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> [AEA qualification-level conditions and requirements](#)



Regulation

AEA Qualification Level Conditions and Requirements

Updated 22 April 2022

Applies to England

Contents

[Introduction](#)

[Qualification Level Conditions](#)

[Requirements in relation to specified levels of attainment](#)

[Appendix 1: revisions to this document](#)

 [Print this page](#)

Introduction

About this document

This document is part of a suite of documents which sets out our regulatory requirements for awarding organisations offering advanced extension awards (AEA).

Requirements set out in this document

This document sets out the AEA Qualification Level Conditions.

It also sets out our requirements in relation to specified levels of attainment for advanced extension awards – awarding organisations must comply with these requirements under Conditions AEA3.1 and AEA6.1(b).

With respect to all advanced extension awards, awarding organisations must also comply with:

- our [General Conditions of Recognition](#), which apply to all awarding organisations and qualifications, and
- all [relevant Regulatory Documents](#).

Revisions to this document

We have revised this document since it was originally published (see Appendix 1 for details), most recently in April 2022.

The April 2022 version of this document replaces all previous versions of AEA Qualification Level Conditions and Requirements with effect from 9:30am on Friday 22 April 2022.

Qualification Level Conditions

Condition AEA 1: Subjects for advanced extension awards

AEA1.1

1.1 An awarding organisation may only make available an advanced extension award in a subject for which –

(a) Ofqual has set and published GCE Subject Level Conditions, and

(b) there is available to Learners in England at least one GCE A level qualification which has been developed in line with those GCE Subject Level Conditions.

Condition AEA2: Content requirements

AEA2.1

2.1 An awarding organisation must ensure that each advanced extension award which it makes available is accessible to any Learner who has been prepared for the assessments for a GCE A level qualification offered in England in the corresponding subject, without that Learner needing to undertake additional study or learning.

AEA2.2

2.2 In particular, an awarding organisation must ensure that each advanced extension award which it makes available is based on –

(a) the [content document published by the Secretary of State](#) with which the GCE A level qualification in the corresponding subject is required to comply under the relevant GCE Subject Level Conditions, and

(b) the objectives to be met by any assessment for the GCE A level qualification in the corresponding subject as required under the relevant GCE Subject Level Conditions.

Condition AEA3: Specified levels of attainment

AEA3.1

3.1 An awarding organisation must ensure that the specification for each advanced extension award which it makes available or proposes to make available sets out specified levels of attainment which comply with any requirements which may be published by Ofqual and revised from time to time.

Condition AEA4: Assessment by Examination

AEA4.1

4.1 An awarding organisation must ensure that every assessment for an advanced extension award which it makes available is an Assessment by Examination

AEA4.2

4.2 Condition AEA4.1 does not apply in respect of an advanced extension award where an AEA Subject Level Condition states that its application is excluded in respect of that qualification.

Condition AEA5: Level of Demand

AEA5.1

5.1 An awarding organisation must take all reasonable steps to ensure that the Level of Demand of the assessments for each advanced extension award which it makes available is higher than the Level of Demand of the assessments for the GCE A level qualification in the corresponding subject, in particular by –

(a) requiring Learners to demonstrate a greater depth of understanding in the assessments for the advanced extension award, and

(b) placing greater emphasis in the assessments for the advanced extension award on more demanding skills (such as analysis, evaluation and problem solving).

Condition AEA6: Standard setting

AEA6.1

6.1 In respect of each advanced extension award which it makes available, an awarding organisation must comply with any requirements, and have regard to any guidance, which may be published by Ofqual and revised from time to time in relation to –

(a) the promotion of consistency between the measurement of Learners' levels of attainment in that qualification and similar qualifications made available by other awarding organisations, and

(b) the setting of specified levels of attainment.

AEA6.2

6.2 In setting the specified levels of attainment for an advanced extension award which it makes available, an awarding organisation must have regard to an appropriate range of qualitative and quantitative evidence.

AEA6.3

6.3 In respect of each advanced extension award which it makes available, the range of evidence to which an awarding organisation has regard for the purposes of Condition AEA6.2 will only be appropriate if it includes evidence of –

(a) the Level of Demand of the assessments for that qualification,

(b) the level of attainment demonstrated in those assessments by an appropriately representative sample of Learners taking that qualification,

(c) the level of attainment demonstrated by Learners taking that qualification in a –

(i) prior assessment (which was not for that qualification), whether or not that assessment was for a regulated qualification, or

(ii) prior qualification, whether or not that qualification was a regulated qualification, and

(d) following the first year in which the qualification is awarded, the level of attainment demonstrated by Learners who have previously been awarded the qualification.

AEA6.4

6.4 An awarding organisation must maintain a record of –

(a) the evidence to which it has had regard in setting the specified levels of attainment for each advanced extension award which it makes available, and

(b) its rationale for the selection of and weight given to that evidence.

Condition AEA7: Interpretation and Definitions

AEA7.1

7.1 The rules of interpretation and definitions outlined in General Condition J1 shall apply to the AEA Qualification Level Conditions, and to any AEA Subject Level Conditions.

AEA7.2

7.2 Except in the circumstances described in Condition AEA7.3, the requirements imposed by the AEA Qualification Level Conditions and any AEA Subject Level Conditions apply in addition to each other and to the requirements imposed by the General Conditions of Recognition.

AEA7.3

7.3 To the extent that there is any inconsistency between –

(a) a requirement of either an AEA Qualification Level Condition or an AEA Subject Level Condition and an awarding organisation's ability to provide either a particular type of Reasonable Adjustment or Special Consideration, such that the awarding

organisation is prevented from providing that Reasonable Adjustment or Special Consideration, the awarding organisation may provide that Reasonable Adjustment or Special Consideration and is not obliged to comply with the requirement of the AEA Qualification Level Condition or an AEA Subject Level Condition,

(b) in all other cases –

(i) a requirement of an AEA Subject Level Condition and a requirement of either an AEA Qualification Level Condition or a General Condition of Recognition, such that an awarding organisation could not comply with both such requirements, the awarding organisation must comply with the requirement of the AEA Subject Level Condition and is not obliged to comply with the requirement of the other Condition, or

(ii) a requirement of an AEA Qualification Level Condition and a requirement of a General Condition of Recognition, such that an awarding organisation could not comply with both such requirements, the awarding organisation must comply with the requirement of the AEA Qualification Level Condition and is not obliged to comply with the requirement of the General Condition of Recognition.

AEA7.4

7.4 In these Conditions the following words shall have the meaning given to them below (and cognate expressions should be construed accordingly) –

AEA Qualification Level Condition

A Condition of Recognition that applies to all advanced extension awards, except where a AEA Subject Level Condition states that its application is excluded in respect of a specific subject, and which uses the numbering format 'AEAn.n', where 'n' denotes a number.

AEA Subject Level Condition

A Condition of Recognition that applies to an advanced extension award in a specific subject only and which uses the numbering format 'AEA(x)n.n', where 'x' denotes a particular subject and 'n' denotes a number.

Assessment by Examination

An assessment which is –

(a) set by an awarding organisation,

(b) designed to be taken simultaneously by all relevant Learners at a time determined by the awarding organisation, and

(c) taken under conditions specified by the awarding organisation (including conditions relating to the supervision of Learners during the assessment and the duration of the assessment).

GCE Subject Level Condition

A Condition of Recognition that applies to a GCE qualification in a specific subject only and which uses the numbering format 'GCE(x)n.n', where 'x' denotes a particular subject and 'n' denotes a number.

Requirements in relation to specified levels of attainment

Requirements in relation to the specified levels of attainment for advanced extension awards

Specified levels of attainment

Condition AEA3.1 allows us to specify requirements in relation to specified levels of attainment for advanced extension awards.

We set out below our requirements for the purposes of Condition AEA3.1.

In relation to each advanced extension award which it makes available, an awarding organisation must ensure that –

- (a) the specified levels of attainment are Merit and Distinction;
- (b) a Learner who does not meet the criteria to be awarded either specified level of attainment is issued a result of ‘Unclassified’ or U.

Requirements for setting specified levels of attainment for advanced extension awards

Condition AEA6.1(b) allows us to specify requirements and guidance in relation to the setting of specified levels of attainment for advanced extension awards.

We set out below our general requirements for the purposes of Condition AEA6.1(b). We may publish additional specific requirements from time to time, including in relation to the setting of particular specified levels of attainment.

For ease of reference, the specified levels of attainment used in AEAs are referred to below as ‘grades’.

An awarding organisation must set the following grade boundaries for each Component:

- (a) Merit / U
- (b) Distinction / Merit

In doing this, the awarding organisation must have regard to achieving suitable qualification level outcomes.

An awarding organisation must set qualification grade boundaries for each advanced extension award as a whole as follows:

- (a) The boundary mark for each Component is scaled as necessary to reflect the intended weighting of that Component as detailed in the specification.
- (b) The resulting scaled Component boundary marks are added and the result is rounded to the nearest whole number (0.5 is rounded up).

In setting these qualification grade boundaries, an awarding organisation must:

- (a) in the first year in which an advanced extension award is awarded^{[\[footnote 1\]](#)}, comply with any specific requirements that Ofqual may set ^{[\[footnote 2\]](#)}

Appendix 1: revisions to this document

We set out below all revisions to this document since it was first published, and the dates on which those revisions came into force.

Revisions in force 22 April 2022

- Conditions AEA7 – Interpretations and Definitions (amended)
-

1. For the purposes of these requirements, the reference to the first year in which an advanced extension award is awarded means the first year in which an advanced extension award in the same subject is awarded by any awarding organisation. It does not mean the first year in which each particular awarding organisation awards an advanced extension award in that subject. Where an awarding organisation (A) first awards an advanced extension award in a subject and an advanced extension award in the same subject has already been awarded by another awarding organisation (B), awarding organisation A must follow the process described in the section on setting grade boundaries from the second year of award onwards.[↵](#)
2. For clarity, this is without prejudice to the obligation under Condition AEA6.1 for an awarding organisation to comply with any additional requirements set by Ofqual in relation to subsequent years.[↵](#)

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