

GCSE Business and GCSE Economics

Consultation on Conditions and guidance



December 2015

Ofqual/15/5815

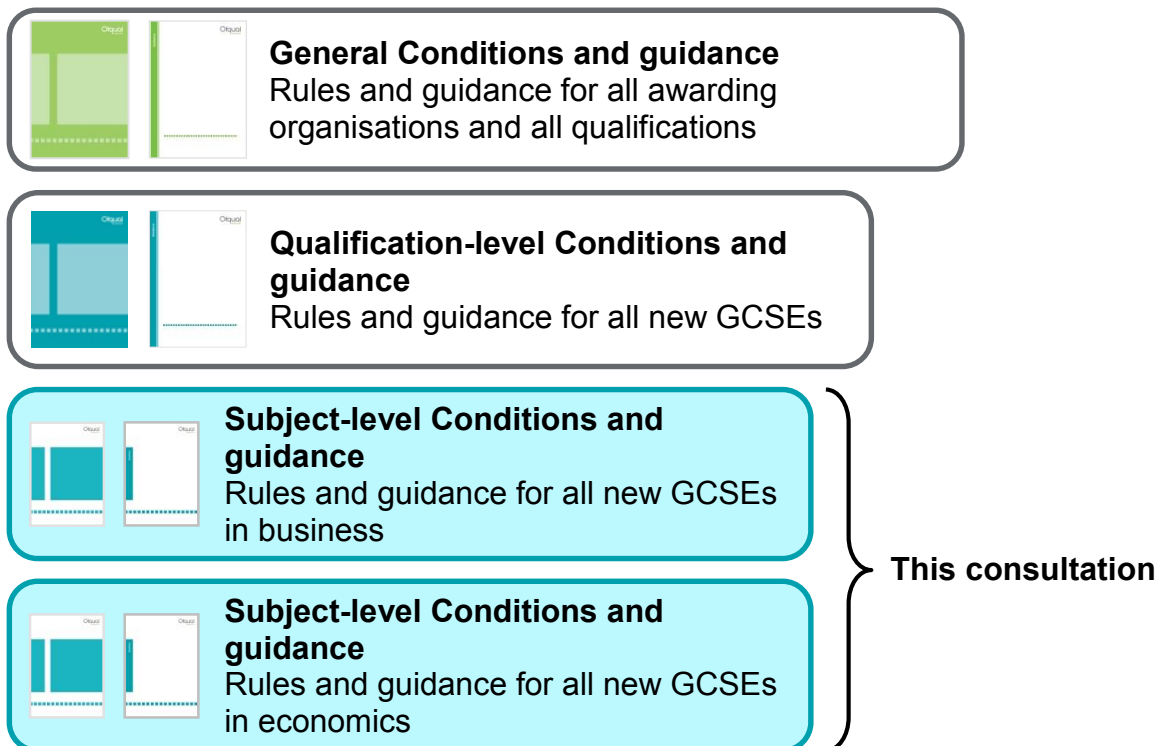
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1. Introduction

- 1.1 As most readers will know, changes are being made to GCSEs, AS and A levels taken by students in England. New GCSEs in business and economics will be taught in schools from September 2017.
- 1.2 The Department for Education (DfE) published the subject content¹ for business and economics in December 2015
- 1.3 Following our own consultation on assessment arrangements, we confirmed² in December 2015 that new GCSEs in business and in economics will:
- be assessed entirely by examination; and
 - not be tiered.
- 1.4 We also confirmed the assessment objectives for both GCSE business and GCSE economics.

Scope of this consultation



¹ www.gov.uk/government/publications/gcse-business and www.gov.uk/government/publications/gcse-economics

² www.gov.uk/government/consultations/development-of-new-gcse-and-a-levels-for-teaching-from-2017

- 1.5 This consultation builds on our and the DfE’s earlier decisions. It seeks views on the subject-specific rules and guidance we should put in place for GCSE business and GCSE economics.
- 1.6 As explained in Appendix A, and illustrated in the figure above, these new rules and guidance will sit alongside our existing rules and guidance for
- all qualifications,³ and
 - all new GCSE qualifications.⁴
- 1.7 This document sets out, and seeks views on:
- our proposed approach to regulating new GCSEs in business and in economics; and
 - the subject-specific Conditions, requirements and guidance we propose to introduce to implement that approach.

³ www.gov.uk/guidance/awarding-organisations-understanding-our-regulatory-requirements#requirements-for-all-awarding-organisations-and-all-regulated-qualifications

⁴ www.gov.uk/government/collections/gcses-9-to-1-requirements-and-guidance

How to respond to this consultation

The closing date for responses is **20 January 2016**.

Please respond to this consultation in one of three ways:

- Complete the online response at <https://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/2496071/GCSE-reform-regulations-for-business-and-economics>;
- Complete the consultation questions at the end of this document and email your response to consultations@ofqual.gov.uk. Please include the consultation title (GCSE Business and Economics Consultation 2015) in the subject line of the email and make clear who you are and in what capacity you are responding; or
- Post your response to: GCSE Business and Economics Consultation 2015, Ofqual, Spring Place, Coventry Business Park, Herald Avenue, Coventry, CV5 6UB, making clear who you are and in what capacity you are responding.

Evaluating the responses

To evaluate responses properly, we need to know who is responding to the consultation and in what capacity. We will therefore only consider your response if you complete the information page.

Any personal data (such as your name, address and any other identifying information) will be processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and our standard terms and conditions.

We will publish our evaluation of responses. Please note that we may publish all or part of your response unless you tell us (in your answer to the confidentiality question) that you want us to treat your response as confidential. If you tell us you wish your response to be treated as confidential, we will not include your details in any published list of respondents, although we may quote from your response anonymously.

Please respond by **20 January 2016**.

2. Regulating GCSE business and GCSE economics

Compliance with subject content and assessment objectives

- 2.1 As we explained in paragraph 1.2, the DfE has published the subject content for new GCSEs in business and in economics⁵
- 2.2 One of the ways we ensure new GCSEs, AS and A levels are comparable across exam boards is by requiring them to be in line with the relevant subject content and our assessment objectives.
- 2.3 The approach we have taken in every other new GCSE, AS and A level qualification is to introduce subject-specific Conditions which:
- require exam boards to comply with the requirements of the subject content (and have regard to any guidance within the subject content); and
 - require exam boards to comply with our assessment objectives (and have regard to our guidance on those assessment objectives).
- 2.4 In all other subjects this Condition includes a provision which requires exam boards to interpret the subject content in line with any rules we set and to have regard to any guidance we publish. Although we do not always specify how the subject content should be interpreted, we think it is important for us to be able to do so when there is a good reason for that (for example, if a different interpretation could compromise qualification standards or comparability).
- 2.5 We see no reason to take a different approach for GCSE business and GCSE economics. We are therefore proposing that we should introduce a Condition which requires exam boards to:
- comply with the requirements (and have regard to any guidance) set out in the subject content;
 - comply with any requirements (and have regard to any guidance) we publish on interpreting the subject content; and
 - comply with our assessment objectives (and have regard to our guidance on those assessment objectives).

⁵ www.gov.uk/government/publications/gcse-business and www.gov.uk/government/publications/gcse-economics

Question 1: To what extent do you agree or disagree that we should introduce a Condition which requires exam boards to comply with the relevant subject content and assessment objectives?

Guidance on assessment objectives

- 2.6 For all other new GCSE, AS and A level qualifications, we have published guidance which explains how exam boards should interpret our assessment objectives. This is designed to ensure exam boards have a common understanding of – and take a consistent approach to targeting – the different assessment objectives.
- 2.7 We are proposing we should introduce similar guidance for GCSE business and GCSE economics

Question 2: To what extent do you agree or disagree that we should introduce guidance which clarifies how exam boards should interpret our assessment objectives?

Rules and guidance for exam assessment

Assessing quantitative skills in exams

- 2.8 The subject content requirements for business and for economics each include an appendix which specifies the quantitative skills that students taking GCSEs in those subjects should be able to use and apply.
- 2.9 We want to make sure that all exam boards take a consistent approach to assessing students' quantitative skills. When the DfE consulted on the subject content for GCSE business and GCSE economics, it included a requirement (in each subject) that exams should allocate at least 10 per cent of marks to the assessment of quantitative skills. Respondents to the DfE's consultation supported this requirement, which reflects the importance of quantitative skills within GCSE business and GCSE economics, and is consistent with the new AS and A levels which were introduced in September 2015. We also included a similar requirement in our consultation⁶ on assessment arrangements.
- 2.10 Since this requirement relates to how GCSE business and GCSE economics should be assessed, we have agreed with DfE that – in both subjects - it should

⁶ www.gov.uk/government/consultations/development-of-new-gcses-and-a-levels-for-teaching-from-2017

form part of our rules on assessment, rather than the subject content. It is therefore included within our draft assessment requirements set out below.

2.11 We also want to make sure that quantitative skills are assessed in a way which is appropriate to the subject. In particular, we want to make sure that:

- quantitative skills are assessed at a comparable level of demand across exam boards;
- quantitative skills are assessed in the context of other areas of the subject content (and not in isolation); and
- students across the ability range have opportunities to access marks for quantitative skills (and these marks are not simply targeted at higher or lower ability candidates).

2.12 To do this, we are proposing to set rules which require exam boards to:

- assess quantitative skills in the context of other areas of the subject content, and not in isolation;
- allocate at least 10 per cent of the marks for the qualification to rewarding use of quantitative skills at a level of demand which is at least equivalent to Key Stage 3; and
- assess quantitative skills across a range of levels of demand which supports effective differentiation between candidates.

Question 3: To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposed approach to assessing quantitative skills in exams (including the 10 per cent minimum weighting) for GCSE business and GCSE economics?

3. Our proposed Conditions and guidance

3.1 As set out above, we are proposing to introduce subject-specific Conditions, requirements and guidance to implement the proposals in this consultation. We set out our proposed Conditions, requirements and guidance below.

Proposed Conditions and requirements for GCSE business

3.2 We are proposing to introduce the following Conditions and requirements which will apply to all new GCSE qualifications in business:

- a Condition covering compliance with subject content and assessment objectives;
- a further enabling Condition which allows us to specify more detailed requirements on assessment; and
- requirements on assessment which relate to assessing quantitative skills.

Condition GCSE (Business)¹	Compliance with content requirements
GCSE(Business)1.1	<p>In respect of each GCSE Qualification in Business which it makes available, or proposes to make available, an awarding organisation must –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(a) comply with the requirements relating to that qualification set out in the document published by the Secretary of State entitled ‘Business GCSE Subject Content’,⁷ document reference DFE-00203-2015,(b) have regard to any recommendations or guidelines relating to that qualification set out in that document, and(c) interpret that document in accordance with any requirements, and having regard to any guidance, which may be published by Ofqual and revised from time to time.

⁷ www.gov.uk/government/publications/gcse-business

GCSE Business1.2 In respect of each GCSE Qualification in Business which it makes available, or proposes to make available, an awarding organisation must comply with any requirements, and have regard to any guidance, relating to the objectives to be met by any assessment for that qualification which may be published by Ofqual and revised from time to time.

Condition GCSE (Business) 2

Assessment

GCSE(Business)2.1 An awarding organisation must ensure that in respect of each assessment for a GCSE Qualification in Business which it makes available it complies with any requirements, and has regard to any guidance, which may be published by Ofqual and revised from time to time

Assessment objectives – GCSE Qualifications in Business

Condition GCSE (Business)1.2 allows us to specify requirements relating to the objectives to be met by any assessment for GCSE Qualifications in Business.

The assessment objectives set out below constitute requirements for the purposes of Condition GCSE (Business)1.2. Awarding organisations must comply with these requirements in relation to all GCSE Qualifications in Business they make available.

	Objective	Weighting
AO1	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of business concepts and issues	35%
AO2	Apply knowledge and understanding of business concepts and issues to a variety of contexts	35%
AO3	Analyse and evaluate business information and issues to demonstrate understanding of business activity, make judgements and draw conclusions.	30%

Assessment requirements – GCSE Qualifications in Business

Condition GCSE(Business)2.1 allows us to specify requirements in relation to assessments for GCSE Qualifications in Business.

We set out below our requirements for the purposes of Condition GCSE(Business)2.1. Awarding organisations must comply with these

requirements in relation to all GCSE Qualifications in Business they make available.

Quantitative skills

The subject content for GCSE Qualifications in Business is set out in the document published by the Secretary of State entitled 'Business GCSE Subject Content', document reference DFE-00203-2015 (the 'Content Document').

Paragraphs 9 to 11 of the Content Document specify the quantitative skills which Learners will be required to use in GCSE Qualifications in Business ('Quantitative Skills').

In designing and setting the Assessments by Examination for a GCSE Qualification in Business which it makes available, or proposes to make available, an awarding organisation must ensure that –

- (a) questions and tasks rewarding the use of Quantitative Skills assess those skills within the context of other areas of the subject content, and not in isolation,
- (b) in each set of assessments⁸, at least 10 per cent of the total marks for the qualification reward the use of Quantitative Skills at a Level of Demand which is not lower than that which is expected of Learners at Key Stage 3 as outlined in the Department for Education's document 'Mathematics programmes of study: key stage 3',⁹ document reference DFE-00179-2013, and
- (c) without prejudice to the above requirements and those outlined in the Content Document, in each set of assessments Quantitative Skills are assessed across a range of Levels of Demand which supports effective differentiation in relation to the qualification.

Proposed guidance for GCSE business

3.3 We are proposing to introduce guidance on assessment objectives which will apply to all new GCSE qualifications in business.

⁸ For the purposes of this guidance, a 'set of assessments' means the assessments to be taken by a particular Learner for a GCSE Qualification in Business. For clarity, the assessments taken by Learners may vary, depending on any possible routes through the qualification.

⁹ www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-mathematics-programmes-of-study

Guidance on assessment objectives for GCSE Qualifications in Business

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

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

	Objective	Weighting
AO1	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of business concepts and issues	35%
AO2	Apply knowledge and understanding of business concepts and issues to a variety of contexts	35%
AO3	Analyse and evaluate business information and issues to demonstrate understanding of business activity, make judgements and draw conclusions.	30%

We set out below our guidance for the purposes of Condition GCSE(Business)1.2. This guidance explains how we expect awarding organisations to interpret these assessment objectives in terms of:

- the discrete ‘elements’ within each assessment objective which 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 GCSE(Business)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 business concepts and issues			35%
Strands	Elements	Coverage	Interpretation and definitions
n/a	<p>1a - Demonstrate knowledge of business concepts and issues</p> <p>1b – Demonstrate an understanding of business concepts and issues</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Full coverage in each set of assessments¹⁰ (but not every assessment) ■ A reasonable balance between both elements in each set of assessments (but not every assessment) ■ No more than 15% of the total marks for the qualification should reward demonstrating knowledge in isolation¹¹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Concepts are business models or ideas within the subject content which relate to business activity, influences on business, business operations, finance, marketing and human resources. ■ Issues in the context of this assessment objective means any external or internal event which will impinge on the environment of an organisation. They are aspects of subject content, and may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ causes and consequences – that is internal and external changes and the results of these, □ problems, and/or □ opportunities. ■ Knowledge and understanding may be assessed either separately or together. They should relate to the course of study, detailed in the specification or reflect what might be considered assumed prior knowledge.

¹⁰ For the purposes of this guidance, a ‘set of assessments’ means the assessments to be taken by a particular Learner for a GCSE Qualification in Business. For clarity, the assessments taken by Learners may vary, depending on any possible routes through the qualification.

¹¹ Marks which ‘reward demonstrating knowledge in isolation’ means any mark awarded solely for recalling facts or other knowledge. 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 business concepts and issues to a variety of contexts			35%
Strands	Elements	Coverage	Interpretation and definitions
n/a	This assessment objective is a single element	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Full coverage in each set of assessments (but not every assessment) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Concepts are business models or ideas within the subject content which relate to business activity, influences on business, business operations, finance, marketing and human resources. ■ Issues in the context of this assessment objective means any external or internal event which will impinge on the environment of an organisation. They are aspects of subject content, and may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ causes and consequences – that is internal and external changes and the results of these, □ problems, and/or □ opportunities. ■ The emphasis here is on Learners applying their knowledge and understanding in or to a given context. Knowledge and understanding are inter-connected here and should not be separated.

AO3: Analyse and evaluate business information and issues to demonstrate understanding of business activity, make judgements and draw conclusions			30%
Strands	Elements	Coverage	Interpretation and definitions
n/a	<p>1a- Analyse business information and issues to demonstrate understanding of business activity</p> <p>1b – Evaluate business information and issues to demonstrate understanding of business activity</p> <p>1c – Make judgements and draw conclusions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Full coverage in each set of assessments (but not every assessment). ■ A reasonable balance between the elements in each set of assessments (but not every assessment). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Business information is qualitative or quantitative information that relates to business, either directly or indirectly. It could include, but is not limited to, financial data, marketing data or market data or any other internal or external information that may have a bearing on business activity. ■ Issues in the context of this assessment objective means any external or internal event which will impinge on the environment of an organisation. They are aspects of subject content, and may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ causes and consequences – that is internal and external changes and the results of these, □ problems, and/or □ opportunities. ■ In the context of this assessment objective – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Analyse means deconstructing information and/or issues to find connections and provide logical chains of reasoning, □ Evaluate means appraising and/or making judgements with respect to information and/or issues, and □ Analysis and evaluation should draw on underpinning knowledge and understanding.

Proposed Conditions and requirements for GCSE economics

3.4 As for GCSE business, we are proposing to introduce the following Conditions and requirements which will apply to all new GCSE qualifications in economics:

- a Condition covering compliance with subject content and assessment objectives;
- a further enabling Condition which allows us to specify more detailed requirements on assessment; and
- requirements on assessment which relate to assessing quantitative skills.

Condition GCSE (Economics)1	Compliance with content requirements
GCSE Economics1.1	<p>In respect of each GCSE Qualification in Economics which it makes available, or proposes to make available, an awarding organisation must –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) comply with the requirements relating to that qualification set out in the document published by the Secretary of State entitled ‘Economics GCSE Subject Content’,¹² document reference DFE-00212-2015, (b) have regard to any recommendations or guidelines relating to that qualification set out in that document, and (c) interpret that document in accordance with any requirements, and having regard to any guidance, which may be published by Ofqual and revised from time to time.
GCSE Economics1.2	<p>In respect of each GCSE Qualification in Economics which it makes available, or proposes to make available, an awarding organisation must comply with any requirements, and have regard to any guidance, relating to the objectives to be met by any assessment for that</p>

¹² www.gov.uk/government/publications/gcse-economics

qualification which may be published by Ofqual and revised from time to time.

Condition

GCSE(Economic)2

Assessment

GCSE Economics2.1

An awarding organisation must ensure that in respect of each assessment for a GCSE Qualification in Economics which it makes available it complies with any requirements, and has regard to any guidance, which may be published by Ofqual and revised from time to time

Assessment objectives – GCSE Qualifications in Economics

Condition GCSE (Economics)1.2 allows us to specify requirements relating to the objectives to be met by any assessment for GCSE Qualifications in Economics.

The assessment objectives set out below constitute requirements for the purposes of Condition GCSE (Economics)1.2. Awarding organisations must comply with these requirements in relation to all GCSE Qualifications in Economics they make available.

	Objective	Weighting
AO1	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of economic concepts and issues	35%
AO2	Apply knowledge and understanding of economic concepts and issues to a variety of contexts.	35%
AO3	Analyse and evaluate economic evidence and issues to demonstrate understanding of economic behaviour, make judgements and draw conclusions.	30%

Assessment requirements – GCSE Qualifications in Economics

Condition GCSE(Economics)2.1 allows us to specify requirements in relation to assessments for GCSE Qualifications in Economics.

We set out below our requirements for the purposes of Condition GCSE(Economics)2.1. Awarding organisations must comply with these requirements in relation to all GCSE Qualifications in Economics they make available.

Quantitative skills

The subject content for GCSE Qualifications in Economics is set out in the document published by the Secretary of State entitled 'Economics GCSE Subject Content', document reference DFE-00212-2015 (the 'Content Document').

Paragraph 16 of the Content Document specifies the quantitative skills which Learners will be required to use in GCSE Qualifications in Economics ('Quantitative Skills').

In designing and setting the Assessments by Examination for a GCSE Qualification in Economics which it makes available, or proposes to make available, an awarding organisation must ensure that –

- (a) questions and tasks rewarding the use of Quantitative Skills assess those skills within the context of other areas of the subject content, and not in isolation,
- (b) in each set of assessments¹³, at least 10 per cent of the total marks for the qualification reward the use of Quantitative Skills at a Level of Demand which is not lower than that which is expected of Learners at Key Stage 3 as outlined in the Department for Education's document 'Mathematics programmes of study: key stage 3',¹⁴ document reference DFE-00179-2013, and
- (c) without prejudice to the above requirements and those outlined in the Content Document, in each set of assessments Quantitative Skills are assessed across a range of Levels of Demand which supports effective differentiation in relation to the qualification.

Proposed guidance for GCSE economics

- 3.5 We are proposing to introduce the guidance on assessment objectives which will apply to all new GCSE qualifications in economics.

Guidance on assessment objectives for GCSE Qualifications in Economics

¹³ For the purposes of this guidance, a 'set of assessments' means the assessments to be taken by a particular Learner for a GCSE Qualification in Economics. For clarity, the assessments taken by Learners may vary, depending on any possible routes through the qualification.

¹⁴ www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-mathematics-programmes-of-study

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

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

	Objective	Weighting
AO1	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of economic concepts and issues	35%
AO2	Apply knowledge and understanding of economic concepts and issues to a variety of contexts.	35%
AO3	Analyse and evaluate economic evidence and issues to demonstrate understanding of economic behaviour, make judgements and draw conclusions.	30%

We set out below our guidance for the purposes of Condition GCSE(Economics)1.2. This guidance explains how we expect awarding organisations to interpret these assessment objectives in terms of:

- the discrete ‘elements’ within each assessment objective which 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 GCSE(Economics)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 economic concepts and issues			35%
Strands	Elements	Coverage	Interpretation and definitions
n/a	1a – Demonstrate knowledge of economic concepts and issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Full coverage in each set of assessments¹⁵ (but not every assessment) ■ A reasonable balance between the elements in each set of assessments (but not every assessment) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Concepts refer to the ideas and theories that describe economic behaviour as outlined in the subject content. These could include scarcity, wants, needs, demand and supply, markets and competition, balance of payments or economies of scale. ■ Issues contextualise the concepts, and may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ causes and consequences – that is internal and external changes and the results of these, □ problems, and/or □ opportunities. ■ Knowledge and understanding may be assessed either separately or together. They should relate to the course of study detailed in the specification or reflect what might be considered assumed prior knowledge.
	1b – Demonstrate understanding of economic concepts and issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ No more than 15% of the total marks for the qualification should reward demonstrating knowledge in isolation¹⁶ 	

¹⁵ For the purposes of this guidance, a 'set of assessments' means the assessments to be taken by a particular Learner for a GCSE Qualification in Economics. For clarity, the assessments taken by Learners may vary, depending on any possible routes through the qualification.

¹⁶ Marks which 'reward demonstrating knowledge in isolation' means any mark awarded solely for recalling facts or other knowledge. 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 economic concepts and issues to a variety of contexts			35%
Strands	Elements	Coverage	Interpretation and definitions
n/a	The assessment objective is a single element.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Full coverage in each set of assessments (but not every assessment) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Concepts refer to the ideas and theories that describe economic behaviour as outlined in the subject content. These could include scarcity, wants, needs, demand and supply, markets and competition, balance of payments or economies of scale. ■ Issues contextualise the concepts, and may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ causes and consequences – that is internal and external changes and the results of these, □ problems, and/or □ opportunities. ■ The emphasis here is on Learners applying their knowledge and understanding in or to a given context. Knowledge and understanding are interconnected and should not usually be separated

AO3: Analyse and evaluate economic evidence and issues to demonstrate understanding of economic behaviour, make judgements and draw conclusions			30%
Strands	Elements	Coverage	Interpretation and definitions
n/a	1a - Analyse economic evidence and issues to demonstrate understanding of economic behaviour.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Full coverage in each set of assessments (but not every assessment) ■ A reasonable balance between the elements in each set of assessments (but not every assessment) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Economic evidence refers to qualitative and quantitative information about the allocation of resources, the costs and benefits of economic decisions and policies, for instance information about unemployment, inflation, GDP or externalities. ■ Issues may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ causes and consequences – that is internal and external changes and the results of these, □ problems, and/or □ opportunities. ■ Understanding of economic behaviour, principally relates to how that behaviour impacts on different contexts and environments. ■ In the context of this AO – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Analyse means deconstructing information and/or issues to find connections and provide logical chains of reasoning □ Evaluate means appraising and/or making judgements with respect to information and/or issues □ Analysis and evaluation should draw on underpinning knowledge and understanding.
	1b – Evaluate economic evidence and issues to demonstrate understanding of economic behaviour.		
	1c – Make judgements and draw conclusions		

Questions on proposed Conditions, requirements and guidance

GCSE business

Question 4: Do you have any comments on our proposed Conditions and requirements for GCSE business?

Question 5: Do you have any comments on our proposed guidance for GCSE business?

GCSE economics

Question 6: Do you have any comments on our proposed Conditions and requirements for GCSE economics

Question 7: Do you have any comments on our proposed guidance for GCSE economics

4. Equality impact analysis

Ofqual's role, objectives and duties

4.1 We are subject to the public sector equality duty. We have set out in Appendix B how this duty interacts with our statutory objectives and other duties.

Equality impact analysis relating to proposed changes to GCSE business and GCSE economics.

- 4.2 We have considered the potential impact on students who share protected characteristics¹⁷ of the application of the principles and features that will apply to all new GCSEs.. Our equality impact analyses for our earlier consultations on GCSE,¹⁸ AS and A level reform¹⁹ is therefore of interest and we encourage you to read it.
- 4.3 Issues concerning the proposed subject content have been considered by the DfE, which has published its own Equalities Impact Analysis on its subject content proposals.²⁰
- 4.4 We have also previously considered the potential impact on students who share protected characteristics of our decisions on assessment arrangements for these subjects.²¹
- 4.5 We do not repeat here all of the evidence we have considered, as this can be found in our earlier reports. We focus instead on the specific issues that arise from the new proposals in this consultation, and from the way in which we are implementing our previous policy decisions.
- 4.6 We have not identified any additional negative impacts on students who share protected characteristics which would result from the proposals in this

¹⁷ For the purposes of the public sector equality duty, the protected characteristics are disability, racial group, age, religion or belief, pregnancy or maternity, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment.

¹⁸ <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20141031163546/http://comment.ofqual.gov.uk/gcse-reform-june-2013/category/8-equality-impact-analysis/>

¹⁹ <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20141031163546/http://www.ofqual.gov.uk/files/2012-06-18-equality-analysis-of-the-a-level-reform-consultation.pdf>

²⁰ www.gov.uk/government/consultations/gcse-and-a-level-reform-content-for-teaching-from-september-2017

²¹ www.gov.uk/government/consultations/development-of-new-gcses-and-a-levels-for-teaching-from-2017

consultation (beyond those that we and the DfE have already identified in our earlier reports).

- 4.7 During this consultation, we will continue to seek and consider evidence and feedback to our proposals that might help us identify any potential subject-specific impacts on students who share a protected characteristic.
- 4.8 Exam boards are required to consider the accessibility of their qualifications at the design stage and to remove any unjustifiable barriers.

Question 8: We have not identified any ways in which our proposals for GCSE business and GCSE economics would impact (positively or negatively) on persons who share a protected characteristic.²² Are there any potential impacts we have not identified?

Question 9: Are there any additional steps we could take to mitigate any negative impact resulting from these proposals on persons who share a protected characteristic?

Question 10: Do you have any other comments on the impacts of the proposals on students who share a protected characteristic?

²² 'Protected characteristic' is defined in the Equality Act 2010. Here, it means disability, racial group, age, religion or belief, pregnancy or maternity, sex, sexual orientation and gender reassignment.

Appendix A: Regulatory tools

Comparability and innovation

Exam boards operate in a market. They can design and deliver their qualifications in different ways, within the parameters we set. This provides some choice to schools or colleges, which is one of the benefits of a qualifications market. Exam boards must, however, make sure that the levels of attainment indicated by their qualifications are comparable to those of other exam boards' versions of the qualifications. The exam boards cooperate in a range of ways to make sure that the standards of their respective qualifications are comparable. To make sure standards are maintained and comparability is secured, we review GCSE qualifications before they can be made available, by applying an accreditation requirement to the qualifications, and we oversee the awarding of GCSE qualifications.

We do not wish to close down opportunities for exam boards to design and deliver their qualifications in different ways. Indeed, we have a statutory duty to have regard to the desirability of facilitating innovation in connection with the provision of regulated qualifications and a statutory objective with regard to the efficiency with which the qualifications market works. If we adopt a regulatory approach in which all aspects of a qualification are very tightly defined, we could effectively remove scope for exam boards to distinguish their qualifications from others and stop choice for schools or colleges. On the other hand, if exam boards have too much scope to vary their approach their qualifications might not be comparable.

In striking a balance, we use a range of tools to regulate qualifications and the exam boards that provide them. The main regulatory tools we use for the qualifications in this consultation are explained below.

Conditions of Recognition

Exam boards must comply at all times with our Conditions of Recognition. These are the main regulatory rules that we use. We can take regulatory action against an exam board that breaches or is likely to breach a Condition.

There are three sets of Conditions that will apply to new GCSEs (graded 9 to 1):

- (i) the published *General Conditions of Recognition*²³ that apply to all regulated qualifications;

²³ www.gov.uk/government/publications/general-conditions-of-recognition

- (ii) GCSE (9 to 1) Qualification Level Conditions and Requirements²⁴ that apply to all new GCSE qualifications;
- (iii) GCSE Subject Level Conditions that apply to new GCSEs (graded 9 to 1) in a specific subject. We are consulting now on draft GCSE Subject Level Conditions for Business, and on draft GCSE Subject Level Conditions for Economics.

Regulatory documents

In some Conditions we refer to published regulatory requirements. We publish these in regulatory documents. The Conditions require exam boards to comply with such documents.

For both GCSE business and GCSE economics, we are proposing to introduce a regulatory document which covers the assessment of quantitative skills.

The requirements will have effect as if they were part of a Condition. The requirements will be set out in a stand-alone section of the Conditions document, simply because they are technical and detailed so they sit better as separate from, rather than within, the Condition itself.

Statutory guidance

We publish guidance to help exam boards identify the types of behaviour or practices they could use to meet a Condition. Exam boards must have regard to such guidance, but they do not have to follow this guidance in the same way that they must comply with the Conditions; they are free to meet the outcomes of the Conditions in their own ways. An exam board that decides to take a different approach to that set out in our guidance must still be able to show that it is meeting the Condition or Conditions to which the guidance relates.

We are consulting now on draft guidance for new GCSEs in business and economics.

²⁴ www.gov.uk/government/publications/gcse-9-to-1-qualification-level-conditions

Appendix B: Ofqual's role, objectives and duties

Our statutory objectives include the qualifications standards objective, which is to secure that the qualifications we regulate:

- (a) give a reliable indication of knowledge, skills and understanding; and
- (b) indicate:
 - (i) a consistent level of attainment (including over time) between comparable regulated qualifications; and
 - (ii) a consistent level of attainment (but not over time) between qualifications we regulate and comparable qualifications (including those awarded outside the UK) that we do not regulate.

We must therefore regulate so that qualifications properly differentiate between students who have demonstrated that they have the knowledge, skills and understanding required to attain the qualification and those who have not.

We also have a duty under the Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 to have regard to the reasonable requirements of relevant students, including those with special educational needs and disabilities, of employers and of the higher education sector, and to aspects of government policy when so directed by the Secretary of State.

As a public body, we are subject to the public sector equality duty.²⁵ This duty requires us to have due regard to the need to:

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited under the Equality Act 2010;
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The exam boards that design, deliver and award AS and A level qualifications are required by the Equality Act, among other things, to make reasonable adjustments for disabled people taking their qualifications, except where we have specified that such adjustments should not be made.

²⁵ Equality Act 2010, section 149.

When we decide whether such adjustments should not be made, we must have regard to:

- (a) the need to minimise the extent to which disabled persons are disadvantaged in attaining the qualification because of their disabilities;
- (b) the need to secure that the qualification gives a reliable indication of the knowledge, skills and understanding of a person upon whom it is conferred;
- (c) the need to maintain public confidence in the qualification.

Legislation therefore sets out a framework within which we must operate. We are subject to a number of duties and we must aim to achieve a number of objectives. These different duties and objectives can, from time to time, conflict with each other. For example, if we regulate to secure that a qualification gives a reliable indication of a student's knowledge, skills and understanding, a student who has not been able to demonstrate the required knowledge, skills and/or understanding will not be awarded the qualification. A person may find it more difficult, or impossible, to demonstrate the required knowledge, skills and/or understanding because they have a protected characteristic. This could put them at a disadvantage relative to others who have been awarded the qualification. It is not always possible for us to regulate so that we can both secure that qualifications give a reliable indication of knowledge, skills and understanding and advance equality between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. We must review all the available evidence and actively consider all the available options before coming to a final, rational decision.

Qualifications cannot be used to mitigate inequalities or unfairness in the education system or in society more widely than might affect, for example, students' preparedness to take the qualification and the assessments within it. While a wide range of factors can have an impact on a student's ability to achieve a particular mark in an assessment, our influence is limited to the way the qualification is designed and assessed.

We require the exam boards to design qualifications to give a reliable indication of the knowledge, skills and understanding of those on whom they are conferred. We also require the exam boards to avoid, where possible, features of a qualification that could, without justification, make a qualification more difficult for a student to achieve because they have a particular protected characteristic. We require exam boards to monitor whether any features of their qualifications have this effect.

In setting the overall framework within which exam boards will design, assess and award the reformed GCSE, A level and AS qualifications, we want to understand the possible impacts of the proposals on persons who share a protected characteristic.

The protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are:

- age;
- disability;
- gender reassignment;
- marriage and civil partnerships;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- race;
- religion or belief;
- sex;
- sexual orientation.

It should be noted that with respect to the public sector equality duty under section 149 of the 2010 Act, we are not required to have due regard to impacts on those who are married or in a civil partnership.

Responding to the consultation

Your details

To evaluate responses properly, we need to know who is responding to the consultation and in what capacity. We will therefore only consider your response if you complete the following information section.

We will publish our evaluation of responses. Please note that we may publish all or part of your response unless you tell us (in your answer to the confidentiality question) that you want us to treat your response as confidential. If you tell us you wish your response to be treated as confidential, we will not include your details in any published list of respondents, although we may quote from your response anonymously.

Please answer all questions marked with a star*

Name*

Position*

Organisation name (if applicable)*

Address

Email

Telephone

Would you like us to treat your response as confidential?*

If you answer yes, we will not include your details in any list of people or organisations that responded to the consultation.

Yes No

Is this a personal response or an official response on behalf of your organisation?*

Personal response (please answer the question 'If you ticked "Personal response"...')

Official response (please answer the question 'If you ticked "Official response"...')

If you ticked "Personal response", which of the following are you?

Student

Parent or carer

Teacher (but responding in a personal capacity)

Other, including general public (please state below)

If you ticked "Official response", please respond accordingly:

Type of responding organisation*

Awarding organisation

Local authority

School or college (please answer the question below)

Academy chain

Private training provider

University or other higher education institution

Employer

Other representative or interest group (please answer the question below)

School or college type

- Comprehensive or non-selective academy
 - State selective or selective academy
 - Independent
 - Special school
 - Further education college
 - Sixth form college
 - Other (please state below)
-

Type of representative group or interest group

- Group of awarding organisations
 - Union
 - Employer or business representative group
 - Subject association or learned society
 - Equality organisation or group
 - School, college or teacher representative group
 - Other (please state below)
-

Nation*

- England
- Wales
- Northern Ireland
- Scotland
- Other EU country: _____
- Non-EU country: _____

How did you find out about this consultation?

Our newsletter or another one of our communications

Our website

Internet search

Other

May we contact you for further information?

Yes No

Questions

Question 1: To what extent do you agree or disagree that we should introduce a Condition which requires exam boards to comply with the relevant subject content and assessment objectives?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Please explain your reasons:

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Question 2: To what extent do you agree or disagree that we should introduce guidance which clarifies how exam boards should interpret our assessment objectives?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Please explain your reasons:

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Question 3: To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposed approach to assessing quantitative skills in exams (including the 10 per cent minimum weighting) for GCSE business and GCSE economics?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Please explain your reasons:

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Question 4: Do you have any comments on our proposed Conditions and requirements for GCSE business?

- Yes No

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Question 5: Do you have any comments on our proposed guidance for GCSE business?

- Yes No

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Question 6: Do you have any comments on our proposed Conditions and requirements for GCSE economics?

Yes No

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Question 7: Do you have any comments on our proposed guidance for GCSE economics?

Yes No

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Question 8: We have not identified any ways in which the proposals for GCSE business and GCSE economics would impact (positively or negatively) on persons who share a protected characteristic.²⁶ Are there any potential impacts we have not identified?

Yes No

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²⁶ 'Protected characteristic' is defined in the Equality Act 2010. Here, it means disability, racial group, age, religion or belief, pregnancy or maternity, sex, sexual orientation and gender reassignment.

Question 9: Are there any additional steps we could take to mitigate any negative impact resulting from these proposals on persons who share a protected characteristic?

Yes No

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Question 10: Do you have any other comments on the impacts of the proposals on students who share a protected characteristic?

Yes No

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Accessibility of our consultations

We are looking at how we provide accessible versions of our consultations and would appreciate it if you could spare a few moments to answer the following questions. Your answers to these questions will not be considered as part of the consultation and will not be released to any third parties.

We want to write clearly, directly and put the reader first. Overall, do you think we have got this right in this consultation?

Yes No

Do you have any comments or suggestions about the style of writing?

Yes No

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.....

Do you have any special requirements to enable you to read our consultations? (For example, screen reader, large text, and so on)

Yes No

Which of the following do you currently use to access our consultation documents? (Select all that apply)

- Screen reader / text-to-speech software
- Braille reader
- Screen magnifier
- Speech-to-text software
- Motor assistance (blow-suck tube, mouth stick, and so on)
- Other

Which of the following document formats would meet your needs for accessing our consultations? (Select all that apply)

- A standard PDF
- Accessible web pages
- Large-type PDF (16 point text)
- Large-type Word document (16 point text)
- eBook (Kindle, iBooks, or similar format)
- Braille document
- Spoken document
- Other

How many of our consultations have you read in the last 12 months?

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- More than 5

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