

Summer 2021



# Summer 2021 Alternative Arrangements: GCSE Biology Subject Guidance



Version 1.0



## Introduction

On 6 January 2021, the Minister of Education, Peter Weir MLA, cancelled all CCEA GCSE, AS and A2 examinations scheduled for January, February, May and June 2021. Instead, the approach to awarding grades in Summer 2021 will be based on teacher professional judgements, with moderation. CCEA has published *GCSE, AS and A Level Awarding Summer 2021 Alternative Arrangements – Process for Heads of Centre* to support teachers and school leaders in determining the appropriate Centre Determined Grades for each student.

In 2021, centres are asked to use a range of evidence to arrive at a professional and academic judgement of the standard at which each student is performing in the context of the specification for which they are entered and from this provide a grade to CCEA. This is different from 2020, when centres were asked to supply a centre assessment grade based on their judgement of the grade a student would likely have achieved if they had been able to complete examinations. It will require centres and CCEA to develop and use different processes from those used last year.

This document follows on from CCEA's *GCSE, AS and A Level Awarding Summer 2021 Alternative Arrangements – Process for Heads of Centre* and aims to provide further guidance to support teachers and Heads of Department in determining the appropriate Centre Determined Grade for each student entered for GCSE **Biology**.

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## 1. Overview

Each Centre Determined Grade is a judgement of the final grade for a qualification. It must be based on a holistic review of a student's performance as indicated by assessment evidence, gathered and retained at centre level. In the interests of fairness within and across centres, each Centre Determined Grade must be a realistic, evidence-based judgement of the standard at which a student is performing, i.e. their demonstrated knowledge, understanding and skills in the content of the specification they have covered. This means students **do not** need to have completed a specified amount of content, or demonstrate skills, knowledge and understanding across every area of the specification, as they would normally. In this way, disruption to teaching and learning can be taken into account.

We must also acknowledge the decision taken in October 2020 by the Education Minister in respect of reducing the assessment burden in GCSE qualifications. The details in the table below will still be applicable in forming a Centre Determined Grade in Summer 2021. For example, teachers can consider evidence for either Units 2 and 3 or all three units.

Subject	Current Arrangements	Defined Unit For Omission	Specification Adaptations
<b>GCSE Biology</b>	<p><b>Unit 1</b> external assessment (35%)</p> <p><b>Unit 2</b> external assessment (40%)</p> <p><b>Unit 3</b> (25%) Booklet A (7.5%) Booklet B (17.5%)</p>	<b>Unit 1</b>	<p>Unit 1 – will be eligible for omission for candidates cashing in for the qualification level grade in Summer 2021. This unit will still be available for any candidates wishing to be assessed in all units.</p> <p>Unit 2 – no changes</p> <p>Unit 3 – Booklet A: Candidates observe a live teacher demonstration in place of completing the experiments themselves.</p>

## 2. Preliminary Considerations

In arriving at a Centre Determined Grade for a student, it is not necessary to assess every aspect of the specification exhaustively. A selection of key tasks or assessments carried out under appropriate conditions and with a suitable level of demand, which allows you to authenticate the work as the student's own, will give a good indication of the standard at which the student is performing in the qualification.

To make accurate judgements, you must have a clear understanding of:

- the range of skills, knowledge and understanding covered by the specification;
- the assessment requirements and the structure of the specification;
- the grade descriptions at key grades (see Section 5 and Appendix 1 in this document);
- the level of demand of the qualification assessments; and
- the weighting of each component/unit and the type of assessment.

For GCSE Biology, information on these aspects can be found in the specification and further illustrated in the specimen assessment materials and past papers<sup>1</sup> which are available on the CCEA website at [www.ccea.org.uk](http://www.ccea.org.uk)

A piece of evidence has high validity and reliability if a student who performs well in the task would reasonably be expected to perform equally well in the qualification as a whole. Some considerations that may impact on evidence are noted below.

- **Specification Coverage**

A piece of evidence that covers a greater breadth of the specification content, knowledge, understanding and skills from a unit (or units) with a higher weighting may give a better indication of a student's standard of performance than a piece with lesser breadth or with a lower weighting. Evidence does not need to cover the entire specification content.

- **Similarity to Actual Qualification Assessments**

Evidence that is similar to a CCEA assessment for the qualification will be more useful in determining a student's grade than evidence that is considerably different from the qualification assessment in terms of question structure, content and/or assessment arrangements.

- **Controls**

If evidence is generated under less controlled conditions than a qualification assessment, its value may be less than a piece generated under conditions that are similar. Centres should keep a record of the conditions under which an assessment was completed, i.e. high, medium or limited levels of control – see **Appendix 2** for definitions.

However, CCEA understands the difficult public health context in which schools have been working since March 2020, which has included two extended periods of

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<sup>1</sup> Past papers and mark schemes will be available for all CCEA GCSE, AS and A level qualifications subject to copyright clearance.

remote learning. Schools may, therefore, need to utilise evidence generated within more limited levels of control, where they can authenticate this as the student's own.

- **Level of Demand**

The evidence you gather must be set at an appropriate level of demand for it to be a good indicator of a student's standard of performance.

- **When Evidence Is Generated**

It should be borne in mind that a student's knowledge, understanding and skills may develop over the period of a course of study; you should consider when any piece of evidence was generated and ensure, if possible, that evidence generated recently is taken into account.

### 3. Evidence to Inform Centre Determined Grades

This section provides guidance on the information that centres should use in confirming Centre Determined Grades.

You should consider all the key evidence you have for each student and reflect on how much it tells you about the student's standard of performance, as measured against the requirements of the relevant specification. For example, this could be, but is not limited to:

- the consistency of a student's practical or performance evidence;
- their depth or breadth of knowledge and understanding in relation to questions on key topics;
- their degree of analytical or evaluative skills demonstrated on key topics; and/or
- quality of student responses to discriminating questions or tasks.

Centres should be clear in their Centre Determined Grades policy what types of evidence will be used in determining the grade. Centres should also be clear with students the evidence that will be used to determine their grades. Where possible, centres should aim to use consistent sources of evidence for a qualification cohort. Some examples of evidence suitable for GCSE Biology you may choose to use are included in the following table:

<b>Evidence</b>
<p><b>CCEA assessment resources for Units 1, 2 and 3.</b> – When taken under high control conditions, where the public health situation allows, these assessments will be a good indicator of the standard of student performance as they are fully aligned to specification content and the level of demand of past papers. See Section 4 for more details.</p>
<p><b>Performance in any mock examinations taken</b> – These are likely to be a good indicator of performance, particularly if they are taken under high control conditions and assess the skills, knowledge and understanding required by the CCEA specification or are similar to CCEA question papers.</p>
<p><b>Performance in CCEA past paper questions and mark schemes</b> – These assessments are in the public domain and can be readily accessed by students. Therefore, in their entirety, they do not form strong evidence. However, elements of these can be incorporated into mock exams or class tests. You may wish to access grade boundaries and/or Chief Examiner’s reports which relate to these papers, available at <a href="http://www.ccea.org.uk">www.ccea.org.uk</a>. If the examinations in the qualifications you deliver are marked online, you can also avail of the data held in the CCEA Analytics application. Further information can be obtained by contacting CCEA at <a href="mailto:CCEA.Analytics@ccea.org.uk">CCEA.Analytics@ccea.org.uk</a></p>
<p><b>Performance in class tests</b> – If class tests only assess specific content, you should use a series of marked class tests. A series of such assessments, done under high control conditions and sampling the key aspects of the specification, should provide good evidence of student performance. Many class tests will be recorded as a mark or percentage, and centres should ensure there is a consistent approach in mapping these to a grade.</p>
<p><b>Records of each student’s performance throughout their study</b> – This includes, for example, progress review/tracking data, classwork and bookwork.</p>
<p><b>For GCSE students who sat units prior to Summer 2021, their notional unit grades in that subject</b> – It is likely that only students studying Single and Double Award Science will have completed prior units.</p>
<p><b>Performance in any class assessments taken throughout their study of the GCSE Biology specification</b> – This may consist of a variety of evidence types, produced under different conditions. Evidence of this kind is unlikely to form a strong evidence base on its own, but it may supplement other evidence types.</p>
<p><b>Tiers</b> – In GCSE subjects that include units available at Foundation or Higher, the tier entered by students should be considered. The Centre Determined Grade should not be higher than the maximum grade allowable through the combination of Foundation and Higher Tier units selected. For example, the maximum allowable Centre Determined Grade for an entry of all units at Foundation tier would be a C*.</p>
<p><b>For resitting students</b>, prioritise evidence generated during the 2020/21 academic year.</p>

## Assessment Objectives

Assessment objectives are the skills that are normally assessed through the completion of examinations or internally assessed tasks. They are the foundations on which a specification is developed, and a weighting is applied to each individual assessment objective to show the weighting of assessment associated with it. They may also prove to be a useful indicator of the level of demand of a task or assessment. As such, you should consider the assessment objectives that will be assessed when selecting evidence to form a holistic judgement of a student's performance. This information will be recorded in the Departmental Assessment Evidence Grid which is set out in Appendix 6 of CCEA's *GCSE, AS and A Level Awarding Summer 2021 Alternative Arrangements – Process for Heads of Centre*.

The assessment objectives for GCSE Biology are:

<b>AO1</b>	demonstrate knowledge and understanding of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• scientific ideas; and</li> <li>• scientific techniques and procedures;</li> </ul>
<b>AO2</b>	demonstrate knowledge and understanding of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• scientific ideas; and</li> <li>• scientific techniques and procedures;</li> </ul>
<b>AO3</b>	analyse scientific information and ideas to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• interpret and evaluate;</li> <li>• make judgements and draw conclusions; and</li> <li>• develop and improve experimental procedures.</li> </ul>

Further information on assessment objectives, including weightings associated with individual units, can be found in Section 4: Scheme of Assessment in the subject specification.

Please note that where a unit omission has impacted on an assessment objective, it is *not necessary* to consider evidence for this objective; however, where reliable evidence exists, centres may still wish to consider it in forming a holistic judgement.

## 4. Support

A range of subject-specific support is available on the CCEA website and can assist teachers in arriving at a fair and consistent judgement for students.

### CCEA 2021 Assessment Resources

In 2020, many students seeking a GCSE or GCE qualification grade had been awarded notional unit grades or uniform mark scores in previous examination series, to use as evidence in determining centre assessment grades; however, this is not the case in 2021. In the absence of this information, CCEA will supply assessment resources to your centre. These will be quality assured question papers and mark schemes for **all** units that normally have examinations.<sup>2</sup> They will contain new questions and tasks not previously released to centres and must therefore be stored securely. These materials are not to be seen as high stakes assessments but rather viewed as materials which could form part of the evidence used to inform Centre Determined Grades. Centres do not have to use all the assessment resources, but we advise centres to use at least one per qualification. We would encourage centres to use the assessment resources under high control conditions, where it is safe to do so, to ensure they have the greatest value.

CCEA will provide mark schemes to centres. To support a standardised approach in the use of the assessment resources, we will provide guidance to accompany the mark scheme.

The following section will help teachers mark questions that assess a candidate's quality of written communication (QWC):

These questions are worth six marks and questions that assess QWC are identified on the front cover of past papers and CCEA assessment resources, where applicable.

### Process

1. The initial marking is for the correct indicative content present in the candidate's response. This will be guided by the answers and band-response table in the relevant mark scheme.

The number of correct indicative content points awarded places the candidate within Band A, B, C or D. For example:

Number of correct indicative marking points awarded	Band candidate is placed in
5-6	A
3-4	B
1-2	C
0 / no response	D

<sup>2</sup> Assessment resources will not be provided for units/components where endorsement arrangements in lieu of assessments were in place for Summer 2021, for example GCSE Languages Unit 2: Speaking.

2. Next, consider the quality of written communication of the candidate's response. If a QWC mark is to be awarded, then it will give the candidate the top mark within that band. Note: the QWC mark cannot take the candidate into the next band.

Number of correct indicative marking points awarded	Band candidate is placed in	Final mark if QWC awarded	Final mark if QWC not awarded.
5-6	A	6	5
3-4	B	4	3
1-2	C	2	1
0/no response	D	0	0

The maximum mark available for a QWC question is six marks.

The QWC mark would not be awarded if the candidate's response includes multiple spelling errors and is not written sentences with capital letters and full stops.

We appreciate that decisions were taken in October 2020 in respect of unit omissions in GCSE qualifications. We also acknowledge disruption to teaching and learning may mean that even in the context of these omissions, certain content may not have been covered. In such cases, the assessment resources may be adapted accordingly. In this way, it can be taken into account that some students have suffered more disruption to their learning than others. For example:

*A centre decided to omit Unit 1 in line with the Education Minister's announcement in October 2020. Therefore, Centre Determined Grades may be based on evidence for Units 2 and 3 only.*

- *Student A has missed a significant amount of learning due to COVID self-isolation and disruptions and has not covered all of the content for Unit 2.*
- *Student A's Centre Determined Grade should be based on assessment of only the content they have covered.*

#### Assessments adapted/Evidence gathered and reviewed based on GCSE Biology Content

All Students	Student A
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unit 2                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Osmosis and plant transport</li> <li>- Circulatory system</li> <li>- Reproduction, fertility and contraception</li> <li>- Genome, chromosomes, DNA and genetics</li> <li>- Variation and natural selection</li> <li>- Health, disease, defence mechanisms and treatments</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Unit 3</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unit 2                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reproduction, fertility and contraception</li> <li>- Genome, chromosomes, DNA and genetics</li> <li>- Variation and natural selection</li> <li>- Health, disease, defence mechanisms and treatments</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Unit 3</li> </ul>

## **Summer 2021 Support Webinar**

We will produce subject-specific support webinars for teachers to accompany this guidance document. These will include an overview of arriving at a Centre Determined Grade and additional guidance in using the CCEA assessment resources and existing support materials. Subject-specific webinars will be uploaded to the CCEA website from 26 March 2021.

## **Specimen Assessment Materials and Past Papers**

Specimen assessment materials and past papers are available in the Support section of the qualification web page and are provided to give centres guidance on the structure and character of CCEA examination papers and assessments. Please note that if a past paper or mark scheme does not appear in this section, it is for copyright reasons.

You may also wish to create a question paper that is of a similar standard to a CCEA GCSE question paper. In doing so, you should refer to the specimen question paper and mark schemes, and the past papers and mark schemes, available on the CCEA qualification web page. These illustrate the standard, structure and requirements of the question paper.

You can generate the most valid evidence by using assessments that replicate, as far as possible, the standard, duration, format and security of CCEA question papers.

## **Exemplification of Examination Performance (EEP)**

EEP booklets are available in the Support section of the qualification web page and include exam questions from the Summer 2019 papers, exemplar answers by students and a senior examiner commentary on the answers.

## **Chief Examiner Reports**

The reports for 2018–2019 Summer series are available in the Reports section of the qualification web page and outline the performance of students in all aspects of this qualification.

## **CCEA Grade Boundaries**

Raw to uniform mark boundaries for past Summer series are available in the Support section of the qualification web page and may provide a reference point to support Centre Determined Grades.

## **CCEA Analytics**

You can also avail of the data held in the CCEA Analytics application. Further information can be obtained by contacting CCEA at [CCEA.Analytics@ccea.org.uk](mailto:CCEA.Analytics@ccea.org.uk)

## 5. Making Decisions about Centre Determined Grades

Before deciding Centre Determined Grades you should agree as a department the evidence you will review (see Section 3 for some examples). Once the decision has been made, this should be set out in your centre's Centre Determined Grades policy and be included in the Departmental Assessment Evidence Grid, referenced in Section 3, that will form part of the evidence base.

When making decisions, take into consideration the amount of specification coverage and if this applies to all students. Adapt as necessary for individual students the evidence you will review, to account for those students who may have encountered more significant disruption. Evidence does not have to be in the same format for every student, but teachers should be satisfied that the evidence is reliable to make an informed holistic judgement of that student's attainment.

### Internal Standardisation

In subjects where there is more than one teacher and/or class in the department, it is a requirement to carry out internal standardisation. The purpose of internal standardisation is to provide teachers with confidence in the Centre Determined Grades they have assigned, to ensure fairness and objectivity of decisions, and to ensure consistency in the application of assessment criteria and standards.

Where more than one teacher is involved in marking the assessment, the application of the mark scheme must be agreed before marking begins.

When marking is complete, internal standardisation must be conducted to ensure all markers have applied the mark scheme consistently and accurately.

Internal standardisation should include cross-marking samples of work across the full range of attainment and include students' work from each class **to ensure a common standard within a department is applied.**

### Grade Descriptions

Grade descriptions set out the characteristics of performance at key grades in the grade range for a qualification, in terms of both content covered and the skills developed (assessment objectives) over the course of study. These should be used to form the basis of your decisions on the Centre Determined Grades that will be awarded to your students in Summer 2021.

Grade descriptions are provided at Grades **A**, **C** and **F** in the GCSE specification, to give a general indication of the standards of achievement likely to have been shown by students awarded these grades. Teachers should refer to these descriptions to support their judgements when arriving at their Centre Determined Grades for students.

Please note that shortcomings in some aspects of students' performance in assessments may be balanced by better performances in others.

**Please see Appendix 1 for the Grade Descriptions at A, C and F for GCSE.** These also include the type of assessment objective evidence you may wish to use and the key features associated with each grade.

### **Practical Application of Grade Descriptions**

To select the most appropriate grade for a student, teachers may use the following approach:

1. Familiarise yourself with the grade descriptions for the subject.
2. Consider support materials such as those set out in Section 4 of this document.
3. Before you arrive at a holistic grade for a student's performance, review the evidence available. At this stage you may wish to make notes to record the qualities that are being looked for.
4. Consider the positive features of the evidence, based on the key features described in the Appendix.
5. Using the descriptions for Grades A, C and F, based on the principle of 'best fit', select the grade you believe comes closest to encapsulating the overall achievement of the student as demonstrated by the evidence. Using this grade as a benchmark, work **either up or down** using the table below to find the final grade.

*For example: A student has recalled, selected and communicated precise knowledge and detailed understanding of biology (Above C standard). Their interpretation and evaluation of quantitative and qualitative data and information is somewhat limited, and they have only drawn basic conclusions (Below C standard). They have used scientific knowledge, terminology and conventions appropriately. (At C standard).*

- a) *if you are of the view that the candidate's evidence meets the description for grade C, consider this first; if the supporting evidence is strong, you may then wish to go up to the grade above and decide if the evidence meets this, and so on, until you have a best fit between the grade description and the student's work; or*
- b) *if you are of the view that the candidate's evidence does not meet the description for grade C, then go down to the grade below and decide if it meets this, and so on, until you have a best fit between the grade description and the student's work.*

The table below summarises this approach:

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Description/Advice</b>
A*	Candidates at grade A* clearly demonstrate all of the features associated with performance at 'A' but in many areas elements of the evidence presented are exceptional, i.e. beyond that which would reasonably be expected of a candidate working at grade 'A'.
<b>A</b>	<i>See Grade A Description.</i>
B	Candidates at grade 'B' may demonstrate some elements of grade 'A' performance in the evidence presented but, because of limitations in other aspects of their work, not to the extent that an assessor could confidently award a grade 'A'.
C*	Candidates at grade C* clearly demonstrate all of the features associated with performance at grade 'C' but in many areas the evidence presented contains elements showing that the candidate is working at a grade beyond that which would reasonably be expected of a candidate working at grade 'C'.
<b>C</b>	<i>See Grade C Description.</i>
D	Candidates at grade 'D' may demonstrate some elements of grade 'C' performance in the evidence presented but, because of limitations in other aspects of their work, not to the extent that an assessor could confidently award a grade 'C'.
E	Candidates at grade 'E' clearly demonstrate all of the features associated with performance at 'F' but in many areas the evidence presented contains elements showing that the candidate is working at a grade beyond that which would reasonably be expected of a candidate working at grade 'F'.
<b>F</b>	<i>See Grade F Description.</i>
G	Candidates at grade 'G' may demonstrate some elements of grade 'F' performance in the evidence presented but, because of limitations in other aspects of their work, not to the extent that an assessor could confidently award a grade 'F'.

## 6. Further Advice and Information

Summer 2021 presents us with significant challenges, particularly teachers and students, and we hope the information set out in this document supports you through the process of awarding Centre Determined Grades this year. The information in this document will be supplemented with a webinar, which amongst other things will provide additional guidance on how to apply grade descriptions to the process of arriving at Centre Determined Grades for each of your students.

If in the interim you require further information, please contact:

CCEA Helpline	<p><u>Email: <a href="mailto:helpline@ccea.org.uk">helpline@ccea.org.uk</a></u></p> <p>Telephone: <b>028 9026 1220</b>. The helpline is operational each day from 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday, for centres with queries in relation to Summer 2021.</p> <p>All other queries should be directed to <u><a href="mailto:centresupport@ccea.org.uk">centresupport@ccea.org.uk</a></u></p>
CCEA Entries	<u><a href="mailto:entriesandresults@ccea.org.uk">entriesandresults@ccea.org.uk</a></u>
Subject Officer	Gareth Wilson <u><a href="mailto:gwilson@ccea.org.uk">gwilson@ccea.org.uk</a></u>
Specification Support Officer	Nola Fitzsimons <u><a href="mailto:nfitzsimons@ccea.org.uk">nfitzsimons@ccea.org.uk</a></u>

## Appendix 1

### GCSE Grade Descriptions and Key Features – Biology

Assessment Objective	AO1		
Grade Descriptions	A	C	F
	<p>Candidates recall, select and communicate precise knowledge and detailed understanding of biology. They demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the nature of biology, its principles and applications and the relationship between biology and society. Candidates understand the relationships between scientific advances, their ethical implications and the benefits and risks associated with them. They use scientific and technical knowledge, terminology and conventions appropriately and consistently showing a detailed understanding of scale, including time, size and space.</p>	<p>Candidates recall, select and communicate secure knowledge and understanding of biology. They demonstrate understanding of the nature of biology and its principles and applications and the relationship between biology and society. They understand that scientific advances may have ethical implications, benefits and risks. They use scientific and technical knowledge, terminology and conventions appropriately, showing understanding of scale, including time, size and space.</p>	<p>Candidates recall, select and communicate limited knowledge and understanding of biology. They show a limited understanding that scientific advances may have ethical implications, benefits and risks. They recognise simple inter-relationships between biology and society. They use limited scientific and technical knowledge, terminology and conventions, showing some understanding of scale in terms of time, size and space.</p>
AO1 Evidence	Grade A Key Features	Grade C Key Features	Grade F Key Features
<p>AO1 evidence can be drawn from all three assessment units. AO1 questions are typically recall type questions that require knowledge and understanding. Sources of AO1 evidence include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CCEA assessment resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Candidates demonstrate excellent knowledge and understanding of scientific ideas and scientific techniques and procedures.</li> <li>Candidates' use of scientific terminology and notation is excellent.</li> <li>Candidates' responses are presented and organised with a high degree of clarity and coherence.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Candidates demonstrate satisfactory knowledge and understanding of scientific ideas and scientific techniques and procedures.</li> <li>Candidates' use of scientific terminology and notation is satisfactory.</li> <li>Candidates' responses are presented and organised with a satisfactory degree of clarity and coherence.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Candidates demonstrate limited knowledge and understanding of scientific ideas and scientific techniques and procedures.</li> <li>Candidates' use of scientific terminology and notation is limited.</li> <li>Candidates' responses are presented and organised with limited clarity and coherence.</li> </ul>

<b>AO1 Evidence</b>	<b>Grade A Key Features</b>	<b>Grade C Key Features</b>	<b>Grade F Key Features</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unit 1, 2 and 3 past papers</li> <li>• Mock examinations</li> <li>• Class tests, homework and other appropriate evidence</li> </ul> (Minimal coverage of AO1 in Booklet A materials)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spelling, punctuation and grammar are of a sufficiently high standard to make the meaning clear.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spelling, punctuation and grammar are of a satisfactory standard to make the meaning clear.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spelling, punctuation and grammar are of a limited standard.</li> </ul>

Assessment Objective	AO2		
Grade Descriptions	A	C	F
	<p>They apply appropriate skills, including communication, mathematical, technical and observational skills, knowledge and understanding effectively in a wide range of practical and other contexts. They show a comprehensive understanding of the relationships between hypotheses, evidence, theories and explanations and make effective use of models, including mathematical models, to explain abstract ideas, phenomena, events and processes. They use a wide range of appropriate methods, sources of information and data consistently, applying relevant skills to address scientific questions, solve problems and test hypotheses.</p>	<p>They apply appropriate skills, including communication, mathematical, technical and observational skills, knowledge and understanding in a range of practical and other contexts. They show understanding of the relationships between hypotheses, evidence, theories and explanations and use models, including mathematical models, to describe abstract ideas, phenomena, events and processes. They use a range of appropriate methods, sources of information and data, applying their skills to address scientific questions, solve problems and test hypotheses.</p>	<p>They apply skills, including limited communication, mathematical, technical and observational skills, knowledge and understanding in practical and some other contexts. They recognise and use hypotheses, evidence and explanations and can explain straightforward models of phenomena, events and processes. They use a limited range of methods, sources of information and data to address straightforward scientific questions, problems and hypotheses.</p>
AO2 Evidence	Grade A Key Features	Grade C Key Features	Grade F Key Features
<p>AO2 evidence can be drawn from all three assessment units. AO2 questions typically involve application of knowledge and understanding as well as mathematical skills such as calculations and graph work.</p> <p>Sources of AO2 evidence include:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Candidates demonstrate excellent application of knowledge and understanding of scientific ideas, scientific enquiry, techniques and procedures.</li> <li>• Candidates' development of skills in scientific ideas, scientific enquiry, techniques and procedures is excellent.</li> <li>• Candidates demonstrate a high level of competence when handling data and can describe and explain fully, trends and patterns shown by data in graphs and tables.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Candidates demonstrate satisfactory application of knowledge and understanding of scientific ideas, scientific enquiry, techniques and procedures.</li> <li>• Candidates' development of skills in scientific ideas, scientific enquiry, techniques and procedures is satisfactory.</li> <li>• Candidates demonstrate a satisfactory level of competence when handling data and can describe and explain trends and patterns shown by data in graphs and tables.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Candidates demonstrate limited application of knowledge and understanding of scientific ideas, scientific enquiry, techniques and procedures.</li> <li>• Candidates' development of skills in scientific ideas, scientific enquiry, techniques and procedures is limited.</li> <li>• Candidates demonstrate limited competence when handling data and can partially describe and explain trends and patterns shown by data in graphs and tables.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CCEA assessment resources</li> </ul>			
<b>AO2 Evidence</b>	<b>Grade A Key Features</b>	<b>Grade C Key Features</b>	<b>Grade F Key Features</b>
<p>Sources of AO2 evidence continued:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unit 1, 2 and 3 past papers</li> <li>Mock examinations</li> <li>Class tests, homework and other appropriate evidence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Candidates demonstrate excellent mathematical skills.</li> <li>Calculations are performed with minimal errors and correct notations are used.</li> <li>Candidates' use of scientific terminology is excellent.</li> <li>Candidates' responses are presented and organised with a high degree of clarity and coherence.</li> <li>Spelling, punctuation and grammar are of a sufficiently high standard to make the meaning clear.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Candidates demonstrate reasonable mathematical skills.</li> <li>Calculations are performed with some errors on occasion, with correct notations used.</li> <li>Candidates' use of scientific terminology and notation is satisfactory.</li> <li>Candidates' responses are presented and organised with a satisfactory degree of clarity and coherence.</li> <li>Spelling, punctuation and grammar are of a satisfactory standard to make the meaning clear.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Candidates demonstrate limited mathematical skills.</li> <li>Calculations can be incomplete with errors, and correct notations are not always used.</li> <li>Candidates' use of scientific terminology and notation is limited.</li> <li>Candidates' responses are presented and organised with a limited clarity and coherence.</li> <li>Spelling, punctuation and grammar are of a limited standard.</li> </ul>

Assessment Objective	AO3		
Grade Descriptions	A	C	F
<p>Candidates analyse, interpret and critically evaluate a broad range of quantitative and qualitative data and information. They evaluate information systematically to develop arguments and explanations taking account of the limitations of the available evidence. They make reasoned judgements consistently and draw detailed, evidence-based conclusions.</p>	<p>Candidates analyse, interpret and evaluate a range of quantitative and qualitative data and information. They understand the limitations of evidence and use evidence and information to develop arguments with supporting explanations. They draw conclusions based on the available evidence.</p>	<p>Candidates interpret and evaluate limited quantitative and qualitative data and information from a narrow range of sources. They can draw elementary conclusions having collected limited evidence.</p>	
AO3 Evidence	Grade A Key Features	Grade C Key Features	Grade F Key Features
<p>AO3 evidence can be drawn from all three assessment units. AO3 questions typically require analysis, interpretation and evaluation of information.</p> <p>Sources of AO3 evidence include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CCEA assessment resources</li> <li>• Unit 1, 2 and 3 past papers</li> <li>• Mock examinations</li> <li>• Class tests, homework and other appropriate evidence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Candidates' analysis of scientific information and ideas is excellent allowing them to fully interpret and evaluate the information, make valid judgements, draw detailed conclusions, and to develop and improve experimental procedures.</li> <li>• Candidates' use of scientific terminology and notation is excellent.</li> <li>• Candidates' responses are presented and organised with a high degree of clarity and coherence.</li> <li>• Spelling, punctuation and grammar are of a sufficiently high standard to make the meaning clear.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Candidates' analysis of scientific information and ideas is satisfactory allowing them to interpret and evaluate the information, make judgements, draw conclusions, and to develop and improve most aspects of experimental procedures.</li> <li>• Candidates' use of scientific terminology and notation is satisfactory.</li> <li>• Candidates' responses are presented and organised with a satisfactory degree of clarity and coherence.</li> <li>• Spelling, punctuation and grammar are of a satisfactory standard to make the meaning clear.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Candidates' analysis of scientific information and ideas is limited allowing them to make basic judgements and conclusions.</li> <li>• Candidates' use of scientific terminology and notation is limited.</li> <li>• Candidates' responses are presented and organised with a limited clarity and coherence.</li> <li>• Spelling, punctuation and grammar are of a limited standard.</li> </ul>

## Appendix 2

### Definitions of Levels of Control

Levels of control for the conditions under which students have completed assessments that are internally marked in school are defined as High, Medium and Limited at GCSE. These definitions also align with the conditions of control for GCE and other CCEA qualifications. In recording the levels of control for evidence to be used in Centre Determined Grades for Summer 2021, the following should be used.

<b>High</b>	<p>The use of resources is tightly prescribed. The centre must ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• all students are within direct sight of the teacher/supervisor throughout the session(s);</li> <li>• display materials which might provide assistance are removed or covered;</li> <li>• there is no access to email, the internet or mobile phones;</li> <li>• students complete their work independently;</li> <li>• interaction with other students does not occur; and</li> <li>• no assistance of any description is provided.</li> </ul>
<b>Medium</b>	<p>Students do not need to be directly supervised at all times. The use of resources, including the internet, is not tightly prescribed. Centres should ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• there is sufficient evidence to ensure that the individual work can be authenticated; and</li> <li>• the work an individual student submits for assessment is their own.</li> </ul> <p>If work has been completed in groups, teachers must ensure that they can determine and assess the individual student's contribution to the work.</p> <p>If work has been completed remotely, it may be useful to ask questions about what they did and how/why they did it, to help authenticate the work.</p>
<b>Limited</b>	<p>Work is completed without any direct supervision and would not normally contribute to assessable outcomes.</p>



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**COUNCIL FOR THE CURRICULUM, EXAMINATIONS AND ASSESSMENT**

29 Clarendon Road, Clarendon Dock, Belfast BT1 3BG

Tel: +44(0)28 9026 1200 Email: [info@ccea.org.uk](mailto:info@ccea.org.uk)

Web: [www.ccea.org.uk](http://www.ccea.org.uk)

