



Qualifications and
Curriculum Authority



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government



Rewarding Learning

GCE AS and A level subject criteria for home economics

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Advanced subsidiary (AS) and advanced (A) level subject criteria describe the general requirements for knowledge, understanding, skills and educational purposes common to all AS and A level specifications. They set out the assessment objectives shared by specifications in home economics. They provide the framework within which the awarding body creates the detail of the specification.

Subject criteria are intended to:

- help ensure consistent and comparable standards in the same subject across the awarding bodies
- define the relationship between the AS and A level specifications, with the AS as a subset of the A level
- ensure that the rigour of A level is maintained
- help higher education institutions and employers know what has been studied and assessed.

Any specification that contains significant elements of the subject home economics must be consistent with the relevant parts of these subject criteria.

2. Aims

- 2.1 AS and A level specifications in home economics should encourage students to:
- develop and apply knowledge, understanding and skills to meet human need in a broad range of activities
 - develop an awareness of the management of resources to meet an identified human need in a diverse and ever-changing society, including values issues
 - take account of rapid technological changes and the growth of scientific knowledge and understanding
 - evaluate critically evidence to justify informed decisions
 - use information and communications technology (ICT) where appropriate
 - develop innovative, creative and original ideas through active investigations
 - make use of their wider knowledge and understanding.

3. Subject content

3.1 AS and A level specifications in home economics should build on knowledge, understanding and skills established in earlier key stages.

3.2 Specifications should show progression from AS to A2.

Knowledge, understanding and skills

3.3 All AS and A level specifications in home economics must require candidates to cover the skills, knowledge and understanding set out in sections 3.5 and 3.6 below.

3.4 In AS and A level specifications, appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills must be set in the contexts of:

- identified human need
- resource management
- consumer rights and responsibilities.

A level specifications should also include:

- an investigative study/research in a chosen focus area.

3.5 Skills

Analysis and research

Provide opportunities to:

- a) identify problems, issues and situations
- b) plan and carry out research, adapting approaches
- c) demonstrate a range of primary and secondary research methods
- d) select appropriate and relevant information
- e) acknowledge valid sources of information
- f) analyse information and judge its relevance

Interpreting evidence

Provide opportunities to:

- a) use information effectively
- b) synthesise information and make decisions based on evidence
- c) draw conclusions using reasoned arguments with justification for decisions and actions taken

- d) recognise the interrelationships of factors and issues.

Planning and realisation

Provide opportunities to:

- a) set clear objectives
- b) manage time and resources effectively
- c) prioritise actions, anticipating and overcoming difficulties
- d) modify and develop ideas to meet needs
- e) progress ideas, evaluating contributions from others and using as appropriate
- f) explore creative alternatives and possible new solutions.

Application

Provide opportunities to:

- a) set clear objectives
- b) manage time and resources effectively
- c) prioritise actions anticipating and overcoming difficulties
- d) modify and develop ideas to meet needs
- e) progress ideas by evaluating information and using as appropriate
- f) explore creative alternatives and possible new solutions.

Reflection and evaluation

Provide opportunities to:

- a) demonstrate the ability to apply relevant ideas to a variety of situations
- b) use appropriate subject-specific terminology when applying ideas
- c) identify the interrelationships between areas of the specification when applying ideas.

Some of the opportunities listed at 3.5 will be assessed at AS, some at A2 and some will be assessed in both.

Progression from AS to A2 is addressed through the emphasis and depth of subject knowledge, understanding and skills within some of the areas above, for example Planning and Evaluation.

It is expected that ICT will be used as appropriate throughout 3.5.

3.6 Knowledge and understanding

Key concepts:

- *Amplification*

Students should demonstrate the application of knowledge and understanding in the following contexts:

- *Identified human need*
Social, historical, scientific, technological, cultural, physiological, psychological, demographic, economic and environmental facts, concepts and principles
- *Lifestyle and resource management*
The management of resources to meet human need
- *Consumer rights and responsibilities*
Current legislation and relevant developments
- *Investigative study/research*
Independent research based on specification subject content.

4. Key skills

4.1 AS and A level specifications in home economics should provide opportunities for developing and generating evidence for assessing relevant key skills from the list below. Where appropriate these opportunities should be directly cross-referenced, at specified level(s), to the key skills standards, which may be found on the QCA website (www.qca.org.uk).

- Application of number
- Communication
- Improving own learning and performance
- Information and communication technology
- Problem solving
- Working with others

5. Assessment objectives

- 5.1 The assessment objectives will be addressed across the range of AS and A2 experiences. The assessment objectives are to be weighted in all specifications as indicated.

Assessment objectives		Weightings
AO1	Knowledge and understanding of the specified content	20–30%
AO2	The ability to apply knowledge, understanding and skills in a variety of situations and to analyse problems, issues and situations using appropriate skills	40–60%
AO3	The ability to gather, organise and select information, evaluate acquired knowledge and understanding and present and justify an argument.	20–30%

The assessment objectives apply across the whole specification for AS and A level.

6. Scheme of assessment

- 6.1 All specifications should ensure that there is a balance between the weighting of assessment of AS and A level content in the overall A level scheme of assessment.

Internal assessment

- 6.2 The maximum weighting in A level specifications for internal assessment is 30 per cent. Internal assessment must include tasks in which candidates combine their skills with knowledge and understanding. Such tasks may vary in duration and the emphasis placed on particular assessment objectives may vary between them.
- 6.3 Where internal assessment is included, specifications must make clear how reliability and fairness are secured, by setting out requirements that ensure the robustness of each stage of the internal assessment, ie:
- the specific skills to be assessed
 - setting of tasks
 - extent of supervision in carrying out of tasks
 - conditions under which assessment takes place

- marking of the assessment and internal standardising procedures
- any moderation process.

Synoptic assessment

6.4 All specifications should include synoptic assessment at A2 to test the candidates' understanding of the connections between the different elements of the subject and their holistic understanding of the subject.

Quality of written communication

6.5 AS and A level specifications will be required to assess the candidates' quality of written communication in accordance with the guidance document produced by QCA.