



GCSE Business

Introduction

GCSE Business is being reformed in Wales for first teaching from September 2017. The reformed GCSE Business will be developed by WJEC and will be the only version of the qualification available to learners on state funded programmes in Wales, as no other exam board has decided to develop this qualification for use in Wales. As part of the reform process we are asking for views on the proposed content, structure and assessment of the reformed qualification.

We have developed the proposals in this questionnaire through consultation with a number of stakeholders including the awarding body, WJEC, school and college practitioners, universities and the Welsh Government. The outcomes of this questionnaire will help inform the development of design criteria for the qualification GCSE Business. The specification and sample assessment materials of the reformed GCSE Business will be developed and approved on the basis of the approval criteria published by Qualifications Wales.



GCSE Business

Subject aims and content

The current subject criteria for GCSE Business Studies can be found at the link below:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/371229/2011-11-25-gcse-subject-criteria-for-business-subjects.pdf

GCSE Business is being reformed in England for first delivery from September 2017. The stakeholders who have been consulted to date have been mindful of the reform in this qualification to ensure the reformed qualifications in England and Wales are comparable. The subject content for the reformed GCSE Business qualification in England can be found at the link below:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/485407/Business_GCSE.pdf

Subject aims and objectives

We propose keeping the current subject aims and objectives:

GCSE specifications in business subjects must enable learners to:

- actively engage in the study of business and economics to develop as effective and independent learners, and as critical and reflective thinkers with enquiring minds;
- use an enquiring, critical approach to distinguish facts and opinions, to build arguments and make informed judgements;
- develop and apply their knowledge, understanding and skills to contemporary issues in a range of local, national and global contexts;
- appreciate the range of perspectives of different stakeholders in relation to business activities;
- consider the extent to which business activity can be ethical and sustainable.

In addition we propose adding the following aims and objectives:

- develop and apply quantitative skills relevant to business including using and interpreting data;
- apply and relate knowledge and understanding to real business opportunities and scenarios.

Together, these aims will ensure that students get a broad introduction to the business world whilst also enabling a deeper understanding of the dynamics of business activity. The content expects students to be aware of current issues in business, the integrated nature of business organisations and how decisions are made.

Q1: To what extent do you agree/disagree with the proposed subject aims and learning outcomes for GCSE Business in Wales?

- I strongly agree
- I agree
- I neither agree nor disagree
- I disagree
- I strongly disagree
- I don't know

Comments (we would encourage you to make a comment, particularly if you disagree with the proposal)



GCSE Business

Subject content

Subject content - Themes

The current GCSE Business Studies subject content covers a number of business themes, including:

- business activity;
- interests of stakeholders;
- competition;
- uncertainty;
- customers;
- business within society;
- decision making;
- changing use of ICT;
- and use of relevant terms, concepts and methods.

The Department for Education (DfE) in England have specified new key topics for the reformed GCSE Business qualifications in England. These are:

- business activity;
- influences on business;
- business operations;
- finances;
- marketing;
- and Human resources.

We propose the content of the reformed GCSE Business in Wales should include these six content areas and their related topics as specified for the reformed GCSE Business in England.

Q2a: To what extent do you agree/disagree with the proposed subject content for GCSE Business in Wales?

- I strongly agree
- I agree
- I neither agree nor disagree
- I disagree
- I strongly disagree
- I don't know

Comments (we would encourage you to make a comment, particularly if you disagree with the proposal)

Subject content - Quantitative skills

The current GCSE Business Studies has no minimum requirement for the assessment of quantitative skills, which includes calculations and interpretation of quantitative data. The reformed A Level in Business in Wales allocates at least 10% of marks to the assessment of quantitative skills. We propose that at least 10% of the marks allocated in GCSE Business examinations should be awarded for quantitative skills.

Q2b: To what extent do you agree/disagree that GCSE Business should have a minimum requirement of 10% of the marks being awarded for quantitative skills?

- I strongly agree
- I agree
- I neither agree nor disagree
- I disagree
- I strongly disagree
- I don't know

Comments (we would encourage you to make a comment, particularly if you disagree with the proposal)

Subject content - Calculations

Stakeholders consulted in Wales have expressed the need to articulate mathematical techniques (particularly calculations) in GCSE Business. These views correlate with the subject content of the reformed GCSE Business in England. We propose that in the reformed GCSE Business in Wales, the qualification subject criteria will require students to apply a variety of mathematical techniques in a business context, including calculating:

- percentages and percentage changes;
- averages;
- revenue, costs and profit;
- gross profit margin and net profit margin ratios;
- average rate of return;
- cash-flow forecasts, including total costs, total revenue and net cash flow.

Q2c: To what extent do you agree/disagree that GCSE Business should require the assessment of calculations in a business context?

- I strongly agree
- I agree
- I neither agree nor disagree
- I disagree
- I strongly disagree
- I don't know

Comments (we would encourage you to make a comment, particularly if you disagree with the proposal)



GCSE Business

Assessment objectives

The following table shows the assessment objectives for the current GCSE Business Studies qualification:

Objective	Requirements	GCSE
AO1	Recall, select and communicate their knowledge and understanding in design and technology including its wider effects.	25 - 35%
AO2	Apply knowledge, understanding and skills in a variety of contexts and in designing and making products.	45 - 55%
AO3	Analyse and evaluate products, including their design and making.	15%

The following assessment objectives are proposed for the reformed GCSE Business in England:

Objective	Requirements	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 business contexts	35%
AO3	Analyse and evaluate business information and issues to demonstrate understanding of business activity, make reasoned judgements and draw conclusions	30%

Stakeholders consulted during the development of this questionnaire felt that the proposed assessment objectives and weightings for GCSE Business in England would be appropriate for the reformed qualification in Wales. The new content of the reformed qualification supports the weighting for AO1 and there is a reasonable balance between the assessment objectives. Stakeholders also felt that there is an appropriate ratio of lower to higher cognitive demand within the assessment objectives, appropriate to GCSE.

It is proposed that the assessment objectives and weightings for the reformed GCSE Business in England should apply to the reformed GCSE Business in Wales.

Q3: To what extent do you agree/disagree that the proposed assessment objectives and weightings should apply to the reformed GCSE Business in Wales?

- I strongly agree
- I agree
- I neither agree nor disagree
- I disagree
- I strongly disagree
- I don't know

Comments (we would encourage you to make a comment, particularly if you disagree with the proposal)



GCSE Business

Non examination assessment (NEA)

The current specification in GCSE Business Studies includes NEA (presently identified as 'controlled assessed task'). The weighting is 75% examination and 25% NEA.

Stakeholders consulted when developing this proposal were generally of the view that NEA does not offer sufficient value to the assessment process in GCSE Business and can detract from teaching and learning. Examinations are appropriate for the content and skills requirement of the subject, enabling students to demonstrate knowledge, understanding, application, analysis and evaluation of core business concepts.

We propose the reformed GCSE Business in Wales will be formally assessed through examinations only.

Q4: To what extent do you agree/disagree with the proposal to wholly assess the reformed GCSE Business through examination?

- I strongly agree
- I agree
- I neither agree nor disagree
- I disagree
- I strongly disagree
- I don't know

Comments (we would encourage you to make a comment, particularly if you disagree with the proposal)



GCSE Business

Tiering

In some GCSEs, some or all of the qualification is assessed through tiered exam papers. In tiered assessments different grades are available at each tier; in most GCSEs the grades available are A* to D are the higher tier and grades C to G in the foundation tier. GCSEs in some subjects are tiered because for some subjects the level of difficulty of the assessment is determined more by how candidates respond to questions (essay style questions for example) than by the question itself, whereas in other subjects the level of difficulty is determined more by the nature of the questions asked than on the answer given (such as where there is only one correct answer). Subjects that rely more on the difficulty of the questions to differentiate between candidates tend to have tiered assessment. Tiered assessment avoids the challenges involved in trying to set a single paper to assess the whole cohort. If these subjects were not tiered, then the exam papers would need to be bigger to include enough questions at each level of difficulty, which would increase the amount of assessment required. There is also a risk that the assessment would be less reliable, because research shows that more able candidates often lose marks on the less challenging questions and less able candidates are demotivated by the more challenging ones.

The Review of Qualifications for 14 to 19 year olds in Wales recommended that “tiering should only be allowed where there is a clear case for doing so due to the nature of the subject”.

We propose that the reformed GCSE Business will not be tiered.

Q5: To what extent do you agree/disagree with the proposal that GCSE Business will not be tiered?

- I strongly agree
- I agree
- I neither agree nor disagree
- I disagree
- I strongly disagree
- I don't know

Comments (we would encourage you to make a comment, particularly if you disagree with the proposal)



GCSE Business

Continuing professional development/resources

Q6: What support and resources do you feel centres and teachers may require to achieve maximum readiness to deliver the revised specification?

Please provide comments



GCSE Business

Equality impact

The Equality Act 2010 states that public bodies must have 'due regard', when making decisions, to ensure there is no discrimination, harassment or victimisation of individuals or groups, to ensure equality and to foster good relations in relation to protected characteristics (age, sex, disability, sexual orientation, race, religion, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity and sexual reassignment).

Q7: With this in mind, please highlight below if you feel any of this proposal has the potential to have a positive or negative impact on individuals with protected characteristics and whether any of the proposal would cause accessibility issues for learners in Wales.



GCSE Business

Personal details

Participants under the age of 16 are requested NOT to fill in this section.

If you supply contact details, we may contact you for clarification of your answers. Qualifications Wales (QW) will not share these details, or details of your answers with any third party.

Personal Details

Name

Company

Email Address

Are you responding as an individual or on behalf of your organisation?

- Individual
- Organisation

Please select the type of organisation or choose 'not applicable' if responding as an individual

- School
- College
- University
- Qualification Awarding Body
- Government (Local, National, UK or EU)
- Non-Applicable
- Other (please specify)

Are you a: (please select as appropriate)

- Teacher
- College Lecturer
- University Lecturer
- Student
- Parent
- Other (please specify)