



WJEC GCSE Grade Descriptors

For use in Summer 2021

Version 2 | April 2021



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Version 2 of this booklet includes information about awarding grades A*, B, D, F and when an unclassified (U) outcome is appropriate (see page 2).

SECTION 1

Foreword

The Minister for Education [announced](#) on 10 November 2020 that end of year examinations will not go ahead in Wales in summer 2021. Furthermore, in a [statement](#) made on 20 January 2021, the Minister for Education confirmed that: ‘learners undertaking GCSE, AS and A levels approved by Qualifications Wales will have their qualifications awarded through a Centre-Determined Grade model.’

On 22 February 2021, WJEC published a range of materials to support teaching and learning in spring and summer 2021 [here](#). As part of that package, we published assessment framework documents for each QW approved WJEC GCSE, AS and A level qualification, including a note that we would subsequently be providing grade descriptors. This booklet includes grade descriptors for GCSE qualifications. There is a separate booklet for WJEC AS and A level qualifications.

Grade descriptors are intended to support centres in determining grades for each learner.

Grade descriptors provided

We have provided qualification-specific descriptors for QW approved WJEC GCSE, AS and A level qualifications¹ for the following grades:

Qualification	Grade A	Grade C	Grade E	Grade G
GCSE	✓	✓	✓	✓
AS	✓	✓	✓	N/A
A level	✓	✓	✓	NA

These grades have been selected to ensure centres are provided with an indication of the likely level of performance at every other grade across the whole grade range for each qualification. Therefore, in making decisions about grades to be awarded to learners, teachers will not be required to make a judgement between adjacent grades where neither of those grades have a qualification-specific descriptor. Furthermore, the approach enables us to provide statements which show clear differentiation between descriptors, whereas attempting to do this for every grade within the range would result in very similar descriptors with minimal differentiation between adjacent grades. This approach is in keeping with the details outlined in Qualifications Wales’ guidance [here](#).

The following information is provided to support teachers considering awarding a grade A*, B, D or F at GCSE in summer 2021. There is also advice about when an unclassified (U) outcome is appropriate.

¹ Grade descriptors for Ofqual accredited qualifications, including WJEC Eduqas GCSE (9-1), AS and A level qualifications, have been published by JCQ [here](#).

Grade	Description
A*	To achieve grade A*, learners' evidence will show that they have securely met all the statements within the grade A descriptor, with stronger performance in most or all aspects of the grade A statements.
B	To achieve grade B, learners' evidence will show that they have securely met all the statements within the grade C descriptor, with stronger performance in most or all aspects of the grade C statements. However, their evidence does not meet the minimum requirements of most of the grade A statements.
D	To achieve grade D, learners' evidence will show that they have securely met all the statements within the grade E descriptor, with stronger performance in most or all aspects of the grade E statements. However, their evidence does not meet the minimum requirements of most of the grade C statements.
F	To achieve grade F, learners' evidence will show that they have securely met all the statements within the grade G descriptor, with stronger performance in most or all aspects of the grade G statements. However, their evidence does not meet the minimum requirements of most of the grade E statements.
Unclassified (U)	Where the evidence for a learner does not meet the minimum requirements of most of the grade G statements, the learner should be graded unclassified (U).

To understand the purpose of grade descriptors, it is important to be aware of the context in which they are intended to be used.

GCSE, AS and A level learners in Wales will have their qualifications awarded through a Centre-Determined Grade model in summer 2021. When determining the grade, centres should take account of unit and assessment objective weightings in the specification (including the effect of any adaptations) and consider each learner's evidence in relation to the grade descriptors provided. Centres should also consider the conditions under which the assessment was taken, e.g. supervised / unsupervised, duration, etc.

The descriptors must be interpreted in relation to the content specified by the specification (as adapted for 2021, where appropriate). The most appropriate grade to award will depend in practice upon the extent to which the learner has met the assessment objectives overall. Shortcomings in some aspects of the evidence may be balanced by better performances in others and learners do not have to cover all aspects of a grade descriptor to be awarded the grade.

SECTION 2

GCSE Art and Design (all titles)

The following grade descriptions are provided to give a general indication of the standards of achievement likely to have been shown by candidates awarded particular grades. The descriptions must be interpreted in relation to the content specified by the specification (as adapted for 2021, where appropriate). The most appropriate grade to award will depend in practice upon the extent to which the candidate has met the assessment objectives overall. Shortcomings in some aspects of the evidence may be balanced by better performances in others.

Grade A

Candidates demonstrate that they are able to:

- Develop sophisticated ideas through sustained independent investigations involving perceptive critical analysis of contextual sources that shows deep critical understanding. (AO1)
- Skillfully control, purposefully experiment with, and creatively exploit, media, materials, techniques and processes, reviewing work to develop and refine it. (AO2)
- Sophistically record ideas, observations and insights through coherent enquiry that is highly relevant to intentions, reflecting on progression of work to increase depth of meaning. (AO3)
- Present highly imaginative, personal and meaningful responses which realise intentions in a coherent and assured manner, showing perceptive understanding of visual language. (AO4)

Grade C

Candidates demonstrate that they are able to:

- Reasonably develop ideas through generally sustained investigations that include critical analysis of contextual sources showing reasonable understanding. (AO1)
- Explore and reasonably refine ideas through relevant experimentation and reasonable control of media, techniques and processes, with reasonable ongoing review. (AO2)
- Reasonably record ideas, observations and insights through enquiry that is generally relevant to intentions, with critical reflection on work as it progresses, to show meaning. (AO3)
- Present reasonably imaginative personal and meaningful responses which realise intentions in a satisfactory manner, showing reasonable understanding of visual language. (AO4)

Grade E

Candidates demonstrate that they are able to:

- Undertake some development of ideas through partially sustained investigations that include some critical analysis of contextual sources to partially inform basic responses. (AO1)
- Partially explore and refine ideas through selection and experimentation, with some attempt to control and exploit media, techniques and processes with some ongoing review. (AO2)
- Basically record ideas and observations through appropriate enquiry that is sometimes relevant to intentions with some reflection on work showing some understanding. (AO3)
- Present a response that is, to some extent, personal and meaningful with intentions realised in a basic manner and with some understanding of visual language. (AO4)

Grade G

Candidates demonstrate that they are able to:

- Develop ideas in a limited way, through investigations that include limited critical analysis of sources which has minimal influence on responses. (AO1)
- Explore and refine ideas in a limited way with minimal control of media and techniques and limited review that has minimal impact on the progression of work. (AO2)
- Record ideas and observations by limited means and through enquiry that has limited relevance to intentions with minimal reflection on work and showing limited understanding. (AO3)
- Present a limited personal response, with minimal attempts to show meaning and realising intentions in a limited manner, with minimal understanding of visual language. (AO4)

GCSE Business

The following grade descriptions are provided to give a general indication of the standards of achievement likely to have been shown by candidates awarded particular grades. The descriptions must be interpreted in relation to the content specified by the specification (as adapted for 2021, where appropriate). The most appropriate grade to award will depend in practice upon the extent to which the candidate has met the assessment objectives overall. Shortcomings in some aspects of the evidence may be balanced by better performances in others.

Grade A

Candidates:

Demonstrate relevant and thorough knowledge and understanding of a range of business concepts and issues.

Apply knowledge and critical understanding to select relevant information from a range of quantitative and qualitative data to explore a range of business concepts and issues in a range of business contexts, using a range of subject specific terminology.

Critically analyse and evaluate quantitative and qualitative data effectively with a high degree of accuracy to analyse problems and issues to make informed and reasoned judgements to present reasoned and substantiated conclusions.

Use a range of relevant quantitative skills.

Grade C

Candidates:

Demonstrate mostly accurate and appropriate knowledge and understanding of a range of business concepts and issues.

Apply knowledge and understanding to select information from a range of quantitative and qualitative data to explore a range of business concepts and issues in different business contexts, using appropriate subject specific terminology.

Analyse and evaluate quantitative and qualitative data to analyse problems and issues with some accuracy to make reasoned judgements to present conclusions that are supported by evidence.

Use some relevant quantitative skills.

Grade E

Candidates:

Demonstrate limited knowledge and understanding of a limited range of business concepts and issues.

Apply limited knowledge and understanding to select information from a limited range of quantitative or qualitative data to explore a limited range of business concepts and issues in limited contexts, using everyday language.

Analyse and evaluate quantitative and qualitative data to attempt to analyse problems and issues to make judgements to present simple conclusions that are sometimes supported by evidence.

Limited use of quantitative skills.

Grade G

Candidates:

Demonstrate some basic knowledge and/or understanding of a very limited range of business concepts or issues.

Attempt to apply basic knowledge and/or understanding to select some data to explore a very limited range of business concepts or issues, using simplistic language.

Simplistic analysis and evaluation of some quantitative or qualitative data to briefly attempt to analyse problems and issues to make limited superficial judgements that are unsupported.

Use of some simple quantitative skills.

GCSE Computer Science

The following grade descriptions are provided to give a general indication of the standards of achievement likely to have been shown by candidates awarded particular grades. The descriptions must be interpreted in relation to the content specified by the specification (as adapted for 2021, where appropriate). The most appropriate grade to award will depend in practice upon the extent to which the candidate has met the assessment objectives overall. Shortcomings in some aspects of the evidence may be balanced by better performances in others.

Grade A

Candidates recall, select and communicate a thorough knowledge and understanding of the function, application, merits and implications of a broad range of computer hardware, software and other related technologies.

They systematically analyse problems, identifying and collecting the information required to solve them from the context of the problem. They apply knowledge, understanding and skills to design and implement effective computer programs which solve these problems. In their solutions, they effectively model situations, acquire and validate input data, sequence instructions, manipulate and process data and present the results of the processing in an appropriate format.

They work systematically and critically evaluate the way they and others use computer technology to solve problems. They iteratively review their work and make improvements where appropriate. Candidates work systematically and understand and adopt safe, secure and responsible practices. They use ICT to communicate effectively, demonstrating a clear sense of purpose and audience.

Grade C

Candidates recall, select and communicate a good knowledge and understanding of the function, application, merits and implications of a range of computer hardware, software and other related technologies.

They analyse problems, identifying and collecting some information relevant to solve them from the context of the problem. They apply knowledge, understanding and skills to design and implement computer programs which solve these problems. In their solutions, they model situations, acquire input data, sequence instructions, manipulate and process data and present the results of the processing in a mostly appropriate format.

They review their work and evaluate the way they and others use computer technology to solve problems and make improvements to their work where appropriate. Candidates work using safe, secure and responsible practices. They use ICT to communicate, demonstrating consideration of purpose and audience.

Grade E

Candidates recall, select and communicate a basic knowledge and understanding of computer hardware, software and other related technologies. They identify, with guidance, the information relevant to solve a problem from the context.

They apply limited knowledge, understanding and skills to design and implement basic computer programs which solve these problems. In their solutions they use simple models, collect some necessary data, use simple instructions to process the data and present the results.

They sometimes review their work and provide comments on how they and others use computer technology to solve problems and make simple modifications to improve their work. Candidates demonstrate some awareness of the need for safe, secure and responsible practices. They use ICT to communicate, demonstrating limited awareness of purpose and audience.

Grade G

Candidates recall, select and communicate a limited knowledge and understanding of computer hardware, software and other related technologies.

They identify, with guidance, most of the information relevant to solve a problem from the context. They apply some limited knowledge and skills to design and implement limited computer programs which may solve these problems. In their solutions they use limited models, use limited instructions to process the data and present the results.

They occasionally review their work and provide comments on how they and others use computer technology to solve problems and may make limited modifications to improve their work. Candidates demonstrate limited awareness of the need for safe, secure and responsible practices. They use ICT to communicate.

GCSE Design and Technology (all endorsed areas)

The following grade descriptions are provided to give a general indication of the standards of achievement likely to have been shown by candidates awarded particular grades. The descriptions must be interpreted in relation to the content specified by the specification (as adapted for 2021, where appropriate). The most appropriate grade to award will depend in practice upon the extent to which the candidate has met the assessment objectives overall. Shortcomings in some aspects of the evidence may be balanced by better performances in others.

Grade A

Candidates are able to demonstrate and effectively apply detailed knowledge and thorough understanding of design and technology principles, in familiar and unfamiliar situations.

They effectively apply appropriate iterative design skills to address all the needs and wants of a situation or user.

They design, develop and model iterations, effectively testing their solutions, working safely with precision, and evaluate their design concept's fitness for purpose.

Candidates communicate and present information clearly and accurately. They make well-reasoned judgements and substantiated conclusions. They critically analyse and evaluate design decisions and outcomes in relation to products and the wider issues in design and technology.

Grade C

Candidates are able to demonstrate and apply mostly accurate knowledge and understanding of design and technology principles, in familiar and unfamiliar situations.

They apply appropriate iterative design skills to address many of the needs and wants of a situation or user.

They design, develop and model iterations, testing their solutions, working safely with some precision, and evaluate their design concept's fitness for purpose.

Candidates communicate and present information generally clearly and accurately. They make some reasoned judgements and conclusions. They analyse and evaluate design decisions and outcomes in relation to products and the wider issues in design and technology.

Grade E

Candidates are able to demonstrate and apply basic knowledge and understanding of design and technology principles, in familiar and unfamiliar situations.

They apply basic iterative design skills to address some of the needs and wants of a situation or user.

They design, develop and model basic iterations, with some testing, working safely with some accuracy, and attempt to evaluate their design concept's fitness for purpose.

Candidates communicate and present information in a straightforward way. There is some evidence of appraisal or appropriate conclusions. They analyse and/or evaluate some design decisions and/or outcomes in relation to products and the wider issues in design and technology.

Grade G

Candidates are able to apply simplistic knowledge and understanding of design and technology principles, in familiar and unfamiliar situations.

They apply simplistic iterative design skills to address one or two of the needs and/or wants of a situation or user.

They design, develop and model simplistic iterations with limited testing, working safely with a limited degree of accuracy.

Candidates communicate and present information in a simplistic way. There is some evidence of simple comments and/or conclusions. They make brief comments about design decisions and/or outcomes in relation to products and/or the wider issues of design and technology.

GCSE Drama

The following grade descriptions are provided to give a general indication of the standards of achievement likely to have been shown by candidates awarded particular grades. The descriptions must be interpreted in relation to the content specified by the specification (as adapted for 2021, where appropriate). The most appropriate grade to award will depend in practice upon the extent to which the candidate has met the assessment objectives overall. Shortcomings in some aspects of the evidence may be balanced by better performances in others.

Grade A

The candidate consistently demonstrates the ability to create work, which shows a high level of understanding of dramatic shape and structure. The work is fully developed and shows a highly imaginative approach to the given stimuli. Their work consistently displays an excellent understanding of a chosen practitioner/style, which is demonstrated through the selection, understanding and application of techniques and applied to the work to create meaning.

The application of performance/design skills is highly effective. The candidate shows the ability to choose highly relevant performance conventions to communicate meaning to an audience. An excellent individual contribution is displayed in both the creation and realisation of their work.

The candidate shows a high level of knowledge and understanding of how drama and theatre is developed and performed through the study of a performance text. They demonstrate an excellent understanding of the characteristics of their chosen text and how meaning is interpreted and communicated through the roles of actor, designer, director and/or audience. They understand and use terminology accurately and appropriately.

Their evaluative skills consistently show excellent, perceptive and detailed analysis of their own performance/design skills and the impact of their own contribution within a performance. They show a high level of ability when analysing their artistic intentions understanding how these were realized in performance. They are able to analyse and evaluate the work of others within a 'live' theatre production in a perceptive and detailed manner by referring to focused examples.

Grade C

The candidate demonstrates the ability to create work, which shows a competent level of understanding of dramatic shape and structure. The work shows satisfactory development and a reasonable understanding of how the stimuli can be used. Their work displays a range of techniques of a chosen practitioner/style, which they apply appropriately to communicate meaning.

The application of performance/design skills is competent. The candidate shows the ability to choose some relevant performance conventions to communicate meaning to an audience. A competent individual contribution is displayed in both the creation and realisation of their work.

The candidate displays a secure knowledge and understanding of how drama and theatre is developed and performed through the study of a performance text. They demonstrate a competent understanding of the characteristics of their chosen performance text and how meaning is interpreted and communicated through the roles of actor, designer, director and/or audience. They use generally appropriate terminology to support their views with relevant reasons, demonstrating the ability to take work forward.

Their evaluative skills demonstrate competent analysis of character, their own performance/design skills and the impact of their own contribution within a performance. They show competent ability when analysing their artistic intentions understanding how these were realized in performance. They are able to analyse and evaluate the work of others within a 'live' theatre review generally by referring to generally appropriate examples.

Grade E

The candidate demonstrates some ability to create work, which shows an inconsistent understanding of dramatic shape and structure. The work shows some development and understanding of how the stimuli can be used. Their work displays some techniques of a chosen practitioner/style.

There is evidence of some application of performance/design skills. The candidate shows some evidence to choose some performance conventions to communicate meaning to an audience. Some individual contribution is displayed in both the creation and realisation of their work.

The candidate displays some knowledge and understanding of how drama and theatre is developed and performed through the study of a performance text. They demonstrate some understanding of the characteristics of their chosen text and how meaning is interpreted and communicated through the roles of actor, designer, director and/or audience. They use basic terminology to support their views with general reasons, demonstrating some ability to take work forward.

Their evaluative skills demonstrate some analysis of character, their own performance skills and the impact of their own contribution within a performance. They show some ability when analysing their artistic intentions, understanding how these were realized in performance. They show some ability of being able to analyse and evaluate the work of others within a 'live' theatre production by referring to some appropriate examples.

Grade G

The candidate demonstrates limited ability to create work, which shows a limited understanding of dramatic shape and structure. The work shows undeveloped ideas of how the stimuli can be used. Their work displays limited or no techniques of a chosen practitioner/style.

The application of performance/design skills is limited. The candidate shows limited ability when choosing performance conventions to communicate meaning to an audience. Limited individual contribution is displayed in both the creation and realisation of their work.

The candidate displays a limited knowledge and understanding of how drama and theatre is developed and performed through the study of a performance text. They demonstrate limited understanding of the characteristics of their chosen text and how meaning is interpreted and communicated through the roles of actor, designer, director and/or audience. They provide a superficial basic response at a simplistic and generalized level to evaluate work

Their evaluative skills demonstrate limited analysis of character, their own performance skills and the impact of their own contribution within a performance. They show limited ability when analysing their artistic intentions understanding how these were realized in performance. They show a limited ability to analyse and evaluate the work of others within a 'live' theatre production and offer limited references regarding appropriate examples.

GCSE English Language

The following grade descriptions are provided to give a general indication of the standards of achievement likely to have been shown by candidates awarded particular grades. The descriptions must be interpreted in relation to the content specified by the specification (as adapted for 2021, where appropriate). The most appropriate grade to award will depend in practice upon the extent to which the candidate has met the assessment objectives overall. Shortcomings in some aspects of the evidence may be balanced by better performances in others.

Grade A

Candidates will show the ability to move beyond straightforward presentation of information to evaluate and analyse topics of more complexity. These will often be a matter of personal interest and concern. The talk will be well-structured and designed to engage the audience. There will be minimal reliance on notes or prompts. Language will be varied and have a wide range of well-chosen vocabulary. There will be a deliberate attempt to use language for effect.

Candidates respond critically and perceptively to a variety of texts, developing interpretations and evaluating how they engage and affect the reader. They will be able to analyse in detail and with insight how writers use language, grammar and structure. They demonstrate a secure understanding of texts, confidently exploring explicit and implicit meanings. Evidence selection, where relevant, is purposeful and used convincingly to substantiate analysis. Candidates make convincing and relevant links between/across texts when summarising, synthesising and comparing information.

Candidates' writing communicates effectively with mature and well-judged ideas. Writing is sustained and skilfully adapted to purpose and audience, using techniques confidently to fully engage the reader. Structural features are effectively used to purposefully shape and sequence writing. A wide range of accurate and varied sentence structures is used to deliberately engage. Vocabulary choices convey precise meaning and show ambition in range. Use of spelling, punctuation and grammar are secure, accurate and precise. Writing will be virtually error-free.

Grade C

Candidates will give a reasonably developed presentation of greater length which may be based on facts or information but will also show some evidence of simple analysis and evaluation – for example, if based on a leisure activity, there may be comments on the benefits to health or interpersonal skills. The talk will be organised and there may still be some reliance on prompts or notes. There will be some attempt to engage the audience through appropriate language or rhetorical questions, for example. Language used will be varied and involve a wider vocabulary and more consistent grammatical accuracy.

Candidates understand and demonstrate how meaning and information are conveyed in a range of texts. They will be able to demonstrate an understanding of how writers use language, grammar and structure. They demonstrate a valid understanding of texts by responding to explicit and implicit meanings. Evidence selection is relevant and appropriately used to support points made. Candidates are able to summarise, synthesise and compare information/ideas from different sources.

Candidates' writing is coherent and interesting with some thoughtfully developed ideas. Writing shows clear awareness of purpose and audience and uses techniques to engage the reader. Structural features are used carefully to sequence and organise writing. A range of varied sentence structures is used to achieve some effect. A range of vocabulary choices is used purposefully to convey precise meaning. Use of spelling, punctuation and grammar is mostly secure and used accurately. Writing will be mostly consistent in control.

Grade E

Candidates will give a simply structured talk on a topic which will generally be information based. There will be an attempt to engage the audience on a simple level such as using eye contact or direct address. There may be some reliance on notes or prompts. If questions are asked, answers will be straightforward. The language used will show some range of vocabulary and there may be an attempt to use the right register for the audience.

Candidates show some understanding of the main ideas, themes or argument in a range of texts. Candidates demonstrate a straightforward understanding of how meaning and information are conveyed. They make some relevant comments about how writers create effects and show awareness of both explicit and implicit meanings. They are able to refer to specific evidence and examples when commenting on the text. Candidates are able to make straightforward summative points and links between texts.

Candidates' writing produces some coherent writing with some interesting ideas. Writing shows some awareness of purpose and audience and there may be an attempt to use some techniques to interest the reader. Some structural features may be used logically to organise and sequence ideas. Some variety of sentence structures may be evident albeit used inconsistently. Some range of vocabulary is evident. Use of spelling, punctuation and grammar shows some control but may be inconsistent. Writing may be straightforward in style and scope.

Grade G

Candidates will give a fairly brief presentation (possibly around two minutes or less) which will generally be factual. There may be some reliance on notes or prompting from the teacher in the form of questions. Language will be simple and straightforward and may show some lack of grammatical accuracy.

Candidates show a basic understanding of the main ideas or themes in a text. Candidates demonstrate a basic understanding of how meaning is conveyed. They may make some relevant comments about explicit and implicit meanings. They may refer to specific evidence and examples when commenting on the text. Candidates are able to make basic summative points and links between texts and/or ideas. Answers are likely to be brief and inconsistent.

Candidates' writing has a basic coherence but may be brief and lacking in substance. Writing shows a limited awareness of purpose and audience with some relevant content. Basic structural features may be used to simply organise and sequence ideas. A limited range of sentence structures and vocabulary is evident. Use of spelling, punctuation and grammar is limited and inconsistent. Errors may be basic and numerous.

GCSE English Literature

The following grade descriptions are provided to give a general indication of the standards of achievement likely to have been shown by candidates awarded particular grades. The descriptions must be interpreted in relation to the content specified by the specification (as adapted for 2021, where appropriate). The most appropriate grade to award will depend in practice upon the extent to which the candidate has met the assessment objectives overall. Shortcomings in some aspects of the evidence may be balanced by better performances in others.

Grade A

Candidates respond critically to texts, showing insight and some confident understanding of sub-text.

Candidates confidently explore and evaluate how language, structure and form contribute to meaning.

Candidates make insightful connections and comparisons between texts.

Candidates show some perceptive understanding of how contexts shape texts.

Grade C

Candidates show some secure understanding of texts, including characters, themes and relationships where relevant. This understanding is evidenced through some supporting reference to details in the text.

Candidates respond personally to some effects of language, structure and form, referring to apt textual detail to support their views and reactions.

Candidates explore some meaningful connections and comparisons between texts.

Candidates show understanding of some of the social, cultural and historical contexts of texts.

Grade E

Candidates show some understanding of the main features of texts.

Candidates make some limited personal response to the effects of language, structure and form in texts.

Candidates make obvious connections and comparisons between texts.

Candidates show a simple awareness of social, cultural and historical contexts.

Grade G

Candidates show a very limited understanding of texts.

Candidates may select from the texts and may make generalised comments on language, structure and form.

Candidates may make limited connections and comparisons between texts.

Candidates may have a limited awareness of social, cultural and historical contexts although this may not always be relevant.

GCSE Food and Nutrition

The following grade descriptions are provided to give a general indication of the standards of achievement likely to have been shown by candidates awarded particular grades. The descriptions must be interpreted in relation to the content specified by the specification (as adapted for 2021, where appropriate). The most appropriate grade to award will depend in practice upon the extent to which the candidate has met the assessment objectives overall. Shortcomings in some aspects of the evidence may be balanced by better performances in others.

Grade A

Candidates recall, select and communicate excellent and detailed knowledge and thorough understanding of all the key areas of the specification, i.e. Food commodities, principles of nutrition, diet and good health, food science, food provenance and cooking and food preparation. This attainment is evidenced within balanced, in-depth and well qualified written responses to assessment(s) that cover all assessment objectives (AO1, AO2, and AO4) for Unit 1 and in written evidence to support a live Unit 2 (task 2), NEA or a NEA style task.

They apply highly relevant knowledge, understanding and skills in a wide range of situations to plan in detail, carry out and complete practical food related tasks. They can produce skillful/ complex dishes with accompaniments as appropriate, working safely, hygienically and with a high degree of precision and sophistication. They can work independently in an extremely competent and confident manner to produce excellent outcomes and to demonstrate excellent attainment in relation to AO3.

They analyse and evaluate the practical outcomes and written evidence available.

They present information clearly and accurately, making reasoned judgements and present substantiated conclusions. They can refer to:

- issues relating to food choices, provenance and production
- food made by themselves and others.

Any written work produced is very well structured, using accurate grammar, punctuation and spelling. Specialist terminology is used with absolute accuracy and ease.

Grade C

Candidates recall, select and communicate sound knowledge and understanding of the key areas of the specification i.e. Food commodities, principles of nutrition, diet and good health, food science, food provenance and cooking and food preparation. Attainment is evidenced within good, clear written responses to assessment(s) that show coverage of the assessment objectives (AO1, AO2, and AO4) for Unit 1 and in a live Unit 2 (task 2), NEA or NEA style task.

They apply suitable knowledge, understanding and skills in a range of situations to plan, carry out and complete practical food related tasks. They can produce dishes with accompaniments as appropriate, with some degree of complexity, working safely, hygienically and with precision. Little or no assistance is required to complete tasks to produce acceptable outcomes and to demonstrate good attainment in relation to AO3.

They attempt to analyse and evaluate the practical outcomes and written evidence available. They present information, making some judgements and present mostly appropriate conclusions. They can refer to:

- issues relating to food choices, provenance and production
- food made by themselves and others.

Any written work produced is structured, using generally accurate grammar, punctuation and spelling. terminology is used with accuracy and ease.

Grade E

Candidates recall, select and communicate some knowledge and basic understanding of some of the key areas of the specification, i.e. Food commodities, principles of nutrition, diet and good health, food science, food provenance and cooking and food preparation. Attainment is evidenced within written responses that may vary in detail, to an assessment that covers AO1, AO2 and AO3 for Unit 1 and in elements of a Unit 2 (Task 2), NEA live or NEA style task.

They can apply knowledge, understanding and skills in some situations to plan, carry out and complete practical food related tasks. They can produce dishes and some accompaniments with varying levels of complexity whilst working safely, hygienically and with some precision. The outcomes may vary in quality. Some assistance may have been required to complete tasks.

They review their practical outcomes and written evidence available and present some appropriate conclusions in relation to:

- issues relating to food choices, provenance and production
- food made by themselves and others.

Any written work produced is generally structured, using generally accurate grammar, punctuation and spelling. Some specialist terminology is used with a fair amount of accuracy and ease.

Grade G

Candidates recall, select and communicate limited knowledge and minimal understanding of the key areas of the specification, i.e. Food commodities, principles of nutrition, diet and good health, food science, food provenance and cooking and food preparation. Attainment is evidenced in limited written responses to questions from a Unit 1 assessment or in supportive work for a Unit 2 NEA style task.

They can apply knowledge, understanding and skills in one or two situations to plan, carry out and complete practical food related tasks. They can produce simple dishes demonstrating basic skills, working safely, hygienically and with minimal precision. Frequent assistance may have been required to complete tasks.

They attempt to review evidence available and present very limited comments on:

- issues relating to food choices, provenance and production
- food made by themselves and others.

Any written work produced may lack structure, uses limited accuracy in relation to grammar, punctuation and spelling. Any specialist terminology is used with limited accuracy and ease.

GCSE Geography

The following grade descriptions are provided to give a general indication of the standards of achievement likely to have been shown by candidates awarded particular grades. The descriptions must be interpreted in relation to the content specified by the specification (as adapted for 2021, where appropriate). The most appropriate grade to award will depend in practice upon the extent to which the candidate has met the assessment objectives overall. Shortcomings in some aspects of the evidence may be balanced by better performances in others.

Grade A

Candidates:

Demonstrate relevant and comprehensive knowledge of geographical information and issues (AO1.1).

Demonstrate perceptive understanding of complex interactions and interrelationships between people and the environment and between geographical phenomena (AO1.2).

Construct sustained and convincing arguments to draw well-evidenced conclusions (AO2).

Use and evaluate a wide range of geographical skills and techniques effectively (AO3).

Grade C

Candidates:

Demonstrate mostly accurate and appropriate knowledge of geographical information and issues (AO1.1).

Demonstrate clear understanding of interactions and interrelationships between people and the environment and between geographical concepts phenomena (AO1.2).

Construct coherent arguments to draw conclusions supported by evidence (AO2).

Use a range of geographical skills and techniques accurately, showing understanding of their purpose (AO3).

Grade E

Candidates:

Demonstrate limited knowledge of geographical information and issues (AO1.1).

Demonstrate basic understanding of aspects of interactions and interrelationships between people and the environment and between geographical phenomena (AO1.2).

Make straightforward comments with some reference to evidence (AO2).

Use some basic geographical skills and techniques with limited accuracy (AO3).

Grade G

Candidates:

Demonstrate basic/simplistic knowledge of geographical information and issues (AO1.1).

Demonstrate simplistic understanding of aspects of interactions and interrelationships between people and the environment and between geographical phenomena (AO1.2).

Make simple comments with limited reference to evidence (AO2).

GCSE History

The following grade descriptions are provided to give a general indication of the standards of achievement likely to have been shown by candidates awarded particular grades. The descriptions must be interpreted in relation to the content specified by the specification (as adapted for 2021, where appropriate). The most appropriate grade to award will depend in practice upon the extent to which the candidate has met the assessment objectives overall. Shortcomings in some aspects of the evidence may be balanced by better performances in others.

Grade A

Candidates recall, select, organise and deploy detailed and accurate historical knowledge effectively and with consistency. They show thorough understanding of the historical periods, themes and topics studied. They communicate their ideas using historical terms accurately and appropriately.

They demonstrate their understanding of the past through developed, reasoned and well-substantiated explanations. They make perceptive analyses of the key concepts, features and characteristics of the periods studied, and the interrelationships between them.

They evaluate and use critically a range of sources of information in an historical context to investigate historical questions, problems or issues independently, and to reach reasoned and substantiated conclusions.

They recognise and provide reasoned comments on how and why events, people and issues have been interpreted and represented in different ways and provide a well-developed consideration of their validity in relation to their historical context.

Grade C

Candidates recall, select, organise and deploy historical knowledge with accuracy and relevance. They show sound understanding of the historical periods, themes and topics studied. They communicate their ideas using historical terminology appropriately.

They demonstrate their understanding of the past through structured descriptions and explanations of the main concepts, features and characteristics of the periods studied. Their descriptions are accurate, and their explanations show understanding of relevant causes, consequences and changes.

They evaluate and use critically sources of information in an historical context to investigate historical questions, problems or issues, and with some limited guidance, to reach reasoned conclusions.

They recognise and comment on how and why events, people and issues have been interpreted and represented in different ways and provide an appropriate consideration of their validity in the historical context.

Grade E

Candidates recall, select and organise some relevant historical knowledge to show basic understanding of historical periods, themes and topics studied. They communicate their ideas using everyday language.

They demonstrate their understanding of the past through basic description of reasons, results and changes in relation to the events, people and issues studied. They provide basic descriptions of events, issues or periods, including characteristic ideas, beliefs and attitudes.

They understand sources of information and, taking them at their face value, begin to consider their usefulness for investigating historical issues and draw basic conclusions.

They identify some differences between ways in which events, people or issues have been represented and interpreted, and may identify some of the reasons for these.

Grade G

Candidates recall, select and organise some relevant historical knowledge to show limited understanding of historical periods, themes and topics studied. They communicate their ideas using simplistic language.

They demonstrate their limited understanding of the past through simplistic description of reasons, results and changes in relation to the events, people and issues studied. They provide brief descriptions of events, issues or periods, including characteristic ideas, beliefs and attitudes.

They demonstrate some understanding of sources of information and, taking them at their face value, begin to consider their usefulness for investigating historical issues and draw limited conclusions.

They begin to identify some differences between ways in which events, people or issues have been represented and interpreted, and may begin to identify simple reasons for these.

GCSE Health and Social Care, and Childcare Single Award and Double Award

The following grade descriptions are provided to give a general indication of the standards of achievement likely to have been shown by candidates awarded particular grades. The descriptions must be interpreted in relation to the content specified by the specification (as adapted for 2021, where appropriate). The most appropriate grade to award will depend in practice upon the extent to which the candidate has met the assessment objectives overall. Shortcomings in some aspects of the evidence may be balanced by better performances in others.

Grade A

Candidates recall, select and communicate excellent and detailed knowledge and thorough understanding of all the key areas of the specification.

This attainment is evidenced within balanced written responses to assessment(s) that cover all assessment objectives (AO1, AO2, and AO3) for Unit 1/3, and in written evidence to support a Unit 2/4 NEA or NEA style task.

For the NEA, candidates apply highly relevant knowledge, understanding and skills from a variety of sources, and in a wide range of situations to independently plan and carry out the stipulated task(s). Candidates analyse and evaluate the evidence available, presenting information clearly and accurately. They make reasoned informed judgements and present detailed and accurate conclusions.

Any written work produced is clearly expressed and shows accurate use of terminology. Writing is very well structured using accurate grammar, punctuation and spelling.

Grade C

Candidates recall, select and communicate sound knowledge and understanding of the key areas of the specification.

Attainment is evidenced within written responses to assessment(s) that show coverage of the assessment objectives (AO1, AO2, and AO3), for Unit 1/3 and in written evidence to support a Unit 2/4 NEA or NEA style task.

For the NEA, candidates apply relevant knowledge, understanding and skills from different sources and in a range of situations to plan and carry out the stipulated task with only limited support. Candidates review some of the evidence available, analysing and evaluating some information clearly, and with some accuracy. Candidates present information clearly and accurately, making some judgements and drawing appropriate conclusions. They can use information to form a competent analysis.

Any written work produced is adequately expressed and shows appropriate use of terminology. Writing is generally well structured using reasonably accurate grammar, punctuation and spelling.

Grade E

Candidates recall, select and communicate some knowledge and basic understanding of some of the key areas of the specification.

Attainment is evidenced within written responses to assessment(s) that cover AO1, AO2 and AO3 for Unit 1/3 and in elements of a Unit 2/4 NEA or NEA style task.

Candidates can apply basic knowledge, understanding and skills in some situations to plan, carry out and complete some investigations and tasks with support. They review evidence available and present some appropriate conclusions in relation to health and social care, and childcare. Candidates present information making some judgements and draw basic conclusions. They attempt to use information to form a basic analysis.

Any written work produced shows basic use of terminology. Writing shows some evidence of structure but with some errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling.

Grade G

Candidates recall, select and communicate limited knowledge and minimal understanding of some areas of the specification.

Attainment is evidenced in written responses to questions from a Unit 1/3 assessment or in supportive work for a Unit 2/ NEA or NEA style task.

Candidates can apply limited knowledge, understanding and skills in one or two situations to plan, carry out simple investigations and tasks with significant guidance and support. Candidates attempt to review evidence available and present very basic comments on the issues relating to health and social care, and childcare. Candidates make use of information from a limited range of sources leading to limited analysis.

Any written work produced may lack structure, with limited use of terminology. There may be limited use of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

GCSE ICT

Single Award and Short Course

The following grade descriptions are provided to give a general indication of the standards of achievement likely to have been shown by candidates awarded particular grades. The descriptions must be interpreted in relation to the content specified by the specification (as adapted for 2021, where appropriate). The most appropriate grade to award will depend in practice upon the extent to which the candidate has met the assessment objectives overall. Shortcomings in some aspects of the evidence may be balanced by better performances in others.

Grade A

Candidates recall, select and communicate a thorough knowledge and understanding of a broad range of ICT including the impact of its social and commercial use.

They apply knowledge, understanding and skills to a variety of situations, selecting and using a range of ICT tools efficiently to solve problems and produce effective ICT-based solutions. They manipulate and process data efficiently and effectively.

They effectively model situations, sequence instructions, interpret information and creatively explore and develop ideas. They work systematically and understand and adopt safe, secure and responsible practices. They systematically analyse problems, identifying needs and opportunities.

They critically analyse and evaluate the way they and others use ICT. They iteratively review their work and make improvements where appropriate. They use ICT to communicate effectively, demonstrating a clear sense of purpose and audience.

Grade C

Candidates recall, select and communicate a good knowledge and understanding of ICT, including the impact of its social and commercial use.

They apply knowledge, understanding and skills in a range of situations, applying ICT tools appropriately to address problems and provide ICT-based solutions. They select information and process data.

They model situations, sequence instructions, select and use information, and explore ideas. They work using safe, secure and responsible practices. They analyse ways of addressing needs using ICT. They review and evaluate the way they and others use ICT.

They review their work and make improvements where appropriate. They use ICT to communicate effectively, demonstrating a clear sense of purpose and audience.

Grade E

Candidates recall, select and communicate a basic knowledge and understanding of aspects of ICT, including its use in the wider world.

They apply limited knowledge, understanding and skills to address simple problems and create basic solutions using ICT tools.

They select and present data and information, and use simple models and instructions. They demonstrate some awareness of the need for safe, secure and responsible practices. They respond to needs using ICT.

They sometimes review and provide comments on the way they and others use ICT. They make simple modifications to their work in the light of progress. They use ICT to communicate, demonstrating limited awareness of purpose and audience.

Grade G

Candidates recall, select and communicate a limited knowledge and understanding of aspects of ICT.

They apply some limited knowledge and skills to address simple problems and create limited solutions using ICT tools.

They select and present data and information, using limited models and instructions. They demonstrate little awareness of the need for safe, secure and responsible practices. They respond to needs using ICT.

They occasionally review and provide comments on the way they use ICT. They make limited modifications to their work in the light of progress. They use ICT to communicate.

GCSE Mathematics and Mathematics - Numeracy

The following grade descriptions are provided to give a general indication of the standards of achievement likely to have been shown by candidates awarded particular grades. The descriptions must be interpreted in relation to the content specified by the specification (as adapted for 2021, where appropriate). The most appropriate grade to award will depend in practice upon the extent to which the candidate has met the assessment objectives overall. Shortcomings in some aspects of the evidence may be balanced by better performances in others.

Grade A

Candidates:

- recall and use a wide range of mathematical facts, techniques, terminology, diagrams, symbols and complex concepts consistently, appropriately and accurately,
- recall and use a combination of standard mathematical methods with accuracy,
- follow direct instructions to solve complex problems involving routine procedures.

Candidates:

- select and use the mathematics and resources needed to solve complex problems,
- select and apply mathematical methods systematically and accurately to solve a range of non-standard, unfamiliar or unstructured, multi-step problems,
- make decisions when tackling a wide range of given tasks, for example, selecting a strategy to tackle a multi-stage trigonometric problem.

Candidates:

- devise strategies to solve non-routine or unfamiliar problems set in a range of contexts, breaking them into smaller, more manageable tasks, where necessary,
- communicate mathematically, using a wide range of mathematical language, notation and symbols to explain reasoning and to express mathematical ideas unambiguously,
- construct convincing arguments and proofs using logical deduction,
- interpret findings or solutions in the context of the original problem,
- use inferences and well-reasoned deductions made from mathematical information to draw valid conclusions,
- reflect on results and critically evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of the methods employed.

Grade C

Candidates:

- recall and use a range of mathematical facts, techniques, terminology, diagrams, symbols and concepts consistently, appropriately and accurately,
- recall and use standard mathematical methods with some accuracy,
- follow direct instructions to solve problems involving routine procedures.

Candidates:

- select and use the mathematics and resources needed to solve problems,
- select and apply mathematical methods to solve non-standard or unstructured, multi-step problems,
- make decisions when tackling given tasks, for example, selecting a suitable method to find the area of a compound shape.

Candidates:

- devise strategies to solve some non-routine or unfamiliar problems, breaking them into smaller, more manageable tasks, where necessary,
- communicate mathematically, using a range of mathematical language, notation and symbols to explain reasoning and to express mathematical ideas clearly,
- construct arguments using logical deduction,
- interpret some findings or solutions in the context of the original problem,
- use inferences and deductions made from mathematical information to draw conclusions,
- reflect on results and comment on the appropriateness of the methods employed.

Grade E

Candidates:

- recall and use basic mathematical facts, techniques, terminology, diagrams, symbols and concepts,
- recall and use simple standard mathematical methods,
- follow direct instructions to solve simple problems involving routine procedures.

Candidates:

- select and use the mathematics and resources needed to solve simple problems,
- select and apply basic mathematical methods to solve simple non-standard or unstructured, multi-step problems,
- make simple decisions when tackling given standard tasks, for example, choosing how to display given information.

Candidates:

- communicate mathematically, using mathematical language, notation and symbols to explain reasoning and to express mathematical ideas with some clarity,
- construct simple arguments using logical deduction,
- interpret simple findings or solutions in the context of the original problem,
- use simple deductions made from mathematical information to draw basic conclusions,
- reflect on results and check their accuracy and reasonableness.

Grade G

Candidates:

- recall and use some basic mathematical facts, techniques, terminology, diagrams, symbols and concepts,
- recall and use some simple standard mathematical methods,
- follow direct instructions to solve some simple problems involving routine procedures.

Candidates:

- select and use the mathematics and resources needed to solve some simple problems,
- select and apply some basic mathematical methods to solve simple multi-step problems,
- make some simple decisions when tackling given standard tasks, for example, choosing how to display given information.

Candidates:

- communicate mathematically, using some basic mathematical language, notation and symbols to explain reasoning and to express some simple mathematical ideas,
- interpret some simple findings or solutions in the context of the original problem,
- use some simple deductions made from mathematical information to draw basic conclusions.

GCSE MFL – French, German, Spanish

The following grade descriptions are provided to give a general indication of the standards of achievement likely to have been shown by candidates awarded particular grades. The descriptions must be interpreted in relation to the content specified by the specification (as adapted for 2021, where appropriate). The most appropriate grade to award will depend in practice upon the extent to which the candidate has met the assessment objectives overall. Shortcomings in some aspects of the evidence may be balanced by better performances in others.

Grade A

AO1: Listening

Candidates show very good understanding of a variety of spoken language that contains some complex language and relates to a range of contexts including extended extracts. They can identify the overall message of an extract, the main points, details and points of view. They can deduce meaning, evaluate and draw conclusions. They can respond to questions in the assessed language.

AO2: Speaking

They initiate and develop conversations and discussions, present information and narrate events. They express and explain ideas and points of view, and consistently produce extended sequences of speech using a wide variety of vocabulary and structures. They make reference to different time frames. They interact confidently, with generally accurate pronunciation and intonation. The message is always clear but there may be some errors, especially when they use more complex structures.

AO3: Reading

They show very good understanding of a variety of written texts relating to a range of contexts. They understand some unfamiliar language and extract meaning from more complex language and extended texts. They can identify the overall message of a text, the main points, details and points of view. They can draw inferences and recognise implicit meaning. They can respond to questions in the assessed language.

AO4: Writing

They write for different purposes across a range of contexts. They express and justify ideas and points of view. They use a variety of vocabulary, structures, including complex structures, and make reference to different time frames. Their spelling and grammar are generally accurate. The messages are clear and coherent but there may be some errors, especially when they use more complex structures.

Grade C

AO1: Listening

Candidates show understanding of different types of spoken language that contains a variety of structures. The spoken material relates to a range of contexts, including some extended extracts. They can identify some main points, details and opinions. They can deduce some meaning, evaluate some information and draw some conclusions. They can respond to some questions in the assessed language.

AO2: Speaking

They take part in conversations and simple discussions and present relevant information, sometimes in detail. They express points of view and show an ability to deal with some unpredictable elements. Their spoken language contains a variety of vocabulary and simple structures and may relate to past and future events. There is some spontaneity with generally good pronunciation and intonation. They convey a clear message but there may be some errors.

AO3: Reading

They show understanding of different types of written texts that contain a variety of structures, including some that are complex. The written material relates to a range of contexts, including some that may be unfamiliar. They can identify some main points, details and some opinions. They can draw some inferences and recognise some implicit meaning. They can respond to some questions in the assessed language.

AO4: Writing

They write for different purposes within different contexts. They express ideas and points of view. They use a variety of vocabulary and structures and may include different time frames. Their spelling and grammar are fairly accurate. They convey clear messages with a fair degree of accuracy.

Grade E

AO1: Listening

Candidates show some understanding of straightforward spoken language in shorter extracts that relates to mostly familiar contexts. They can identify some main points and extract some details. They can occasionally respond to questions in the assessed language.

AO2: Speaking

They take part in simple conversations, present simple information and can express their opinion. They use a range of simple language, usually in short responses. Their pronunciation is mostly understandable.

The main points are usually conveyed, despite grammatical inaccuracies.

AO3: Reading

They show some understanding of short, straightforward written texts that relate to mostly familiar contexts. They can identify some main points and extract some details. They can occasionally respond to questions in the assessed language.

AO4: Writing

They write short texts that relate to mostly familiar contexts. They can express straightforward opinions. They use a simple range of vocabulary and structures. The main points are usually conveyed but there are mistakes in spelling and grammar.

Grade G

AO1: Listening

Candidates show very limited understanding of basic spoken language in shorter extracts that relates to familiar contexts. They can occasionally identify main points and details.

AO2: Speaking

They take part in simple conversations by responding briefly to some questions. They use a limited range of vocabulary and grammatical structures, maybe just phrases. Their pronunciation is sometimes understandable, but lapses, coupled with grammatical inaccuracies, may impede communication.

AO3: Reading

They show very limited understanding of short, basic written texts that relate to familiar contexts. They can occasionally identify main points and details.

AO4: Writing

They write very brief texts that relate to familiar contexts. They can express simple opinions. Their range of vocabulary and structures is limited. The main points are sometimes conveyed but there are frequent mistakes in spelling and grammar that may impede communication.

GCSE Media Studies

The following grade descriptions are provided to give a general indication of the standards of achievement likely to have been shown by candidates awarded particular grades. The descriptions must be interpreted in relation to the content specified by the specification (as adapted for 2021, where appropriate). The most appropriate grade to award will depend in practice upon the extent to which the candidate has met the assessment objectives overall. Shortcomings in some aspects of the evidence may be balanced by better performances in others.

Grade A

Candidates characteristically:

- demonstrate an accurate, detailed knowledge and understanding of media language
- perceptively analyse how media products construct representations
- show a confident grasp of the concept of audience
- demonstrate an excellent knowledge and understanding of media industries
- communicate their ideas clearly through appropriate use of subject-specific terminology
- develop and create effective media products that include highly appropriate media language and representations and have a clear sense of audience and industry context
- demonstrate confident creative and technical skills.

Grade C

Candidates characteristically:

- demonstrate a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of media language
- provide a satisfactory analysis of how media products construct representations
- show an appropriate and accurate grasp of the concept of audience
- demonstrate satisfactory knowledge and understanding of media industries
- communicate their ideas using some subject-specific terminology
- develop and create media products that include satisfactory use of media language and representations and show satisfactory understanding of audience and industry.

Grade E

Candidates characteristically:

- demonstrate a basic knowledge and understanding of media language
- provide a basic analysis of how media products construct representations
- show a basic grasp of the concept of audience
- demonstrate a basic knowledge and understanding of media industries
- communicate their ideas using occasional subject-specific terminology
- develop and create media products that show a basic use of media language and representations, showing a basic understanding of audience and/or industry.

Grade G

Candidates characteristically:

- demonstrate a limited or inappropriate knowledge and understanding of media language
- provide a limited or inappropriate analysis of how media products construct representations
- show limited or inaccurate grasp of the concept of audience
- demonstrate a limited or very limited knowledge and understanding of media industries
- communicate their ideas using very limited or no subject-specific terminology
- develop and create media products that show a limited use of media language and representations and/or show a limited understanding of audience and/or industry.

GCSE Music

The following grade descriptions are provided to give a general indication of the standards of achievement likely to have been shown by candidates awarded particular grades. The descriptions must be interpreted in relation to the content specified by the specification (as adapted for 2021, where appropriate). The most appropriate grade to award will depend in practice upon the extent to which the candidate has met the assessment objectives overall. Shortcomings in some aspects of the evidence may be balanced by better performances in others.

Grade A

Candidates perform accurately and expressively, with secure technique and intonation, effectively communicating the chosen style to the audience, achieving a good sense of balance with other performers. (The standard level of performing is equivalent to Grade 3.)

They compose very well organised pieces of music with highly effective ideas which are creatively developed using an effective choice of skillfully controlled elements. They respond very well to their chosen brief to produce a highly effective outcome.

They make detailed observations and critical judgements about their own and others' music. They have a secure knowledge of the elements of music and how they are used, which they describe using an accurate musical vocabulary appropriate to this level. (See the list of terms in the specification.)

Grade C

Candidates perform generally accurately but there are occasional slips. Technique and intonation are generally reliable, and performances are generally expressive and in keeping with the chosen style with a sense of balance with other performers. (The standard level of performing is equivalent to Grade 3.)

They compose well-organised pieces of music with generally effective ideas and use of elements which are competently developed. They respond well to their chosen brief to produce a generally effective outcome.

They make observations and some critical judgements about their own and others' music. They have a good knowledge of the elements of music and how they are used, which they describe using some musical vocabulary appropriate to this level. (See the list of terms in the specification.)

Grade E

Candidates' performances show some limited control, fluency and expressiveness but there are inaccuracies, and the outcome is inconsistent. Rapport with others is limited. (The standard level of performing is equivalent to Grade 3.)

They compose simple pieces of music in which the ideas are partially developed using some effective choices of elements and resources. Their response to their chosen brief is inconsistent with only some sense of coherence.

They make basic observations about music showing little knowledge of the elements of music and how they are used. Responses are inconsistent and lack appropriate detail, only occasionally using musical vocabulary appropriate to this level. (See the list of terms in the specification.)

Grade G

Candidates' performances lack accuracy and fluency and are within the confines of a limited technique, which rarely allows for rapport between performers. (The standard level of performing is equivalent to Grade 3.)

They compose very basic pieces of music in which there is little opportunity for development of ideas. The outcome is limited in control and in the organisation and presentation of ideas with little sense of coherence.

They make limited observations about music occasionally showing some knowledge of the elements of music and a simple and at times inaccurate use of musical vocabulary.

GCSE Physical Education Single Award and Short Course

The following grade descriptions are provided to give a general indication of the standards of achievement likely to have been shown by candidates awarded particular grades. The descriptions must be interpreted in relation to the content specified by the specification (as adapted for 2021, where appropriate). The most appropriate grade to award will depend in practice upon the extent to which the candidate has met the assessment objectives overall. Shortcomings in some aspects of the evidence may be balanced by better performances in others.

Grade A

Candidates demonstrate comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the factors that underpin performance. They can apply relevant knowledge and understanding of a wide range of factors affecting performance and involvement in physical activity and sport. They can apply their knowledge to a wide range of contexts.

Candidates can critically analyse and evaluate a wide range of factors that underpin performance and involvement in physical activity and sport. They can make logical arguments and draw well-reasoned conclusions using accurate specialist terminology.

Candidates can effectively apply a wide range of appropriate skills and techniques, strategies and/or compositional ideas demonstrating a consistently precise and fluent performance.

Grade C

Candidates demonstrate largely accurate knowledge and understanding of the factors that underpin performance. They can apply relevant knowledge and understanding of some factors affecting performance and involvement in physical activity and sport. They can apply their knowledge to a range of contexts.

Candidates show some analysis and evaluation of a range of factors that underpin performance and involvement in physical activity and sport. They can make mostly logical arguments, though they may be one-sided. They draw some balanced conclusions making reasonable use of specialist terminology.

Candidates can effectively apply a range of appropriate skills and techniques, strategies and/or compositional ideas. They demonstrate some precise and fluent performance, though not always consistently.

Grade E

Candidates demonstrate some knowledge and understanding of the factors that underpin performance. They show limited application of relevant knowledge and understanding of few factors affecting performance and involvement in physical activity and sport. They can apply their knowledge to a limited range of contexts.

Candidates show limited analysis and evaluation of some factors that underpin performance and involvement in physical activity and sport. They can make mostly superficial arguments which are mostly one-sided. They draw few balanced conclusions and make limited use of specialist terminology.

Candidates can apply a limited range of appropriate skills and techniques, strategies and/or compositional ideas. Their performance demonstrates limited precision, fluency and consistency.

Grade G

Candidates demonstrate little knowledge and understanding of the factors that underpin performance. They show little application of relevant knowledge and understanding of very few factors affecting performance and involvement in physical activity and sport. There is little application of their knowledge to very few contexts.

Candidates show little or no analysis and evaluation of few factors that underpin performance and involvement in physical activity and sport. They draw few or no conclusions and make little or no use of specialist terminology.

Candidates can apply few appropriate skills and techniques, strategies and/or compositional ideas. Their performance demonstrates little precision, fluency and consistency.

Religious Studies²

The following grade descriptions are provided to give a general indication of the standards of achievement likely to have been shown by candidates awarded particular grades. The descriptions must be interpreted in relation to the content specified by the specification (as adapted for 2021, where appropriate). The most appropriate grade to award will depend in practice upon the extent to which the candidate has met the assessment objectives overall. Shortcomings in some aspects of the evidence may be balanced by better performances in others.

Grade A

AO1 – Candidates characteristically:

- a) demonstrate very good, detailed knowledge and understanding of a wide range of beliefs and practices
- b) include , accurate and appropriate religious language
- c) confidently use references to sources of wisdom and authority, where relevant
- d) demonstrate very good, detailed understanding of common and divergent views and practices within and between religions and beliefs.

AO2 – Candidates characteristically:

- a) construct a very good, detailed, convincing argument on matters of religion and beliefs based on critical analysis and evaluation of different perspectives
- b) include accurate and appropriate religious language
- c) confidently use references to sources of wisdom and authority, where relevant.

Grade C

AO1 – Candidates characteristically:

- a) demonstrate satisfactory knowledge and understanding of a range of beliefs and practices
- b) include some accurate religious language
- c) and/or include some accurate sources of wisdom and authority, where appropriate
- d) demonstrate satisfactory understanding of common and divergent views and practices within and between religions or beliefs.

AO2 – Candidates characteristically:

- a) construct a satisfactory, reasoned point of view on matters of religion or belief based on some analysis and evaluation of different perspectives
- b) include some accurate and relevant religious language
- c) and/or include some relevant sources of wisdom and authority.

² Includes Religious Studies (Short Course); Religious Studies; Religious Studies (Catholic Theology and Judaism).

Grade E

AO1 – Candidates characteristically:

- a) demonstrate basic, relevant knowledge and understanding of some beliefs and practices
- b) include a basic level of religious language
- c) and/or include some basic references to sources of wisdom and authority, where relevant
- d) demonstrate a basic understanding of similar and different views and practices within and between religions or beliefs.

AO2 – Candidates characteristically:

- a) express an opinion on matters of religion or belief, recognising others might have different views
- b) include a basic level of religious language
- c) and/or include some basic references to sources of wisdom and authority, where relevant.

Grade G

AO1 – Candidates characteristically:

- a) offer very weak knowledge and understanding of beliefs and practices
- b) use religious language very infrequently and/or inappropriately
- c) and/or give isolated examples, or irrelevant examples, of sources of wisdom and authority.
- d) give isolated examples of a very weak understanding, or a very confused understanding, of similar or different views and practices between religions or beliefs.

AO2 – Candidates characteristically:

- a) offer isolated examples of very weak analysis and evaluation and a weak attempt, or no attempt, to give different views
- b) include very poor use, or no use, of religious language
- c) and/or include very poor use, or no use, of sources of wisdom and authority.

GCSE Science (all science qualifications³)

The following grade descriptions are provided to give a general indication of the standards of achievement likely to have been shown by candidates awarded particular grades. The descriptions must be interpreted in relation to the content specified by the specification (as adapted for 2021, where appropriate). The most appropriate grade to award will depend in practice upon the extent to which the candidate has met the assessment objectives overall. Shortcomings in some aspects of the evidence may be balanced by better performances in others.

Grade A

The candidate:

Demonstrates precise knowledge and detailed understanding of some more complex scientific ideas, processes, techniques and procedures.

Consistently applies knowledge and understanding of scientific ideas, processes, techniques, procedures and mathematical skills in a wide range of familiar and unfamiliar contexts.

Analyses, interprets and evaluates scientific information, ideas and evidence, including in relation to issues, to make reasoned judgements and reach evidence-based conclusions.

Grade C

The candidate:

Demonstrates good knowledge and basic understanding of a range of key scientific ideas, processes, techniques and procedures.

Applies knowledge and understanding of scientific ideas, processes, techniques, procedures and mathematical skills in a range of familiar contexts.

Analyses, interprets and evaluates scientific information, ideas and evidence, including in relation to issues, to make sensible judgements and reach evidence-based conclusions given simple or familiar contexts.

³ Includes Applied Science; Biology; Chemistry; Physics and Science qualifications.

Grade E

The candidate:

Demonstrates basic knowledge of some key scientific ideas, processes, techniques and procedures.

Applies basic knowledge of key scientific ideas, processes, techniques and procedures, and basic mathematical skills, in simple and familiar contexts.

Analyses, interprets and evaluates scientific information and evidence to reach sensible conclusions.

Grade G

The candidate:

Demonstrates very basic knowledge of some scientific ideas, processes, techniques and procedures.

Applies very basic knowledge of scientific ideas, processes, techniques and procedures, in very simple and familiar contexts.

Analyses scientific information and evidence to reach very simple conclusions.

GCSE Welsh Second language

The following grade descriptions are provided to give a general indication of the standards of achievement likely to have been shown by candidates awarded particular grades. The descriptions must be interpreted in relation to the content specified by the specification (as adapted for 2021, where appropriate). The most appropriate grade to award will depend in practice upon the extent to which the candidate has met the assessment objectives overall. Shortcomings in some aspects of the evidence may be balanced by better performances in others.

Grade A

AO1: Speaking

Candidates are required to demonstrate an increasing ability to communicate the spoken language in a variety of situations by communicating and interacting confidently and spontaneously with others most of the time.

They are expected to express and justify opinions fully, elaborate on reasons and respond in detail to other people's ideas whilst communicating and interacting confidently and spontaneously. They are required to use a wide range of language patterns very accurately and a range of different tenses along with appropriate tone, accurate pronunciation and clear intonation.

AO2: Listening

Candidates are required to demonstrate an increasing understanding of spoken language in a variety of situations by communicating and interacting confidently and spontaneously with others most of the time.

They are expected to demonstrate that they can respond with confidence to stimulus, listen and respond with confidence to relevant contributions from others and fully understand the main message including specific details which are communicated verbally by giving insightful contributions.

AO3: Reading

Candidates are required to read and understand a wide variety of appropriate materials including some complex pieces and respond to challenging material by corroborating their observations with reference to the text. They are expected to use their reading skills to select and apply information to carry out a range of tasks on topics within their range of experience which cover the three broad themes.

AO4: Writing

Candidates are required to write a variety of narrative, specific, instructional, descriptive, creative and imaginative writing pieces effectively, by producing coherent and well-organised work. They are expected to convey information and express an opinion confidently on relevant matters and corroborate viewpoints with a wide range of ideas and opinions, reasons and examples. They need to create engaging work that creates appropriate mood and atmosphere. In order to communicate very confidently with a strong element of accuracy they need to use verb forms (tense and person) consistently accurately and present accurate spelling and punctuation.

Grade C

AO1: Speaking

Candidates are required to demonstrate an increasing ability to communicate the spoken language in a variety of situations by communicating and interacting confidently with others. They are expected to express and justify opinions quite fully, give reasons and respond to other people's ideas whilst communicating and interacting with a little spontaneity and with confidence. They are required to use language patterns accurately and some variation of tense along with appropriate tone, fairly accurate pronunciation and quite clear intonation.

AO2: Listening

Candidates are required to demonstrate an increasing understanding of spoken language in a variety of situations by communicating and interacting confidently with others. They are expected to demonstrate that they can respond with confidence to stimulus, listen and respond to relevant contributions from others and listen to and understand the main message and specific details which are communicated verbally in some detail.

AO3: Reading

Candidates are required to read and understand a selection of appropriate materials and respond to various materials, corroborating their explanations with reference to the text. They are expected to select and apply relevant information from many sources in order to carry out specific tasks which cover the three broad themes.

AO4: Writing

Candidates are required to write a variety of narrative, specific, instructional, descriptive, creative and imaginative writing pieces fairly effectively, by producing evidence of planning and legible well-organised work. They are expected to convey information, express an opinion on relevant matters and corroborate viewpoints with sufficient ideas and opinions, reasons and examples. In order to communicate they need to use a variety of phrases, questions and sentence patterns, verb forms (tense and person) and spell and punctuate with a fair degree of accuracy.

Grade E

AO1: Speaking

Candidates are required to demonstrate the ability to communicate the spoken language in a variety of situations by communicating and interacting with a little encouragement giving some information. They are expected to express and justify some opinion, give very simple responses to different types of verbal language spoken by one or more speakers and communicate and interact with a little encouragement. They are required to use simple language patterns accurately and an occasional variation of tense. They pronounce most words accurately.

AO2: Listening

Candidates are required to demonstrate an understanding of spoken language in a variety of situations by communicating and interacting with a little encouragement giving some information. They are expected to demonstrate that they can give simple responses to stimulus, listen to others and respond with some contributions. They will be able to identify some main points and extract some details from the main message that is communicated verbally.

AO3: Reading

Candidates are required to read and show an understanding of a selection of appropriate materials and respond to some materials, attempting to corroborate their explanations with reference to the text. They are expected to select and apply some relevant information from some sources in order to carry out specific tasks which cover the three broad themes.

AO4: Writing

Candidates are required to attempt to write a variety of narrative, specific, instructional, descriptive, creative and imaginative writing pieces, and produce some evidence of planning. They are expected to convey some information and attempt to express straightforward opinions on relevant matters with some ideas and opinions. They attempt to use a simple range of vocabulary and structures including some verb forms (tense and person) and attempt to spell and punctuate reasonably accurately. The main points are usually conveyed but there are mistakes in spelling and grammar.

Grade G

AO1: Speaking

Candidates are required to demonstrate the ability to communicate the spoken language in a variety of familiar situations by communicating and interacting with direct encouragement and giving occasional pieces of information. They are expected to attempt to express a simple opinion occasionally, communicate and interact with direct encouragement and use basic language patterns. They will use a limited range of vocabulary and their pronunciation is mostly understandable.

AO2: Listening

Candidates are required to demonstrate very limited understanding of basic spoken language in a variety of familiar situations by communicating and interacting with direct encouragement and giving occasional pieces of information. They are expected to demonstrate that they can give very simple responses to stimulus, listen to others, make an effort to respond with a contribution now and again and listen to and understand a little of the main message that is communicated verbally.

AO3: Reading

Candidates are required to read and show an understanding of the general meaning of appropriate texts and provide basic responses to reading materials by selecting information for specific purposes which cover the three broad themes.

AO4: Writing

Candidates are required to attempt to write narrative, specific, instructional, descriptive, creative and imaginative writing pieces which will include some basic ideas and convey limited information. They write very brief texts that relate to familiar contexts. They attempt to express simple opinions. Their range of vocabulary and structures is limited. The main points are sometimes conveyed but there are frequent mistakes in spelling and grammar that may impede communication.

GCSE Welsh Language / TGAU Cymraeg Iaith

The following grade descriptions are provided to give a general indication of the standards of achievement likely to have been shown by candidates awarded particular grades. The descriptions must be interpreted in relation to the content specified by the specification (as adapted for 2021, where appropriate). The most appropriate grade to award will depend in practice upon the extent to which the candidate has met the assessment objectives overall. Shortcomings in some aspects of the evidence may be balanced by better performances in others.

Grade A

AO1 - Oracy

Candidates make effective and confident presentations with complex information and ideas. They are able to analyse and evaluate the information and ideas skilfully. They confidently vary sentence structures and choose from a broad repertoire of vocabulary to express information and ideas in an engaging and creative manner to meet the needs of the audience.

AO2 - Reading

Candidates are able to select, analyse and evaluate information, ideas, opinions, purpose, implicit meaning and/or bias within texts and text types. They demonstrate a secure overview of challenging texts when gathering information, ideas, arguments and opinions for different purposes. They make cogent and critical responses and show originality in analysis and interpretation. They make assured and astute responses to key ideas and themes and use inference, deduction and analysis effectively. They are able to summarise and synthesise information and ideas succinctly from different sources.

AO3 - Writing

Candidates' writing shows confident, assured control of forms and styles, appropriate to task and purpose. Their writing engages and holds the reader's interest through logical argument, persuasive force or inspired originality. Linguistic and structural features are used skilfully to sequence texts and achieve coherence. They write documents on complex subjects, concisely and clearly, logically and persuasively, including extended writing pieces, communicating information, ideas and opinions effectively and persuasively. A wide range of accurate sentence structures ensures clarity; choices of vocabulary are ambitious and imaginative; grammar, punctuation and spelling are correct.

Grade C

AO1 - Oracy

Candidates make effective presentations with information and ideas and provide some analysis and evaluation. They show an understanding of the needs of the audience. They use a variety of sentence structures accurately and select vocabulary and phrases so that ideas, experiences and information are communicated clearly, maintaining the listener's interest.

AO2 - Reading

Candidates are able to understand and demonstrate how meaning and information are conveyed in complex texts. They can identify the main points, ideas and purpose of texts and text types including reports, instructional, explanatory and persuasive texts. They are able to make personal and critical responses, referring to specific aspects of language, grammar, structure and presentational devices to justify their views. They are able to summarise and synthesise information/ideas from different sources.

AO3 - Writing

Candidates' writing shows successful adaptation of form and style to different tasks and for various purposes. They write documents clearly and coherently to communicate information, ideas and opinions using language, formats and styles suitable for their purpose and audience. Paragraphing is used effectively to make the sequence of events or development of ideas coherent and clear to the reader. Sentence structures are varied and grammar, punctuation and spelling are accurate to create different effects and to engage the reader's interest.

Grade E**AO1 - Oracy**

- Candidates convey information and experiences, develop ideas clearly showing ability to give some significant detail. They show awareness of purpose and the needs of the audience. Appropriate features of the language are used. Sentence structures are varied and appropriate language is accurate at times.

AO2 - Reading

Candidates understand and are able to describe in some detail ideas, themes or arguments in written texts. They are able to understand some main points and ideas in texts and text types and can independently identify the main purposes of different formats. They show awareness of how texts achieve their effects through writers' use of presentational devices. They are able to synthesise some information or ideas from different sources.

AO3 - Writing

Candidates' writing shows adaptation of form and style for different tasks, purposes and audiences. They attempt to communicate their ideas and opinions effectively and vocabulary and phrases are chosen for variety and interest. Paragraphing is used to convey ideas clearly and the structure of sentences, including some that are complex, is usually correct. Grammar, spelling and punctuation are mostly accurate.

Grade G**AO1- Oracy**

Candidates convey briefly some information, experiences and ideas with encouragement. They have some awareness of the audience. They attempt to speak appropriately with limited range of vocabulary and command of grammar.

AO2 - Reading

Candidates understand a few main ideas, themes or arguments in some written texts. They are able to understand straightforward texts and can at times independently identify the main purposes of different formats.

AO3 - Writing

Candidates' writing shows some awareness of form and style for different tasks, purposes and audiences. The writing is straightforward on the whole and there is effort to choose interesting vocabulary and phrases. The structure of sentences is basic. Grammar, spelling and basic punctuation are at times accurate.

GCSE Welsh Literature / TGAU Llenyddiaeth Gymraeg

The following grade descriptions are provided to give a general indication of the standards of achievement likely to have been shown by candidates awarded particular grades. The descriptions must be interpreted in relation to the content specified by the specification (as adapted for 2021, where appropriate). The most appropriate grade to award will depend in practice upon the extent to which the candidate has met the assessment objectives overall. Shortcomings in some aspects of the evidence may be balanced by better performances in others.

Gradd A

AA1

Bydd disgwyl i ymgeiswyr ddadansoddi a dangos dealltwriaeth dda iawn o gynnwys testunau llenyddol/llunyddol gan ddangos gwybodaeth fanwl i gadarnhau safbwynt.

AA2

Bydd disgwyl i ymgeiswyr drafod arddull/mesur/ffurf testunau ac ystyried eu haddasrwydd a'u heffeithiolrwydd yn dda iawn gan gynnwys rhesymau perthnasol a dilys.

AA3

Bydd disgwyl i ymgeiswyr gyflwyno ymateb personol deallus i'r testunau a astudiwyd gan roi rhesymau argyhoeddiadol a dilys i ategu eu safbwyntiau.

Gradd C

AA1

Bydd disgwyl i ymgeiswyr ddangos dealltwriaeth eithaf da o gynnwys testunau llenyddol/llunyddol gan gyfeirio'n lled fanwl at y testun dan sylw a llwyddo ar adegau i ddeall y testun ar lefel ddyfnach na'r llythrennol yn unig.

AA2

Bydd disgwyl i ymgeiswyr adnabod ac ymdrin ag arddull/mesur/ffurf testunau ac ystyried eu haddasrwydd a'u heffeithiolrwydd yn eithaf da gan roi rhai rhesymau.

AA3

Bydd disgwyl i ymgeiswyr gyflwyno ymateb personol eithaf da i'r testunau a astudiwyd a rhoi rhai rhesymau i ategu eu safbwyntiau.

Gradd E

AA1

Bydd disgwyl i ymgeiswyr ddangos dealltwriaeth o brif syniadau a sôn am rai manylion yng nghynnwys testunau llenyddol/llunyddol.

AA2

Bydd disgwyl i ymgeiswyr adnabod ac ymgeisio i drafod addasrwydd arddull/mesur/ffurf testunau.

AA3

Bydd disgwyl i ymgeiswyr ddangos ychydig o ymateb personol perthnasol.

Gradd G

AA1

Bydd disgwyl i ymgeiswyr adrodd cynnwys testunau llenyddol/llunyddol yn fras gan ddangos dealltwriaeth arwynebol iawn.

AA2

Bydd disgwyl i ymgeiswyr gyfeirio at ambell nodwedd arddull/ffurf/mesur amlwg.

AA3

Bydd disgwyl i ymgeiswyr gyflwyno ymateb personol syml iawn i'r testunau.