

**GCE Subject Level
Conditions and
Requirements for Business**

April 2014

Ofqual/14/5417



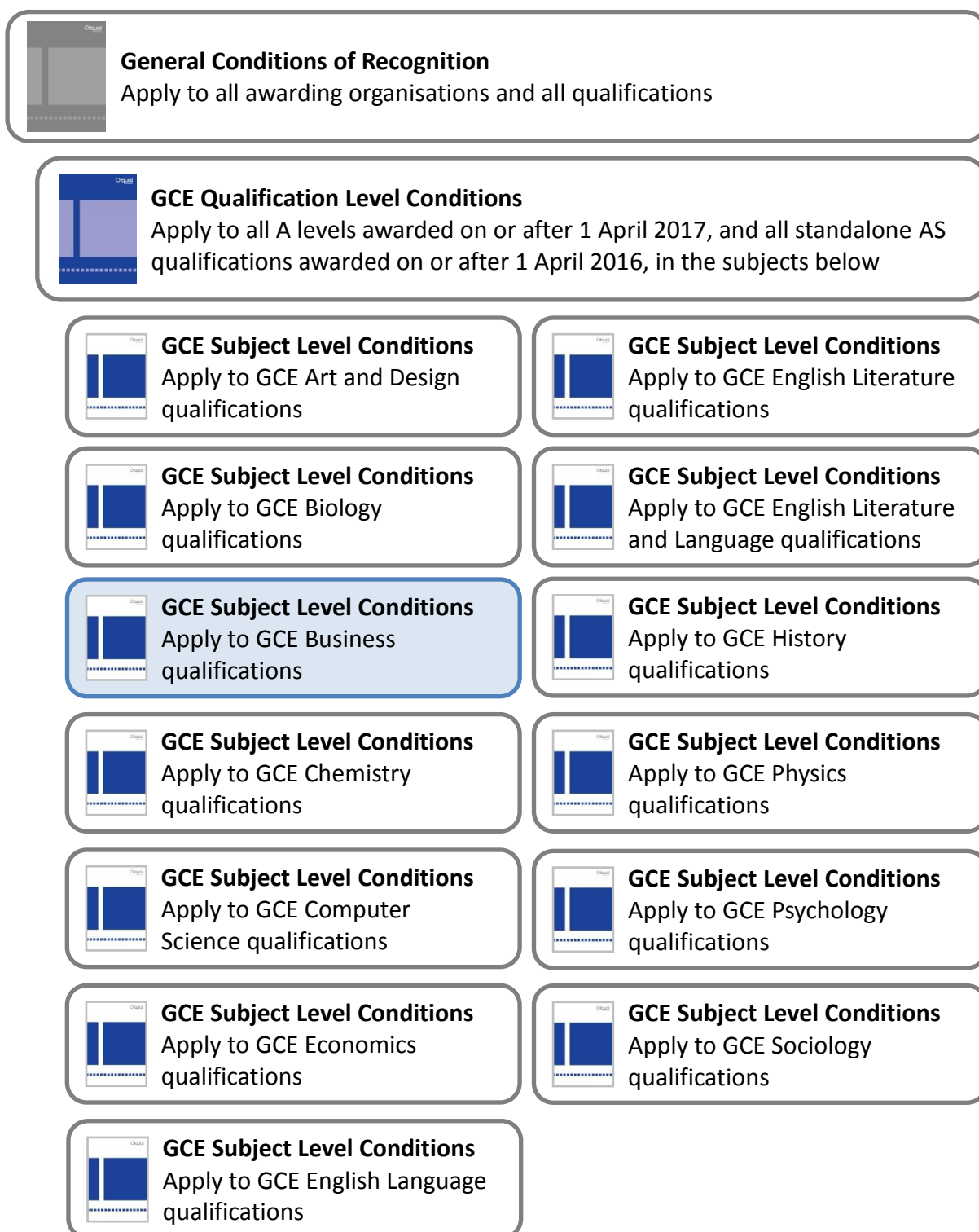
Contents

Introduction.....	2
About this document	2
Requirements set out in this document.....	3
Summary of requirements.....	4
Subject Level Conditions	6
GCE Subject Level Conditions for Business	7
Condition GCE(Business)1 Compliance with content requirements.....	7
Assessment objectives	7
Assessment objectives – GCE AS and A level qualifications in Business	9
Subject content (published by Department for Education).....	10

Introduction

About this document

1. This document (highlighted in the figure below) is part of a suite of documents which sets out the regulatory requirements for awarding organisations offering GCE qualifications.



2. We have developed all our requirements for GCE qualifications with the intention that AS and A level qualifications should fulfil the purposes set out in the table below:

A levels	AS qualifications
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ define and assess achievement of the knowledge, skills and understanding which will be needed by students planning to progress to undergraduate study at a UK higher education establishment, particularly (although not only) in the same subject area; □ set out a robust and internationally comparable post-16 academic course of study to develop that knowledge, skills and understanding; □ permit UK universities to accurately identify the level of attainment of students; □ provide a basis for school and college accountability measures at age 18; and □ provide a benchmark of academic ability for employers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ provide evidence of students' achievements in a robust and internationally comparable post-16 course of study that is a sub-set of A level content; □ enable students to broaden the range of subjects they study.

Requirements set out in this document

3. This document sets out the GCE Subject Level Conditions for Business. These conditions will come into effect at 12.01am on Wednesday 9 April 2014 for the following qualifications:
- all GCE A levels in Business awarded on or after 1 April 2017; and
 - all standalone GCE AS qualifications in Business awarded on or after 1 April 2016.

4. It also sets out the assessment objectives for GCE Business. Awarding organisations must comply with these assessment objectives under Condition GCE(Business)1.2.
5. Appendix 1 reproduces the subject content requirements for Business, as published by the Department for Education. Awarding organisations must comply with these requirements under Condition GCE(Business)1.1.
6. With respect to the qualifications listed in paragraph 3, awarding organisations must also comply with:
 - our *General Conditions of Recognition*,¹ which apply to all awarding organisations and qualifications; and
 - our *GCE Qualification Level Conditions*;² and
 - all relevant Regulatory Documents.
7. With respect to all other GCE qualifications in Business, awarding organisations must continue to comply with the General Conditions of Recognition, the *General Conditions of Recognition in respect of GCE Qualifications*,³ and the relevant Regulatory Documents.⁴

Summary of requirements

Subject Level Conditions	
GCE(Business)1	Compliance with content requirements

Assessment objectives
Assessment objectives – GCE AS and A level qualifications in Business

¹ www.ofqual.gov.uk/documents/general-conditions-of-recognition

² www.ofqual.gov.uk/documents/gce-qualification-level-conditions

³ www.ofqual.gov.uk/documents/general-conditions-of-recognition-in-respect-of-gce-qualifications

⁴ www.ofqual.gov.uk/documents/list-of-additional-regulatory-documents

Appendix 1 – Subject content (published by Department for Education)

[GCE AS and A level Subject Content for Business](#)

Subject Level Conditions

GCE Subject Level Conditions for Business

Condition GCE(Business)1 Compliance with content requirements

GCE(Business)1.1 In respect of each GCE Qualification in Business 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 'GCE AS and A level subject content for business', DFE-00358-2014,
- (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.

GCE(Business)1.2 In respect of each GCE Qualification in Business 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.

Assessment objectives

Assessment objectives – GCE AS and A level qualifications in Business

Condition GCE(Business)1.2 allows us to specify requirements relating to the objectives to be met by any assessment for GCE qualifications in Business.

The assessment objectives set out below constitute requirements for the purposes of Condition GCE(Business)1.2. Awarding organisations must comply with these requirements in relation to all GCE AS and A level qualifications in Business qualifications they make available.

		<i>A level</i>	<i>AS</i>
AO1	Demonstrate knowledge of terms, concepts, theories, methods and models to show an understanding of how individuals and organisations are affected by and respond to business issues	20-30%	25-35%
AO2	Apply knowledge and understanding to various business contexts to show how individuals and organisations are affected by and respond to issues	20-30%	20-30%
AO3	Analyse issues within business, showing an understanding of the impact on individuals and organisations of external and internal influences	20-30%	20-30%
AO4	Evaluate quantitative and qualitative information to make informed judgements and propose evidence-based solutions to business issues	20-30%	15-25%

The ability to use mathematical skills at a level appropriate for GCE A level Business must be tested across the assessment objectives. The weighting of mathematical skills within this subject must be at least 10 per cent for both of AS and A level qualifications.

Subject content (published by Department for Education)



GCE AS and A level subject content for business

Introduction

1. AS and A level subject content sets out the knowledge, understanding and skills common to all AS and A level specifications in business.

Aims and objectives

2. AS and A level specifications in business must encourage students to:
- develop an enthusiasm for studying business
 - gain an holistic understanding of business in a range of contexts
 - develop a critical understanding of organisations and their ability to meet society's needs and wants
 - understand that business behaviour can be studied from a range of perspectives
 - generate enterprising and creative approaches to business opportunities, problems and issues
 - be aware of the ethical dilemmas and responsibilities faced by organisations and individuals
 - acquire a range of relevant business and generic skills, including decision making, problem solving, the challenging of assumptions and critical analysis
 - apply numerical skills in a range of business contexts

Subject content

3. Previous study of business should not be a requirement.
4. The AS course must provide a free-standing, coherent course of study.
5. A level specifications must further develop higher-level skills and extend beyond AS in terms of breadth and depth of knowledge and understanding.
6. All content and assessment material included in A level specifications must represent a coherent whole, and demonstrate clear and logical progression to further study and training.

7. Knowledge, understanding and skills set out in the AS and A level specifications must:

- enable students to investigate different types and sizes of organisations in various business sectors and environments, with an awareness of local, national and global contexts, recognising that they face varying degrees of competition
- enable students to:
 - identify business opportunities and problems
 - investigate, analyse and evaluate business opportunities and problems
 - apply numerical skills, including those indicated in the Annex
 - make justifiable decisions using both qualitative methods and quantitative methods, including those indicated in the Annex
 - identify and understand how businesses adapt to operate successfully in a dynamic business environment
- promote an holistic understanding of business and enterprise

8. In addition, A level specifications must require students to:

- apply basic business concepts to a wider range of contexts
- understand and apply more sophisticated concepts and techniques
- analyse, interpret and evaluate more complex business information
- take a more strategic view of business opportunities, problems and issues

9. All AS specifications must cover the following core knowledge, understanding and skills. This core must constitute 60% of the AS specification content.

The following areas of study must be applied through a range of types and sizes of business organisations in different contexts.

Area of study	Amplification
External influences	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The market• Competition
Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identifying and anticipating customer needs• Marketing mix• Product life cycle
Accounting and finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Budgeting• Cash-flow forecasting

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Break-even analysis • Ratio analysis
People in organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivation • Leadership • Organisation design • Employer/employee relationships
Operations management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality • Productivity • Added value

10. All A level specifications must cover the following core knowledge, understanding and skills. This core must constitute 60% of the A level specification content.

The following areas of study must be applied through a range of types and sizes of business organisations in different contexts.

Area of study	Amplification
Business objectives and strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different stakeholder and business objectives • Strategy and implementation • Risk and uncertainty
Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying and anticipating customer needs • Marketing mix • Product life cycle
Accounting and finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budgeting • Cash-flow forecasting • Break-even analysis • Ratio analysis
People in organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivation • Leadership • Organisation design • Employer/employee relationships

Operations management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality • Productivity • Added value
External influences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The market • Competition • Global context • Political, social, economic and technological factors • Ethical, legal and environmental issues
Business analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forecasting • Data analysis • Market analysis • Decision making • Measures of performance: financial and non-financial
Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Causes and effects of change • Managing change

Annex: quantitative skills in business

In order to be able to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding in business, students need to have acquired competence in the quantitative skills that are relevant to the subject content and which are applied in the context of a business A level, including:

- **calculate, use and understand ratios, averages and fractions**
- **calculate, use and understand percentages and percentage changes**
- **construct and interpret a range of standard graphical forms**
- **interpret index numbers**
- **calculate cost, revenue, profit and break-even**
- calculate investment appraisal outcomes and interpret results
- **interpret values of price and income elasticity of demand**
- **use and interpret quantitative and non-quantitative information in order to make decisions**
- **interpret, apply and analyse information in written, graphical and numerical forms**

Quantitative skills not in bold do not form part of the AS core content requirement; however, an awarding organisation may include them in their AS specifications.

The assessment of quantitative skills will include at least level 2 mathematical skills as a minimum of 10% of the overall AS marks and as a minimum of 10% of the overall A level marks.

These quantitative skills may be assessed across the assessment objectives.

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