



Qualifications and  
Curriculum Authority



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru  
Welsh Assembly Government



*Rewarding Learning*

# GCSE subject criteria for health and social care

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## Introduction

1. GCSE subject criteria set out the knowledge, understanding, skills and assessment objectives common to all GCSE specifications in health and social care. They provide the framework within which an awarding body creates the detail of the specification.
2. Specifications must also meet the regulators' general requirements, including the common and GCSE criteria as defined in *The statutory regulation of external qualifications* (QCA/04/1293).
3. Subject criteria are intended to:
  - help ensure consistent and comparable standards in the same subject across the awarding bodies
  - ensure that the rigour of GCSE is maintained
  - ensure that specifications build on the knowledge, understanding and skills established by the national curricula for England, Northern Ireland and Wales, and facilitate progression to higher level general or vocational qualifications in health and social care, or related sectors of employment
  - help higher education institutions, employers and other stakeholders such as learners and parents/guardians know what has been studied and assessed.
4. Any GCSE specification that contains significant elements of health and social care must be consistent with the relevant parts of these subject criteria.

## Aims and learning outcomes

5. GCSE specifications in health and social care should encourage learners to be inspired, moved and changed by following a broad, coherent, satisfying and worthwhile course of study and gain an insight into related sectors. They should prepare learners to make informed decisions about further learning opportunities and career choices.
6. GCSE specifications in health and social care must enable learners to:
  - actively engage in the processes of health and social care to develop as effective and independent learners

- understand aspects of personal development, and the health, social care and early years sectors, through investigation and evaluation of a range of services and organisations
  - develop a critical and analytical approach to problem-solving within the health, social care and early years sectors
  - examine issues which affect the nature and quality of human life, including an appreciation of diversity and cultural issues.
7. GCSE double award specification in health and social care must additionally enable learners to:
- develop their awareness of the influences on an individual's health and wellbeing
  - understand the importance of motivation and support when improving health.

## **Subject content**

8. The content of GCSE specifications in health and social care must reflect the learning outcomes.
9. GCSE specifications in health and social care must require learners to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of health, social care and early years provision in terms of:
- the range of care needs of major client groups
  - the types of services that exist to meet client group needs and how they are developed and organised
  - the ways people can obtain care services and the possible barriers that could prevent people from gaining access to services
  - the main work roles and skills of people who provide health, social care and early years services
  - the principles of care that underpin all care work with clients
  - personal development and relationships
  - the stages and pattern of human growth and development

- the different factors that can affect human growth and development
  - the development of self-concept and different types of relationships
  - major life changes and sources of support.
10. GCSE specifications in health and social care must require learners to plan and carry out tasks in which they:
- analyse issues and problems
  - identify, gather and record relevant information and evidence
  - analyse and evaluate evidence
  - make reasoned judgements and present conclusions.
11. GCSE double award specifications in health and social care must additionally require learners to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of promoting health and wellbeing in terms of:
- definitions of health and wellbeing
  - common factors that affect health and wellbeing and the different effects they can have on individuals and groups across the lifespan
  - methods used to measure an individual's physical health
  - ways of promoting and supporting health improvement for an individual or small group.

## Assessment objectives

12. All specifications must require candidates to demonstrate their ability to:

Assessment objectives		% weighting
AO1	Recall, select and communicate their knowledge and understanding of a range of contexts	25–35
AO2	Apply skills, knowledge and understanding in a variety of contexts and in planning and carrying out investigations and tasks	40–50
AO3	Analyse and evaluate information, sources and evidence, make reasoned judgements and present conclusions	20–30

## Scheme of assessment

13. GCSE specifications in health and social care must allocate a weighting of 40% to external assessment and a weighting of 60% to controlled assessment in the overall scheme of assessment.

14. Question papers must be targeted at the full range of GCSE grades.

## Grade descriptions

15. Grade descriptions are provided to give a general indication of the standards of achievement likely to have been shown by candidates awarded particular grades. The descriptions must be interpreted in relation to the content in the specification; they are not designed to define that content.

16. The grade awarded will depend in practice upon the extent to which the candidate has met the assessment objectives overall. Shortcomings in some aspects of candidates' performance in the assessment may be balanced by better performances in others.

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Description</b>
A	<p>Candidates recall, select and communicate detailed knowledge and thorough understanding of aspects of health, social care and early years provision.</p> <p>They apply relevant knowledge, understanding and skills in a range of situations to plan and carry out investigations and tasks effectively.</p> <p>They analyse and evaluate the evidence available, presenting information clearly and accurately. They make reasoned judgements and present substantiated conclusions.</p>
C	<p>Candidates recall, select and communicate sound knowledge and understanding of aspects of health, social care and early years provision.</p> <p>They apply knowledge, understanding and skills to plan and carry out investigations and tasks.</p> <p>They review the evidence available, analysing and evaluating some information clearly, and with some accuracy. They make judgements and draw appropriate conclusions.</p>
F	<p>Candidates recall, select and communicate knowledge and understanding of basic aspects of health, social care and early years provision.</p> <p>They apply limited knowledge, understanding and skills to plan and carry out simple investigations and tasks.</p> <p>They review their evidence and draw basic conclusions.</p>