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Guidance

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

Published 11 November 2021

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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 2021.

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 Geography (2022). These conditions will come into effect at 09:30 on 12 November 2021 for all GCSE qualifications (graded from 9 to 1) in Geography 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(Geography)1.1(c)
- assessment objectives for GCSE qualifications in Geography. Awarding organisations must comply with these requirements under Condition GCSE(Geography)1.2
- assessment – awarding organisations must comply with these requirements under Condition GCSE(Geography)3.1

With respect to GCSE qualifications (graded from 9 to 1) in Geography 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 Geography 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 Geography](#).

Subject Level Conditions

GCSE Subject Level Conditions for Geography

Condition GCSE(Geography)1: Compliance with content requirements GCSE(Geography)1.1

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

- (a) comply with the requirements relating to that qualification set out in the document published by the Secretary of State entitled '[Geography GCSE subject content](#)', document reference DFE-00345-2014,
- (b) have regard to any recommendations or guidelines relating to that qualification set out in that document, and
- (c) 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(Geography)1.2

In respect of each GCSE Qualification in Geography 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(Geography)2: [Not used]

[Condition temporarily removed for 2022]

Condition GCSE(Geography)3: Assessment GCSE(Geography)3.1

An awarding organisation must ensure that in respect of each assessment for a GCSE Qualification in Geography 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 Geography

The subject content for GCSE Qualifications (graded 9 to 1) in Geography is set out in the Department for Education's [Geography GCSE subject content](#), document reference DFE- 00345-2014 (the 'Content Document').

Condition GCSE(Geography)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(Geography)1.1(c) below.

Fieldwork

An awarding organisation must interpret the Content Document as if paragraphs 11, 12, 21, 22 and 24 have been disapplied in so far as they require a Learner to undertake fieldwork him- or herself and collect their own primary data.

Assessment objectives

Assessment objectives - GCSE Qualifications in Geography

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

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

Assessment objective	Description	Weighting
AO1	Demonstrate knowledge of locations, places, processes, environments and different scales.	15%
AO2	Demonstrate geographical understanding of: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• concepts and how they are used in relation to places, environments and processes• the interrelationships between places, environments and processes	25%
AO3	Apply knowledge and understanding to interpret, analyse and evaluate geographical information and issues and to make	35% (10% applied to fieldwork contexts)

judgements.

AO4	Select, adapt and use a variety of skills and techniques to investigate questions and issues and communicate findings.	25% (5% used to respond to fieldwork data and contexts)
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In respect of each GCSE Qualification in Geography which it makes available, or proposes to make available, an awarding organisation must -

(a) ensure that the total mark for the qualification consists of -

(i) marks allocated to assessment objectives AO1 to AO4 in line with the weightings outlined above (the 'subject marks'), and

(ii) marks available to credit the accuracy of Learners' spelling, punctuation and grammar and their use of specialist terminology,

(b) ensure that at least 10 per cent of the subject marks are allocated to the assessment of mathematical and statistical techniques at a level appropriate to the qualification, and

(c) take all reasonable steps to ensure that the number of marks available to credit the accuracy of Learners' spelling, punctuation and grammar and their use of specialist terminology is equal to 5 per cent of the subject marks.

Requirements in relation to assessments for GCSE Qualifications in Geography

Condition GCSE(Geography)3.1 allows us to specify requirements and guidance in relation to assessments for GCSE Qualifications in Geography.

We set out our requirements for the purposes of Condition GCSE(Geography)3.1 below.

Assessments in 2022

Each awarding organisation must ensure that the assessments to be taken in 2022 for a GCSE Qualification in Geography which it makes available differ from those set in years other than 2020 and 2021 in line with the requirements set out below.

These requirements are in addition to any amendments to be made to assessments to be taken in 2022 in order to reflect the requirements in relation to the interpretation of the Content Document that we have set under Condition GCSE(Geography)1.1(c).

AQA

AQA must ensure that its assessment 'Paper 2 - Challenges in the human environment' to be taken in 2022 is designed and set so that Learners answer questions on –

- Section A: Urban issues and challenges, and
- either –
 - Section B: The changing economic world, or
 - Section C: The challenge of resource management.

AQA must ensure that the marks made available through Section B and Section C are comparable.

Pearson (Specification A)

Pearson must ensure that its assessment 'Paper 2 - The Human Environment' to be taken in 2022 is designed and set so that Learners answer questions on –

- Topic 4: Changing cities, and
- either –
 - Topic 5: Global development, or
 - Topic 6: Resource management (which contains within it optional questions).

Pearson (Specification B)

Pearson must ensure that its assessment 'Paper 1 - Global Geographical Issues' to be taken in 2022 is designed and set so that Learners answer questions on –

- Topic 1: Hazardous Earth, and
- either –
 - Topic 2: Development dynamics, or
 - Topic 3: Challenges of an urbanising world.

OCR (Specification A)

OCR must ensure that its assessment 'Paper 2 - The World Around Us' to be taken in 2022 is designed and set so that Learners answer questions on –

- Section 2.2 People of the Planet, and
- either –
 - Section 2.1 Ecosystems of the Planet, or
 - Section 2.3 Environmental Threats to our Planet.

OCR (Specification B)

OCR must ensure that Section A of its assessment 'Paper 1 - Our Natural World' to be taken in 2022 is designed and set so that Learners answer questions on –

- Topic 2 - Changing Climate, and
- Topic 3 - Distinctive Landscapes, and

- one of the following –
 - Topic 1 - Global Hazards, or
 - Topic 4 - Sustaining Ecosystems, or
 - Topic 8 - Resource Reliance (moved from Paper 2 - People and Society).

OCR must ensure that Section A of its assessment 'Paper 2 - People and Society' to be taken in 2022 is designed and set so that Learners answer questions on –

- Topic 5 - Urban Futures, and
- Topic 6 - Dynamic Development, and
- Topic 7 - UK in the 21st Century.

WJEC (Eduqas Specification A)

WJEC must ensure that its assessment 'Paper 2 - Environmental and Development Issues' to be taken in 2022 is designed and set so that Learners answer –

- one question on either –
 - Core Theme 5 (Weather, Climate and Ecosystems), or
 - Core Theme 6 (Development and Resource Issues), and
- one question on either –
 - Theme 7 (Social Development Issues), or
 - Theme 8 (Environmental Challenges).

WJEC (Eduqas Specification B)

WJEC must ensure that its assessment 'Paper 1 - Investigating Geographical Issues' to be taken in 2022 is designed and set so that Learners answer all questions on –

- Theme 1 - Changing places - changing economies, and
- in relation to Theme 2 - Changing environments, either –
 - questions on
 - Key Idea 2.1: Shaping the landscape coasts and coastal management, and
 - Key Idea 2.3: Weather and climate, and
 - Key Idea 2.4: Climate change – cause and effect, or
 - questions on –
 - Key Idea 2.2: Shaping the landscape - rivers and river management, and
 - Key Idea 2.3: Weather and climate, and
 - Key Idea 2.4: Climate change – cause and effect, and
- In relation to Theme 3 - Environmental challenges, either –
 - questions on –
 - Key Idea 3.1: How ecosystems function, and
 - Key Idea 3.2: Ecosystems under threat, or

- questions on –
 - Key Idea 3.3: Water resource and management, and
 - Key Idea 3.4: Desertification.

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