

Decisions on Conditions and guidance for GCSE business and GCSE economics



In December 2015 we published a consultation about the rules and guidance we proposed to put in place for new GCSEs in business and new GCSEs in economics.

This consultation set out draft Subject Level Conditions, requirements and guidance which would apply to all new GCSEs in these subjects.

We have reviewed the responses to the consultation and are now announcing our decisions. We are also publishing a more detailed analysis of the responses alongside this document.¹

GCSE Business and GCSE Economics

Compliance with content requirements

We proposed that all reformed GCSEs in business and all reformed GCSEs in economics should comply with the subject content requirements published by the Department for Education,² and with our assessment objectives.

All the respondents who commented on this proposal supported it, noting that it would help ensure comparability between different specifications. No respondents raised any concerns with this aspect of our proposals.

We have therefore decided to confirm our proposals in this area.

Guidance

We proposed to introduce guidance on the interpretation of our assessment objectives. Respondents raised a number of comments in relation to the proposed guidance:

- two respondents commented that the draft guidance on assessment objectives AO1 and AO2 in GCSE business suggested that “business concepts and issues” should be assessed together. The respondents expressed the view that knowledge, understanding and application of concepts can legitimately be

¹ www.gov.uk/government/consultations/gcse-reform-regulations-for-business-and-economics

² www.gov.uk/government/publications/gcse-business
www.gov.uk/government/publications/gcse-economics

assessed without looking at issues (and vice versa), and that the guidance should make this clear. The same issue was raised in relation to GCSE economics, in relation to the guidance on assessment objectives AO1 and AO2 surrounding “economic concepts and issues”.

We agree that it should be possible, and that in some questions/tasks it may be desirable, to assess “concepts and issues” separately within both GCSE business and GCSE economics. We have therefore decided to revise the wording of our guidance in both subjects to clarify our expectations.

- One respondent expressed the view that quantitative skills in GCSE business would always be assessed and rewarded against assessment objective AO2, and that the guidance on assessment objective AO2 should be revised to reflect this.

We are of the view that it is possible for quantitative skills to be assessed under assessment objectives other than assessment objective AO2. For example, it may be possible to assess a more sophisticated use of quantitative skills under assessment objective AO3. Our requirements are currently silent on which assessment objectives the quantitative skills should be assessed under, and it is for the exam boards to justify the approach they have taken. We have therefore decided not to revise the wording of our requirements or guidance in this regard.

- One respondent suggested that within the guidance on assessment objective AO3 in GCSE business, questions could not meaningfully target elements 1b (evaluate business information and issues to demonstrate understanding of business activity) and 1c (make judgements and draw conclusions) separately. They recommended that elements 1b and 1c should be combined into a single element. In our consultation we proposed that AO3 for GCSE business should be broken down into three elements.

We have reflected on the comments raised by the respondent, and have decided to amend our guidance on AO3 to clarify our expectations:

- elements 1b (evaluate business information and issues to demonstrate understanding of business activity) and 1c (make judgements and draw conclusions) have been combined into a single element,
- our guidance on the definition of “evaluate” has been amended so that there is not an overlap with “make judgements”, and
- we have provided further guidance setting out that the extent to which evaluation questions/tasks require Learners to make judgements and draw

conclusions will depend on the subject content targeted and the nature of those questions/tasks.

We have decided to make the same changes to the guidance on assessment objective AO3 in GCSE economics for consistency.

We have not made any other substantive amendments to our guidance in either GCSE business or GCSE economics.

Next steps

We have published the following documents which formally introduce our rules and guidance for GCSE business and GCSE economics:

- *GCSE Subject Level Conditions for GCSE Business*³
- *GCSE Subject Level Guidance for GCSE Business*⁴
- *GCSE Subject Level Conditions for GCSE Economics*⁵
- *GCSE Subject Level Guidance for GCSE Economics*⁶

³ www.gov.uk/government/publications/gcse-9-to-1-subject-level-conditions-and-requirements-for-business

⁴ www.gov.uk/government/publications/gcse-9-to-1-subject-level-guidance-for-business

⁵ www.gov.uk/government/publications/gcse-9-to-1-subject-level-conditions-and-requirements-for-economics

⁶ www.gov.uk/government/publications/gcse-9-to-1-subject-level-guidance-for-economics