

WJEC GCSE THE SCIENCES (DOUBLE AWARD)

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Content and assessment

Q: What practical activities should our learners complete?

A: In line with the principles of the Curriculum for Wales, centres should provide a range of practical activities appropriate for their learners. Practical work should be embedded in teaching and learning and should include opportunities to develop the relevant scientific enquiry skills. Centres' choices may be influenced by a range of factors, including their local area and the availability of equipment. There are no specified practical tasks as there were previously.

Q: What are the requirements for extended writing in GCSE The Sciences (Double Award)?

A: Learners will be expected to write some extended responses, particularly on higher tier papers. There will be no 'Quality of Extended Response' (QER) questions where answers are assessed using a banded marking scheme as there were previously.

Q: Will there be questions common to the foundation and higher tier papers?

A: Yes – there will be common questions. These will account for 25% of the available marks. This is the same as it was previously.

Q: Why will no mixed grades (i.e. AB, BC, CD) be awarded as was possible previously?

A: The same grading structure is being used for all double award qualifications as set out in the [Qualifications Wales principles](#).

Q: Will year 10 learners be able to enter the unit 7 assessment in year 10?

A: It is highly recommended that unit 7 is completed in year 11 after learners have had time to develop their scientific enquiry skills. The terminal assessment rule requires 55% of the qualification to be taken in year 11 and this can be achieved by entering units 4, 5, 6 and 7.

Q: What are the 8 marks for 'making connections' on the year 11 papers?

A: These marks are awarded for questions assessing linked areas of content from the year 10 unit in that discipline only, e.g. questions on the unit 6 paper linked to content from unit 3.

Q: What units will be available in summer 2027?

A: Units 1, 2 and 3 are available in 2027. All units will be available in subsequent years.

Resources

Q: Are digital resources available for GCSE The Sciences (Double Award)?

A: Digital resources are being published throughout the first half of 2026 and everything will be available in English and Welsh by September 2026.

Q: Where can I find the digital resources?

A: All digital resources can be accessed via the [Digital Resources](#) link at the bottom of the WJEC homepage.

Q: Will the Guidance for Teaching document be available in Word format?

A: No – this document is only available in PDF format, as is the case for the specification and Sample Assessment Materials.

Q: Is there a document that summarises the differences between the content of the new specification and that of the GCSE biology, chemistry and physics qualifications?

A: A mapping document comparing the content of the GCSE biology, chemistry and physics qualifications and GCSE The Sciences (Double Award) will be published before the Preparing to Teach events in the spring. Please refer to the specification and Guidance for Teaching for full details of the content required.

Other

Q: Will the content for GCSE biology, chemistry and physics be changed for September 2026?

A: There will be no change to the content of units 1 and 2 in these qualifications. The requirements for unit 3 will be amended so they align with unit 7 in the new The Sciences (Double Award) qualification.

Q: Will the assessment objective weightings for GCSE biology, chemistry and physics be changed to align with GCSE The Sciences (Double Award)?

A: There will be no change to the weightings for units 1 and 2. The requirements for unit 3 will be changed from September 2026 and assessment objective weightings for that unit will be aligned with those for unit 7 in the new The Sciences (Double Award) qualification.

Q: Will GCSE biology, chemistry and physics continue after 2031?

A: This will depend on the results of the Qualifications Wales consultation in autumn 2028. See the following article for further information:

[Update: Qualifications Wales announces GCSE science update](#)

Q: Will learners be able to move between Integrated Science and The Sciences (Double Award)?

A: They are distinct qualifications with very little overlap of content. It will not be straightforward for learners to switch to The Sciences (Double Award) after a few weeks of teaching time. Integrated Science is not a suitable preparation for AS and A level qualifications in the sciences.

Q: What is the pathway to AS and A level qualifications in the sciences?

A: GCSE The Sciences (Double Award) and separate GCSEs in biology, chemistry and physics are both suitable preparation for AS and A level qualifications. Integrated Science is not.

Q: Is there going to be a reform of the AS and A level science qualifications?

A: Qualifications Wales has asked WJEC to conduct a targeted, proportionate review of A levels in Wales and science qualifications will be included in this. Significant changes are not anticipated.

Q: Are the guided learning hours for The Sciences (Double Award) the same as for Mathematics and Numeracy (Double Award)?

A: Yes – they are both 240-280 hours.

Q: Will Entry Level continue in its present form as well as Integrated Science and The Sciences (Double Award)?

A: A new Foundation qualification in Science will be available from September 2027. This will replace the current Entry Level Certificate in Science.