



Department
for Education

Performance points: a practical guide

April 2024

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Summary

This publication provides non-statutory guidance from the Department for Education. It has been produced to help schools, colleges and parents understand how 'performance points' are calculated for school and college performance measures, from 2016 onwards.

Expiry or review date

This guidance will be reviewed before March 2025.

Who is this publication for?

This guidance is for:

- school and college leaders, staff and governing bodies in England offering provision at key stage 4 or at age 16 to 18
- parents who wish to find out more about how 'performance points' for the school and college performance measures are calculated

Main points

This document contains an overview of how points are calculated for qualifications included in the school and college performance measures:

- The number of 'guided learning hours' associated with a qualification are used to determine its **size**.
- The size of a qualification, along with its **level** and **total number of passing grades**, determine how many 'performance points' are assigned to each passing grade.

The tables in this document demonstrate how performance points are assigned to qualifications of various levels, sizes and grading structures.

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Introduction

Performance points are used within the key stage 4 and 16 to 18 performance measures. They help us to compare qualifications of different levels, sizes, and grade structures.

This document explains how performance points are determined. It does not attempt to explain how they are used to calculate specific measures in the performance tables.

Alongside this document, you should be able to find the necessary information about a qualification's guided learning hours on [Ofqual's Register of Regulated Qualifications](#) (hereafter referred to as the Register), and determine the appropriate points for that qualification.

Performance measures are only used to compare schools or colleges in England and therefore points cannot be calculated for qualifications which are only relevant in other parts of the UK.

Intentions and limitations of the system

The system is designed to be used for reporting the performance of the institution and is intended only to be used in the production of performance measures.

It cannot and should not be compared to systems designed to measure an individual's achievement – for example, the UCAS tariff.

To maintain accuracy, the department regularly reviews the points scores and will make updates, if necessary, where this improves the quality of performance measures. All updates will be communicated to schools through published guidance.

Eligibility

To be eligible for performance points a qualification must be:

- regulated by Ofqual

If a qualification is regulated then it will have been given a qualification number (QN), previously known as a qualification accreditation number (QAN). It will also have a regulation start date. All qualifications on the Register are regulated.

- approved for funding at the relevant age range by the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

You can check whether a qualification has been approved for funding by checking the [ESFA website](#).

- approved by the department for inclusion in performance measures in the relevant year.

Approval decisions for some qualifications are based on recommendations from the 2011 ['Wolf review of vocational education'](#).

The department publishes separately a [list of qualifications included in the key stage 4 performance tables](#), and a [list of qualifications eligible in 16 to 18 performance points](#).

Calculating points

Key stage 4 performance points

All information about how to calculate key stage 4 performance points from 2016 onwards is contained in the document [‘Secondary accountability measures: guide’](#).

16 to 18 performance points

Information on how to calculate performance points from 2016 onwards for qualifications used in the headline, additional attainment and value-added measures at 16-18 is included in this guide.

Dedicated ‘capped’ points are used in the English and maths progress measure. The qualifications included in that measure and associated points can be found in the document, [‘16 to 18 English and maths progress measure qualifications’](#).

The 2024 performance points for both 16 to 18 and KS4 qualifications can be found in the documents [16 to 18 qualifications, discount codes and point scores](#) and [Key stage 4 qualifications, discount codes and point scores](#) respectively.

An overview of how to determine 16 to 18 performance points

The calculation of points is defined as ‘size’ times ‘challenge’.

Size is a measure of the average length of time it takes to teach the qualification. Average time is taken from the guided learning hours (GLH) from the Ofqual Register. If a single GLH value is not available, a notional GLH is created. More information about calculating notional GLH is given in Appendix A.

Challenge reflects the level of the qualification and grade achieved.

To work out performance points for a qualification which counts towards the 16 to 18 performance measures, follow the rules below:

1. Any qualification belonging to one of the following types of *academic* qualification will have the same points structure as others of that type: applied GCE award (single or double); GCE A levels; applied GCE AS levels (single or double); GCE AS levels; applied GCE A level/AS level combined; advanced extension award; core maths, extended project; AQA Technical Award (Level 1/2); free standing mathematics (level 3); certain components of the International Baccalaureate; principal learning (level 3); pre-Us. **Refer to Tables 2a to 2i in Section 2 for these qualifications.**

2. For other eligible qualification types, the points structure depends on the level, the number of possible (passing) grades, **as well as the size of the qualification.**
3. To determine size, use the GLH value (and Table 1 in Section 1) to work out the GCSE size equivalence for level 2 qualifications, or GCE A level size equivalence of the qualification for level 3 qualifications.
4. Then, **refer to Tables 3a to 3k in Section 3 for performance point values for level 3 qualifications.** Alternatively, **refer to Tables 4a to 4m in Section 4 for performance point values for level 2 qualifications.**

(Note that qualifications with the same level, number of (passing) grades and size will have the same points assigned to their respective grades, even if their grades have different names/labels. For example, there is no difference, in terms of performance points, between a qualification with passing grades A/B/C/D and a qualification with passing grades Distinction*/Distinction/Merit/Pass, provided they are the same level and size).

Section 1: Size table

Table 1 – Size

Size band	GLH		GCSE (level 1 or 2) size equivalence ¹	GCE A level (level 3) size equivalence
	Minimum	Maximum		
A	0	44	0.25	0.10
B	45	89	0.50	0.20
C	90	144	1.00	0.30
D	145	234	2.00	0.50
E	235	324	3.00	0.75
F	325	414	4.00	1.00
G	415	504	5.00	1.25
H	505	594	6.00	1.50
I	595	684	7.00	1.75
J	685	774	8.00	2.00
K	775	864	9.00	2.25
L	865	954	10.00	2.50
M	955	1044	11.00	2.75
N	1045	1134	12.00	3.00
O	1135	1224	13.00	3.25
P	1225	-	14.00	3.50

¹ Size information for qualifications at level 1 is given for reference purposes only as they are not needed for the purposes of calculating points; points for all qualifications of this level are given in the '[Secondary accountability measures: Guidance for maintained secondary schools, academies and free schools](#)' document. Note that since 2014, GCSE size equivalence is capped at a maximum value of 1 in the key stage 4 tables.

For example, Table 1 shows that a qualification of 120 GLH at level 3 would be the equivalent to 0.3 of an A level. A similarly sized qualification at either level 1 or level 2 would have a size equivalence of one GCSE.

Section 2: Performance points for level 3 qualifications

Some types of level 3 qualification included in the 16 to 18 performance measures tend to have a set size and grading structure. Qualifications belonging to one of these types will have the same points structure as others of the same type. They tend to be *academic* qualifications.

The points assigned to these types of qualification (since 2016) are shown in this section. They include:

- Applied GCE award (single or double)
- GCE A levels
- Applied GCE AS levels (single or double)
- GCE AS levels
- Applied GCE A level/AS level combined
- Advanced extension award
- Core maths
- Extended project
- Free standing mathematics (level 3)
- International Baccalaureate
- Pre-Us

The department publishes separately [a complete list of level 3 qualifications included in the 16 to 18 tables and their performance points.](#)

Table 2a – A level, Applied A level, AS level, Applied AS level, Core maths

	AS level or Core Maths Size: 0.5 / Band: D	A level Size: 1 / Band: F
Grade	Performance points	
A*	N/A	60
A	25	50
B	20	40
C	15	30
D	10	20
E	5	10
Fail	0	0

Table 2b – Applied A level double award, AS level double award, Combined A and AS level

	Double AS level Size: 1 / Band: F	Combined A and AS level Size: 1.5 / Band: H	Double A level Size: 2 / Band: J
Grade	Performance points		
A*A*	N/A	N/A	120
A*A	N/A	85.0	110
AA	50	75.0	100
AB	45	67.5	90
BB	40	60.0	80
BC	35	52.5	70
CC	30	45.0	60
CD	25	37.5	50
DD	20	30.0	40
DE	15	22.5	30
EE	10	15.0	20
FAIL	0	0	0

Table 2c – Advanced extension award

Grade	Performance points
D	9.0
M	7.7
Fail	0

Table 2d – Extended project (diploma)

Grade	Performance points
A*	18
A	15
B	12
C	9
D	6
E	3
Fail	0

Table 2e – Free standing mathematics qualification (level 3)

Grade	Performance points
A	8.20
B	6.53
C	4.87
D	3.20
E	1.53
Fail	0

Table 2f – International Baccalaureate diploma programme

Grade	Performance points
Grade 45	300.0
Grade 44	290.5
Grade 43	281.0
Grade 42	271.5
Grade 41	262.0
Grade 40	252.5
Grade 39	243.0
Grade 38	233.5
Grade 37	224.0
Grade 36	214.5
Grade 35	205.0
Grade 34	195.5
Grade 33	186.0
Grade 32	176.5
Grade 31	167.0
Grade 30	157.5
Grade 29	148.0
Grade 28	138.5
Grade 27	129.0
Grade 26	119.5
Grade 25	110.0
Grade 24	100.5
Fail	0

Table 2g – IBO (International Baccalaureate Organisation) standard and higher level components

	Standard level component Size: 0.5 / Band: D	Higher level component Size: 1 / Band: F
Grade	Performance points	
7	25	60
6	20	48
5	15	36
4	10	24
3	5	12
2	0	0
1	0	0
Fail	0	0

Table 2h – IBO (International Baccalaureate Organisation) core components

	Reflective project Size: 0.2 / Band: B	Extended essay Size: 0.2 / Band: B	Theory of knowledge Size: 0.3 / Band: C
Grade	Performance points		
A	10	8	12
B	8	6	9
C	6	4	6
D	4	2	3
E	2	0	0
FAIL	0	0	0

Table 2i – Pre-U

	Short course subject Size: 0.5 / Band: D	Principal subject Size: 1 / Band: F
Grade	Performance points	
D1	30.00	60.00
D2	27.08	54.17
D3	24.17	48.33
M1	21.25	42.50
M2	18.33	36.67
M3	15.00	30.00
P1	11.67	23.33
P2	8.33	16.67
P3	5.00	10.00
Fail	0	0

Section 3: Performance points for other level 3 qualifications

Other level 3 qualifications included in the 16 to 18 performance measures might have more varied sizes and grading structures.

The performance points for these qualifications depend on both the size (A level equivalence) of the qualification (as obtained from Table 1), and the number of passing grades. It is important to note that the key factor in the grade structure is the number of grades – not the names of the grades. For example, a Pass/Merit/Distinction/Distinction* grade structure is the same as a C/B/A/A* grade structure, because there are four grades in both.

Examples of performance points assigned to various combinations of qualification sizes and grading structures are shown in this section. Qualifications like these might include:

- BTEC certificates/diplomas/national subsidiary awards
- OCR Cambridge certificates/diplomas/extended certificates/extended diplomas/foundation diplomas/introductory diplomas/subsidiary diplomas

The department publishes separately [a complete list of level 3 qualifications included in the 16 to 18 tables and their performance points](#).

Table 3a – One-grade structure at level 3, e.g. Pass only

Grade	A level size	Band	Performance points
Pass	0.5	D	15.0
	0.75	E	22.5
	1	F	30.0
	1.25	G	37.5
	1.5	H	45.0
	1.75	I	52.5
	2	J	60.0
	2.25	K	67.5
	2.5	L	75.0
	2.75	M	82.5
	3	N	90.0
	3.25	O	97.5
	3.5	P	105.0
Fail			0

Table 3b – Two-grade structure at level 3, e.g. Pass/Merit

	A level size: 0.5 / Band: D	A level size: 0.75 / Band: E
Grade	Performance points	
Merit	20.0	30.00
Pass	12.5	18.75
Fail	0	0

Table 3c – Three-grade structure at level 3, e.g. Pass/Merit/Distinction (A level size 0.5 to 1.25)

	A level size: 0.5 Band: D	A level size: 0.75 Band: E	A level size: 1 Band: F	A level size: 1.25 Band: G
Grade	Performance points			
D	25.0	37.50	50	62.50
M	17.5	26.25	35	43.75
P	7.5	11.25	15	18.75
Fail	0	0	0	0

Table 3d – Three-grade structure at level 3, e.g. Pass/Merit/Distinction (A level size 1.5 to 2.25)

	A level size: 1.5 Band: H	A level size: 1.75 Band: I	A level size: 2 Band: J	A level size: 2.25 Band: K
Grade	Performance points			
D	75.0	87.50	100	112.50
M	52.5	61.25	70	78.75
P	22.5	26.25	30	33.75
Fail	0	0	0	0

Table 3e – Three-grade structure at level 3, e.g. Pass/Merit/Distinction (A level size 2.5 to 3)

	A level size: 2.5 Band: L	A level size: 2.75 Band: M	A level size: 3 Band: N	A level size: 3.25 Band: O
Grade	Performance points			
D	125.0	137.50	150	162.5
M	87.5	96.25	105	113.75
P	37.5	41.25	45	48.75
Fail	0	0	0	0

Table 3f – Four-grade structure at level 3, e.g. Pass/Merit/Distinction/Distinction* (A level size 0.5 to 1.25)

	A level size: 0.5 Band: D	A level size: 0.75 Band: E	A level size: 1 Band: F	A level size: 1.25 Band: G
Grade	Performance points			
D*	25.0	37.50	50	62.50
D	17.5	26.25	35	43.75
M	12.5	18.75	25	31.25
P	7.5	11.25	15	18.75
Fail	0	0	0	0

Table 3g – Four-grade structure at level 3, e.g. Pass/Merit/Distinction/Distinction* (A level size 1.5 to 3)

	A level size: 1.5 Band: H	A level size: 1.75 Band: I	A level size: 2 Band: J	A level size: 3 Band: N
Grade	Performance points			
D*	75.0	87.50	100	150
D	52.5	61.25	70	105
M	37.5	43.75	50	75
P	22.5	26.25	30	45
Fail	0	0	0	0

Table 3h – Five-grade structure at level 3, e.g. A*/A/B/C/D

	A level size: 0.5 Band: D	A level size: 1 Band: F	A level size: 1.25 Band: G	A level size: 1.5 Band: H	A level size: 1.75 Band: I
Grade	Performance points				
A*	25	50	62.5	75	87.5
A	20	40	50	60	70.0
B	15	30	37.5	45	52.5
C	10	20	25	30	35.0
D	5	10	12.5	15	17.5
Fail	0	0	0	0	0

	A level size: 2 Band: J	A level size: 2.5 Band: L	A level size: 3 Band: N	A level size: 3.25 Band: O
Grade	Performance points			
A*	100	125	150	162.5
A	80	100	120	130
B	60	75	90	97.5
C	40	50	60	65
D	20	25	30	32.5
Fail	0	0	0	0

Table 3i – Six-grade structure at level 3, e.g. A*/A/B/C/D/E vocational qualifications

	A level size: 0.5 Band: D	A level size: 0.75 Band: E	A level size: 1 Band: F	A level size: 3 Band: N
Grade	Performance points			
A*	25	37.5	50	150
A	21	31.5	42	126
B	17	25.5	34	102
C	13	19.5	26	78
D	9	13.5	18	54
E	5	7.5	10	30
Fail	0	0	0	0

Table 3j – Seven-grade structure at level 3, e.g. Pass Pass to Distinction* Distinction*

	A level size: 1.5 Band: H	A level size: 1.75 Band: I	A level size: 2 Band: J	A level size: 2.25 Band: K	A level size: 2.75 Band: M
Grade	Performance points				
D*D*	75.00	87.50	100	112.50	137.50
D*D	63.75	74.38	85	95.63	116.88
DD	52.50	61.25	70	78.75	96.25
DM	45.00	52.50	60	67.50	82.50
MM	37.50	43.75	50	56.25	68.75
MP	30.00	35.00	40	45.00	55.00
PP	22.50	26.25	30	33.75	41.25
Fail	0	0	0	0	0

Table 3k – Ten-grade structure at level 3, e.g. Pass Pass Pass to Distinction* Distinction* Distinction*

Grade	A level size: 2.75 Band: M	A level size: 3 Band: N	A level size: 3.25 Band: O
	Performance points		
D*D*D*	137.50	150	162.50
D*D*D	123.75	135	146.25
D*DD	110.00	120	130.00
DDD	96.25	105	113.75
DDM	87.08	95	102.92
DMM	77.92	85	92.08
MMM	68.75	75	81.25
MMP	59.58	65	70.42
MPP	50.42	55	59.58
PPP	41.25	45	48.75
Fail	0	0	0

Section 4: Performance points for level 2 qualifications

Level 2 qualifications were included in the 16 to 18 performance measures for the first time in 2017.

The points for these qualifications depend on both size (GCSE equivalence) of the qualification (as obtained from Table 1), and the number of passing grades. It is important to note that the key factor in the grade structure is the number of grades – not the names of the grades. For example, a Pass/Merit/Distinction/Distinction* grade structure is the same as a C/B/A/A* structure, because there are four grades in both.

Examples of performance points assigned to these types of qualification (various combinations of size and grading structure) are shown in this section. They might include:

- BTEC certificates/diplomas
- OCR Cambridge technical diplomas/extended certificates

Table 4a – One-grade structure at level 2, e.g. Pass only

Grade	GCSE size	Band	Performance points
Pass	2	D	12
	3	E	18
	4	F	24
	5	G	30
	6	H	36
	7	I	42
	8	J	48
	9	K	54
	10	L	60
	11	M	66
	12	N	72
	13	O	78
Fail			0

Table 4b – Two-grade structure at level 2, e.g. Pass/Merit

	GCSE size: 2 Band: D	GCSE size: 3 Band: E	GCSE size: 4 Band: F	GCSE size: 5 Band: G
Grade	Performance points			
Merit	14	21.0	28	35.0
Pass	11	16.5	22	27.5
Fail	0	0	0	0

Table 4c – Three-grade structure at level 2, e.g. Pass/Merit/Distinction (GCSE size 2 to 6)

Grade	GCSE size: 2 Band: D	GCSE size: 3 Band: E	GCSE size: 4 Band: F	GCSE size: 5 Band: G	GCSE size: 6 Band: H
	Performance points				
D	15	22.5	30	37.5	45
M	13	19.5	26	32.5	39
P	10	15.0	20	25.0	30
Fail	0	0	0	0	0

Table 4d – Three-grade structure at level 2, e.g. Pass/Merit/Distinction (GCSE size 7 to 14)

Grade	GCSE size: 7 Band: I	GCSE size: 8 Band: J	GCSE size: 9 Band: K	GCSE size: 10 Band: L	GCSE size: 14 Band: P
	Performance points				
D	52.5	60	67.5	75	105
M	45.5	52	58.5	65	91
P	35.0	40	45.0	50	70
Fail	0	0	0	0	0

Table 4e – Four-grade structure at level 2, e.g. Pass/Merit/Distinction/Distinction*

Grade	GCSE size: 2 Band: D	GCSE size: 3 Band: E	GCSE size: 4 Band: F	GCSE size: 5 Band: G	GCSE size: 6 Band: H	GCSE size: 7 Band: I
	Performance points					
D*	16	24	32	40	48	56
D	14	21	28	35	42	49
M	12	18	24	30	36	42
P	10	15	20	25	30	35
Fail	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 4f – Five-grade structure at level 2, e.g. 1/2/3/4/5

Grade	GCSE size: 2 Band: D	GCSE size: 3 Band: E	GCSE size: 4 Band: F	GCSE size: 5 Band: G
	Performance points			
1	14	21.0	28	35.0
2	13	19.5	26	32.5
3	12	18.0	24	30.0
4	11	16.5	22	27.5
5	10	15.0	20	25.0
Fail	0	0	0	0

Table 4g – Six-grade structure at level 2, e.g. A*/A/B/C/D/E vocational qualifications

Grade	GCSE size: 3 Band: E	GCSE size: 5 Band: G
	Performance points	
A*	24.0	40.00
A	22.5	37.50
B	20.5	34.17
C	18.5	30.83
D	16.5	27.50
E	15.0	25.00
Fail	0	0

Qualifications with grades spanning level 1 / level 2

Table 4h – Five-grade structure with top 4 grades at level 2, 1 grade at level 1, e.g. P1/P2/M2/D2/*2

Grade	Level	GCSE size: 3 Band: E
		Performance points
*2	2	24.0
D2	2	21.0
M2	2	18.0
P2	2	15.0
P1	1	7.5
Fail		0

Table 4i – Six grade structure with top 4 grades at level 2, bottom 2 grades at level 1, e.g. C1/AC1/P2/M2/D2/*2

Grade	Level	GCSE size: 1 Band: C
		Performance points
*2	2	8.5
D2	2	7.0
M2	2	5.5
P2	2	4.0
AC1	1	2.5
C1	1	1.25
Fail		0

Table 4j – Seven-grade structure with top 4 grades at level 2, bottom 3 grades at level 1, e.g. P1/M1/D1/P2/M2/D2/*2

Grade	Level	GCSE size: 3 Band: E
		Performance points
*2	2	24.0
D2	2	21.0
M2	2	18.0
P2	2	15.0
D1	1	12.0
M1	1	9.0
P1	1	4.5
Fail		0

Table 4k – Eight-grade structure with top 7 grades at level 2, 1 grade at level 1, e.g. P1/PP/MP/MM/MD/DD/D*D/D*D*

Grade	Level	GCSE size: 3 Band: E	GCSE size: 4 Band: F	GCSE size: 5 Band: G
		Performance points		
D*D*	2	24.0	32	40.0
D*D	2	22.5	30	37.5
DD	2	21.0	28	35.0
DM	2	19.5	26	32.5
MM	2	18.0	24	30.0
MP	2	16.5	22	27.5
PP	2	15.0	20	25.0
P1	1	7.5	10	12.5
Fail		0	0	0

Table 4l – Eight-grade structure with top 4 grades at level 2, bottom 4 grades at level 1, e.g. A*/A/B/C/D/E/F/G

Grade	Level	GCSE size: 2 Band: D
		Performance points
A*	2	16
A	2	14
B	2	12
C	2	10
D	1	8
E	1	6
F	1	4
G	1	2
Fail		0

Table 4m – Fifteen-grade structure with top 8 grades at level 2, bottom 7 grades at level 1, e.g. A*A*/A*A/AA/AB/BB/BC/CC/CD/DD/DE/EE/EF/FF/FG/GG

Grade	Level	GCSE size: 2 Band: D	GCSE size: 3 Band: E
		Performance points	
A*A*	2	16	24.0
A*A	2	15	22.5
AA	2	14	21.0
AB	2	13	19.5
BB	2	12	18.0
BC	2	11	16.5
CC	2	10	15.0
CD	2	9	13.5
DD	1	8	12.0
DE	1	7	10.5
EE	1	6	9.0
EF	1	5	7.5
FF	1	4	6.0
FG	1	3	4.5
GG	1	2	3.0
Fail		0	0

Section 5: T Levels

T Levels are new 2-year courses which are taken after GCSEs and are broadly equivalent in size to 3 A Levels.

T Levels comprise of a technical qualification and an industry placement with an employer. The technical qualification is split into two components: the core and the occupational specialism.

For 16-18 accountability measures, the department will be reporting on the core component and the occupational specialism. More information can be found in the document [‘16 to 18 accountability headline measures: technical guide’](#).

The following tables outline the points assigned per passing grade for T Levels and their components.

Table 5a – Core component

Grade	Performance points
A*	60
A	50
B	40
C	30
D	20
E	10
U	0

Table 5b – Occupational specialism

Grade	Performance points
D	60
M	40
P	20
U	0

Appendix A: Guided Learning Hours (GLH) and notional GLH

GLH as a range

In some circumstances, the GLH used as size equivalence for the performance measures may not be precisely as stated on the Register. If a range of GLH is provided, then the mid-point of the range is taken. For example, if a qualification has a minimum GLH of 120 and a maximum GLH of 130, then a value of 125 GLH is used. Or if a qualification has a minimum GLH of 490 and a maximum GLH of 519, the mid-point is 504.5 which would be rounded up to 505 (so would lie in band H).

One exception to this is where minimum GLH is 0, and maximum GLH is greater than 0, in which case the GLH value is set as the maximum value rather than the mid-point.

No stated GLH

If there is no single GLH value or minimum/maximum GLH value given for a qualification, a proxy value may be used to create a notional GLH for the purpose of the performance measures. A qualification of one of the following types is assigned the notional GLH below:

- a GCSE is assigned 120 GLH (a short course is 60 and a double is 240)
- a GCE A level is assigned 360 GLH (an AS level is 180 and a double is 720)
- a functional skills qualification is assigned 45 GLH
- a basic skills qualification is assigned 60 GLH
- a free-standing mathematics qualification is assigned 60 GLH

If the qualification does not belong to one of the types above, the following measures are used instead, in this order:

- diploma GLH
- Qualifications Credit Framework (QCF) qualifications only: credit value \times 6.8
- QCF qualifications only: minimum credit value \times 6.8



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