General Certificate of Secondary Education

Chinese (Mandarin) (4670)
French (4655)
German (4665)
Italian (4630)
Spanish (4695)
Urdu (4645)

Centres with students beginning a GCSE course in September 2010, should note the following changes to what is permitted on the Task Planning Form:

- whole words only, in English or the target language, may be used
- a maximum of 40 words may be used
- there must be no conjugated verbs
- no drawings, photos, icons or visuals of any kind may be used
- phonetic transcriptions must not be used
- codes of any kind are not permitted eg blank lines, initial letters, different colours and arrows to indicate time frames etc.

These changes aim to promote consistency and fairness to candidates and are based on best practice from the 2010 exam series.

Examples of appropriately completed *Task Planning Forms* will be available in the *Key Materials/Teacher Resource Bank* area of **aqa.org.uk** from 1 September 2010.

As candidates may already have produced tasks for 2011 submission, we will accept *Task Planning Forms* completed according to the autumn 2009/spring 2010 versions of the FAQ document.

Students starting their course this term, however, should follow the guidance above. This is published in the autumn 2010 versions of the FAQ document and *Controlled Assessment Handbook*, available in the *Key materials/Teacher Resource Bank* area of **aqa.org.uk**

English (4700)
English Language (4705)
English Literature (4710)

Anthologies: *Moon on the Tides and Sunlight on the Grass*
Clean exam copies of *Moon on the Tides* will be sent out for GCSE English Literature Unit 2: Poetry across time.

Copies of the following anthologies need to be requested:

- teaching copies for English Literature Unit 2 – *Moon on the Tides*
- teaching copies for all other units
- exam copies for all other units.

From Monday 6 September, anthology orders should be made from our online publications shop via e-AQA. Please order anthologies separately from other publications to avoid postal charges.

Humanities (4070)

Controlled Assessment
We are running meetings from mid-September to mid-October to offer guidance on Controlled Assessment. We have already invited centres who have made entries, but if you have not heard from us, perhaps due to a late entry, please e-mail **humanities@aqa.org.uk** to receive an invitation.

Law (4160)

There have been two minor amendments to the subject content of the specification:

Section 3.1.2 The County Court
Civil Legal Representation is now included in the list of sources of legal advice and funding

Section 3.2.2 Property Offences
The list of property offences now includes aggravated burglary as well as burglary.

These changes are shown in v1.3 of the specification, in the *Qualifications*/*GCSEs* section of **aqa.org.uk**

Leisure and Tourism and Leisure and Tourism (Double Award) (4841) (New specification)

Controlled Assessment Tasks
The live Controlled Assessment Tasks for Unit 2: The nature of leisure and tourism (48402) and Unit 4: Investigating tourism destinations and impacts (48404) are now available via e-AQA. Please do **not** use the Specimen Assessment tasks as the basis of your work.

Music (4270)

Unit 2: Composing and Appraising Music 42702
For 2012 the strand will be Popular Music of the 20th and 21st centuries.

Sociology (4190)

Unit 2
A Scheme of Work for Unit 2 is now available at from *Qualifications*/*GCSEs* section of **aqa.org.uk** Select the blue box labelled 'Teacher Resource Bank', then the document entitled 'Scheme of Work Unit 2: Crime and Deviance; Mass Media; Power; Social Inequality'. You can then download and insert it into your Teacher Resource Bank folder.

Units 1 and 2 – further guidance
For details of our autumn support meetings see the *Events* area of **aqa.org.uk** Bookings can be made online.

General Certificate of Education

Anthropology (2110)

AS Units – ANTH1 and ANTH2
The first exam for this new specification (ANTH1) will take place in January 2011.

The Specimen Question Papers and Mark Schemes for Units 1 and 2 have been revised. Version 2 of these documents is available in the *Qualifications/GCEs* section of **aqa.org.uk** To download them, select the blue box labelled 'Specimen Papers and Mark Schemes'.

Applied Art and Design (8511, 8513, 8516, 8517, 8519)

Change to the 2012 specification
From January 2012 we will no longer be offering a January series in the three externally set units:

- AD03 Working to a brief
- AD05 Professional practice, communication and meaning
- AD09 Working to self-identified briefs.

The last January entry will be in January 2011. From 2012, we will only offer a June series for all 12 units (AD01 – AF12).

Communication and Culture (2625)

The topics for assessment for COMM2 June 2011 are available to view/download from the *Qualifications/A-levels/English/Communication & Culture/Noticeboard* section of **aqa.org.uk**

The topics for assessment and topic guides for COMM4 June 2011 are available to view/download from the *Qualifications/A-levels/English/Communication & Culture/Noticeboard* section of **aqa.org.uk**

Leisure Studies (8641) Advanced Subsidiary
Leisure Studies (Double Award) (8643) Advanced Subsidiary
Leisure Studies (8646) Advanced
Leisure Studies (Double Award) (8649) Advanced
Leisure Studies (8647) Advanced and Advanced Subsidiary (additional)

New mailbox address
From September 2010 our new e-mail address is: **leisureandtourism@aqa.org.uk** The old address will remain active for a transitional period.

Media Studies (2570)

MEST2 Coursework Briefs – January and June 2011
The MEST2 coursework briefs for submission in January/June 2011 are available to view/download from the *Qualifications/A-levels/Arts/Media Studies/Noticeboard* section of **aqa.org.uk** Hard copies will be despatched to centres on receipt of estimated entries.

MEST1 and MEST3 exams
From January 2011, if a DVD is provided for use in either MEST1 and/or MEST3 exams, centres will not be permitted to open and check it until the day of the exam.

MEST3 Examination Topics
The MEST3 topics for January and June 2011 will remain:

- Representations in the Media
- The Impact of New/Digital Media

MEST4
From September 2010, centres will not need to have their candidates' coursework titles approved. Each centre will, however, still have access to a designated Coursework Adviser for any queries.

Physics specification A (2450)
Physics specification B (2455)

Units 3 & 6
Investigative & Practical Skills – Route X
PHA3/B3/X & PHA6/B6/X
The specifications outline that the practical and investigative skills will be assessed through:

- Practical Skills Verification (PSV)
- Externally Marked Practical Assignment (EMPA).

PSV requires teachers to verify candidates' ability to demonstrate safe and skilful practical techniques and make valid and reliable observations.

Candidates must undertake specific practical exercises. They must work individually and carry out five short practical exercises in the laboratory, under supervision, during normal class time. The exercises will be set by us and may be undertaken at any stage in the course at the centre's discretion. They can be done as individual exercises or grouped together. Candidates must be supervised in the practical work.

One or more of these tasks may change from year to year depending on the content of the EMPA.

Tasks for September 2010 – May 2011 are as follows:

PHA3/B3/X

Exercise	Measuring equipment used
Measuring the trajectory of a ball bearing, launched horizontally from the bench, and allowed to fall to the floor	Metre ruler, set square
Measuring the terminal velocity of a ball bearing falling in oil	Stopwatch, metre ruler, set square
Measurement of the *I V* curve of a component	Ammeter, voltmeter
Investigating how the dimensions of a uniform conductor affects the resistance of the conductor	Ammeter, voltmeter, ruler, micrometer screw gauge
Measurement of the stiffness ie the force required to produce unit extension, of an expendable spring or a ductile metal wire	Slotted masses, metre ruler or travelling microscope

PHA6/B6/X

Exercise	Measuring equipment used
Investigating the decrease in amplitude of a simple pendulum or mass-spring system performing simple harmonic motion	Simple manual method involving a metre ruler
Measuring the pd across a capacitor as it is discharged through a resistor of fixed resistance	Digital stopwatch, voltmeter
Determination of the specific heat capacity of a solid	Thermometer, mass balance and digital stopwatch
Measuring the absorption of beta or gamma radiation by aluminium or lead leading to a determination of the half-value thickness	Radiation detector (any type) and counter or rate meter
Use of data logging in any of the above contexts; analysis of the outcome using a pc-based spreadsheet	Voltage sensors, light gates or motion sensors, temperature sensors or radiation detectors; attached to data logger or via an interface to a computer

There is no formal assessment of these exercises. Teachers need to confirm on the *Front Cover of the EMPA Test*, for each candidate, that this requirement has been met. Failure to complete the tick box will result in the candidate being awarded a mark of zero for the whole unit. Knowledge and understanding of the skills shown in the tasks may be assessed by the EMPA written tests.

The EMPA must be conducted between **1 March** and the deadline date for coursework submission.

We will provide details of the EMPA well in advance so that preparations can be made.

Travel and Tourism (8651) Advanced Subsidiary
Travel and Tourism (Double Award) (8653) Advanced Subsidiary
Travel and Tourism (8656) Advanced
Travel and Tourism (Double Award) (8659) Advanced
Travel and Tourism (8657) Advanced and Advanced Subsidiary (additional)

New mailbox adress
From September 2010 our new e-mail address is: **leisureandtourism@aqa.org.uk** The old e-mail address will remain active for a transitional period.

Sociology (2190)
A2 Units – SCLY3 and SCLY4

We are holding a series of autumn term meetings to feed back on the summer exams for the two A2 units (SCLY3 and SCLY4). Details of these meetings are shown in the *Events* area of **aqa.org.uk** and bookings can be made online.

Other qualifications

Free-Standing Mathematics Qualifications (FSMQs) – Foundation and Intermediate levels (6981, 6982, 6983, 6984, 6986, 6988)

The current FSMQs at Foundation and Intermediate level will be examined for the last time in **May/June 2011**. Replacement FSMQs will be available for first teaching from September 2011, with first exams in May/June 2012. Specifications are available in the *Qualifications/Other* section of **aqa.org.uk**

If you have any queries, please e-mail: **mathematics-gce@aqa.org.uk**

Exciting new suite of Vocationally Related Qualifications (VRQs) in Counselling

With the demand for counselling and other psychotherapeutic services on the rise in the UK, we have developed a new suite of Counselling qualifications, available for first teaching from September 2010 (see the enclosed flyer). These post-compulsory qualifications are accredited to the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) and are available at the following levels:

Level 2: ideal entry level for candidates with little or no prior counselling experience –

- Level 2 Award in Introduction to Counselling Concepts (30 Guided Learning Hours)
- Level 2 Certificate in Counselling Skills (75 Guided Learning Hours)

Levels 3 and 4: focus on the development of competent counselling practitioners –

- Level 3 Certificate in Counselling (175 Guided Learning Hours)
- Level 4 Diploma in Therapeutic Counselling (250 Guided Learning Hours)

Level 5: developed specifically to provide an accessible professional level qualification for counselling practitioners, fulfilling the relevant practitioner training criteria for BACP personal accreditation –

- Level 5 Diploma in Counselling Practice (450 Guided Learning Hours)

Candidates who have successfully completed this qualification, may either leave with a self-standing qualification or choose to progress to the BA (Hons) programme at the University of Nottingham.

Level 6 Diploma in Counselling Supervision is currently being developed.

For further information, call **01483 477 835/836**, e-mail **counselling@aqa.org.uk** or see the *Qualifications/Other* section of **aqa.org.uk**

Key Skills and Basic Skills

Basic Skills (8990)
Key Skills (9900) (KS2004)
Wider Key Skills (9970) (KS2004)

The Future of Basic, Key and Wider Key Skills
As you will know, Basic, Key and Wider Key Skills are being replaced by Functional Skills. For a summary of developments, see the *Qualifications/Other* section of **aqa.org.uk** The last opportunity for Level 4 Key Skills tests was in June 2010 and the other skills and levels are now being phased out. Associated Frequently Asked Questions are available on *Ask AQA*.

Withdrawal of test opportunities in 2010-2011
For the academic year 2010-11 there will be a change to the number of Key and Basic Skills level 1 and 2 test series.

The October 2010 and May 2011 test series will be withdrawn. The following series will be offered:

- November 2010
- January 2011
- March 2011
- June 2011.

As usual, portfolio moderation, proxy and certification entries will be available in the January, March and June series.

Proxies may be claimed up until the June 2012 series.

ICT tests Level 3 data files
The new set of data files for 20010/11 will be available on **www.qcda.gov.uk** from September 2010. They can be made available to candidates in read-only format, as early as possible in the course, to help them develop practical skills in preparation for the tests.

Candidates must not be given prior knowledge of which data files are to be used in any of the tests. This is to ensure that their preparation is broadly based rather than focused on a particular context.

Please delete the data files you downloaded for 2009/10 from your network. Although they may appear the same as last year, new scenarios have been added and some deleted.

It is good practice to download the Zip file with all of the published data files and make these available to candidates in practice tests for them to familiarise themselves with the type of files they will be using.

Centre Standardising meetings
We will be holding a series of centre standardising meetings to assist teachers in the assessment of portfolio work in the autumn term. They will cover the Key Skills of:

- Application of Number
- Communication
- Information and Communication Technology.

A separate meeting will be held for Wider Key Skills.

All centres which have previously made entries in these subjects will be invited. A list of these meetings will be published on the Key Skills website in October.

Portfolio Advisers
Centres should contact their Portfolio Advisers for advice and guidance on producing the Key Skills portfolio. Please contact the Key Skills team on **0161 953 7569** or **0161 957 3351** for your Adviser contact details. Advisers are not automatically allocated to centres when entries are made.

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