise stated. To view this licence, visit <http://nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3> or write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: publications@ofqual.gov.uk.

Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/ofqual.

Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at:

Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation

Spring Place
Coventry Business Park
Herald Avenue
Coventry CV5 6UB

2nd Floor
Glendinning House
6 Murray Street
Belfast BT1 6DN

Telephone 0300 303 3344

Textphone 0300 303 3345

Helpline 0300 303 3346