

GCE Subject Level Guidance for Accounting

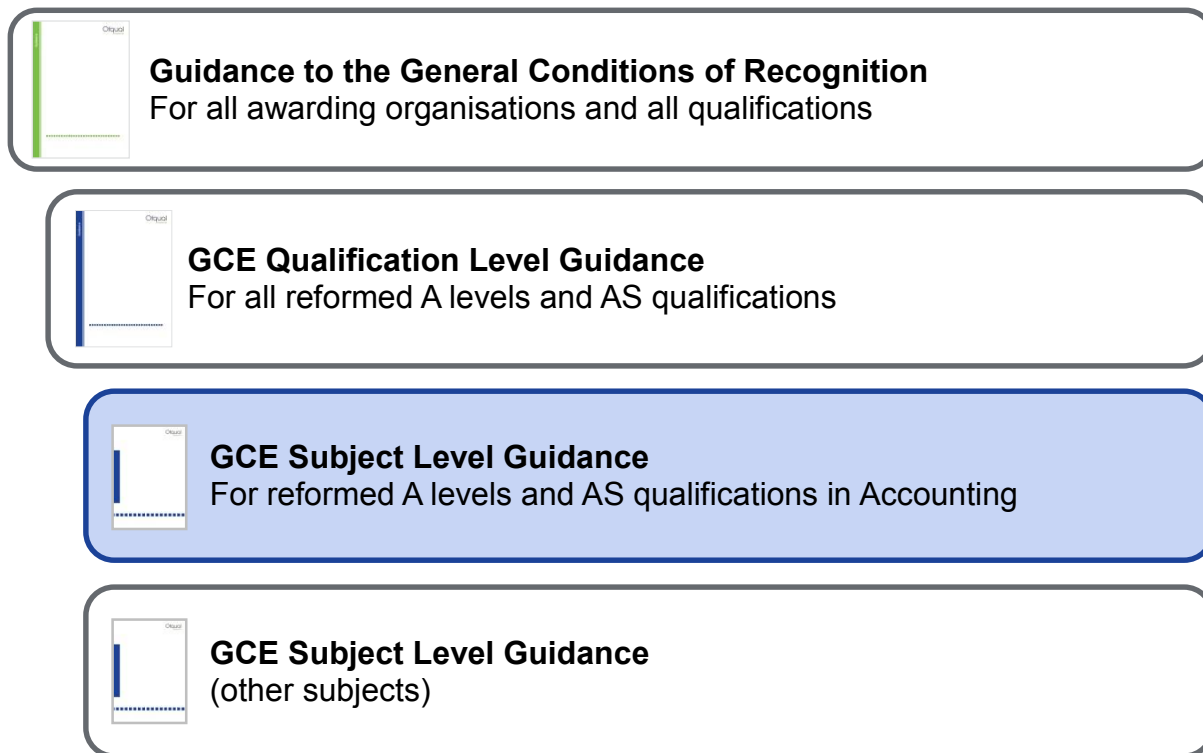
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Introduction

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 Accounting awarded on or after 1 April 2019; and
- all standalone GCE AS qualifications in Accounting awarded on or after 1 April 2018.

This guidance supports the *GCE Subject Level Conditions and Requirements for Accounting*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(Accounting)¹.

An awarding organisation has a legal obligation under the 2009 Act to have regard to this guidance, where relevant, in relation to each GCE Qualification in Accounting that it makes available or proposes to make available. Condition GCE(Accounting)¹

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

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

An awarding organisation should use the guidance in this document to help it understand how to comply with the *GCE Subject Level Conditions and Requirements for Accounting*.

Guidance set out in this document

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| <p>This document provides guidance on assessment objectives for GCE Qualifications in Accounting.</p> |
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Guidance on assessment objectives for GCE Qualifications in Accounting

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

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

| | Objective | Weighting (A level) | Weighting (AS) |
|-----|--|---------------------|----------------|
| AO1 | Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of accounting principles, concepts and techniques. | 20-30% | 30-40% |
| AO2 | Apply knowledge and understanding of accounting principles, concepts and techniques. | 25-35% | 35-45% |
| AO3 | Analyse and evaluate accounting data to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ present information ■ make judgements ■ draw conclusions. | 35-45% | 25-35% |

We set out below our guidance for the purposes of Condition GCE(Accounting)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(Accounting)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 accounting principles, concepts and techniques | | | 20-30% (A level) 30-40% (AS) |
|---|--|--|---|
| Strands | Elements | Coverage | Interpretation and definitions |
| n/a | 1a – Demonstrate knowledge of accounting principles and concepts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Full coverage in each set of assessments² (but not in every assessment). ■ A reasonable balance between the elements within this assessment objective. ■ Awarding organisations should justify the balance between elements in their assessment strategies. ■ No more than 10% of the total marks for the qualification should reward demonstrating knowledge in isolation³ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Both here and in AO2 – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Accounting principles means the rules and guidelines that businesses must follow when reporting financial data. □ Accounting concepts means the rules of accounting that should be followed when preparing accounts and financial statements. They include prudence, consistency, going concern and accruals (matching). □ Accounting techniques are the methods used to complete accounting tasks using particular knowledge or skills. They include both financial and management accounting techniques. ■ Knowledge and understanding may be assessed either separately or together. They should relate to the course of study, being detailed in the specification or reflecting assumed prior knowledge. |
| | 1b – Demonstrate knowledge of accounting techniques | | |
| | 1c – Demonstrate understanding of accounting principles and concepts | | |
| | 1d – Demonstrate understanding of accounting techniques | | |

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

³ Marks that 'reward demonstrating knowledge in isolation' include any mark awarded solely for recalling facts or other knowledge that is part of the specification. 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 of accounting principles, concepts and techniques | | | 25-35% (A level) 35-45% (AS) |
|---|---|--|---|
| Strands | Elements | Coverage | Interpretation and definitions |
| n/a | 1a – Apply knowledge and understanding of accounting principles and concepts 2a – Apply knowledge and understanding of accounting techniques | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Full coverage in each set of assessments (but not in every assessment). ■ A reasonable balance between the elements within this assessment objective. ■ Awarding organisations should justify the balance between elements in their assessment strategies. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ See guidance in relation to AO1 for definitions of accounting principles, accounting concepts and accounting techniques. ■ The emphasis here is on Learners applying their knowledge and understanding in or to a given context.⁴ The application should relate principally to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ 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. ■ Knowledge and understanding are interconnected here and should not usually be separated. ■ Individual questions/tasks may, but need not always, target accounting principles and accounting concepts in combination. |

⁴ A 'context' here means any scenario; it could be specific or more generalised and could take the form of a given quantitative skill (for example, a calculation that requires the use of a particular approach or formula in a particular situation).

| AO3: Analyse and evaluate accounting data to: | | | 35-45% (A level) 25-35% (AS) |
|--|----------------------------------|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ present information ■ make judgements ■ draw conclusions | | | |
| Strands | Elements | Coverage | Interpretation and definitions |
| 1 – Analyse and evaluate accounting data to present information. | This strand is a single element. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Full coverage in each set of assessments (but not in every assessment). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ In the context of this assessment objective: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ analyse means deconstructing information and/or issues to find connections between them and to provide logical chains of reasoning; □ evaluate means appraising and/or ascribing value to information and/or issues. ■ The emphasis here is on the Learner constructing coherent and reasoned responses, supported by evidence (such as relevant financial or management accounting information), to make judgements and draw conclusions. This might include – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ making salient points, □ acknowledging qualifying factors, and/or □ understanding the limitations of material. ■ Where relevant, a judgement or conclusion might involve developing and/or proposing solutions. |
| 2 – Analyse and evaluate accounting data to make judgements. | This strand is a single element. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A reasonable balance between the strands within this assessment objective. | |
| 3 – Analyse and evaluate accounting data to draw conclusions. | This strand is a single element. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Awarding organisations should justify the balance between strands in their assessment strategies. | |

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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