

Aspect of assessment	Why we should have a requirement	Our proposed requirement	How to decide on exceptions	The requirement that should govern the exceptions	Illustrative examples of the present position
Assessment objectives	Allowing boards to take different positions on the weighting and nature of assessment objectives in a subject may prevent demonstrably comparable standards being set between qualifications with the same title.	We write assessment objectives for a subject and assign weightings to them to optimise validity.	There should be no exceptions to this requirement.	<i>Not applicable</i>	We ensure that the key abilities for the subject are reflected and that all of them are given due weight. For instance the four core skills in modern foreign languages (mfl) are represented equally.
Parameters for non-exam assessment	Allowing boards to take different positions on the weighting and nature of non-exam assessment in a subject may prevent demonstrably comparable standards being set between qualifications with the same title.	We select the mode of assessment required in each aspect of a subject that optimises validity and so is the most defensible one. In making that selection we balance what ought to provide the most valid assessment against threats to that validity and wider concerns. Threats to the validity of non-exam	There should be no exceptions to this requirement. A FIRST SUPPLEMENTARY RULE Where Ofqual determines that non-exam assessment should be used in a subject, it shall specify the weighting, assessment objectives to be included and focus of that assessment,	<i>Not applicable</i> A SECOND SUPPLEMENTARY RULE Where the most valid and sufficiently defensible way to assess a discrete part of a subject is through non-exam assessment but the accuracy of that assessment would be a major threat to the	In the sciences, the threats to validity shown by some current practices in controlled assessment led us to require assessment to be wholly through examinations. Similarly, in English language, it was decided that marks from the spoken language aspect of the subject would not contribute towards the subject grade but be reported separately on a three-point scale.

		assessment may come from external pressures such as the use of the qualification in accountability or selection systems which may make it harder for teachers to mark accurately; from challenges with authenticity depending on the nature of the non-exam assessment and how it is carried out; from the manageability of the assessment and the amount of course time it requires or from other sources.	consistent with the specified content for that subject. Not to do so would permit a variety in approaches that could threaten inter-syllabus comparability of standards.	qualification, the outcome of that assessment may be separated from the qualification.	In music we specify that the 60% weighting must be split equally between composition and performance.
Setting and marking of non-exam assessment	Deciding who sets and who marks non-exam assessment is a proper part of an exam board's responsibility when designing its non-exam assessment scheme for a qualification.	Ofqual does not generally take a position on who sets and who marks non-exam assessment.	Ofqual specifies how non-exam assessments should be set and marked in a subject where it perceives that not to do may create a serious threat to validity in relation to inter-syllabus comparability of standards.	When making decisions about the arrangements for the setting and marking of non-exam assessment in a subject the requirement should be to optimise validity and so using those arrangements that are the most defensible. In making that choice we balance what ought to provide the most valid assessment against	In cases where the nature of the subject may present challenges to the validity of external marking, such as art and design, we permit assessment to be by the centre, by the exam board, or a combination of those. (We do not, however, actively specify centre marking as the sole option to assessment.) Where we consider that valid marking

				threats to that validity and wider concerns. Threats may come from challenges with authenticity, examiner/moderator supply, undermining curriculum intentions, manageability in centres or from other sources.	can be achieved through assessment by the exam board, such as the speaking test in mfl, we require that. In some cases, with particular pressures and where we can appreciate there is a fine balance to the pros and cons, such as in computer science, we permit exam boards to select their approach, but require them to show that they have taken all reasonable steps to address the potential adverse effects of this chosen approach.
Tiering	Allowing boards to take different positions on tiering in a subject may prevent demonstrably comparable standards being set between qualifications with the same title.	GCSEs should not use tiered exams.	GCSE subjects should only be tiered if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> manageable assessments cannot be designed that would both allow students at the lower end of the ability range to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and understanding, and that would stretch the most able students; and content that would be exclusive to the higher 	Where tiering is used in GCSE it should comprise two overlapping tiers, the overlap comprising grades 4 and 5.	Only three subjects use tiering: mathematics, the sciences and mfl. The two tiers are focused on grades 1 – 5 and 4 – 9 so there is a two-grade overlap. The Conditions in mathematics and the sciences require at least 20% of the marks for each tier to be common. The idea is that the boards use the performance on the overlap marks during awarding to try to ensure comparability of standards for grades 4 and 5 on each

			<p>tier can be identified; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the level of candidature for each tier will be sufficient to allow standards to be set confidently in both. 		<p>tier. The requirements to achieve comparability across tiers are less prescriptive in mfl. This is owing to a combination of the question types used (where differentiation is often by outcome) and the typical size of the individual assessments in terms of marks, which would restrict the inferences that could be drawn from any equating.</p>
<p>Marks allocated to mathematics in other subjects</p>	<p>Deciding a weighting for marks allocated to mathematics within a subject is a proper part of an exam board's responsibility when designing an assessment scheme for a qualification.</p>	<p>Ofqual does not generally take a position on prescribing a weighting for marks allocated to mathematics within a subject.</p>	<p>We should determine a weighting for marks allocated to mathematics where it features actively in the prescribed content – typically in an appendix – and allowing boards to take different positions on that weighting may prevent demonstrably comparable standards being set between qualifications with the same title.</p>	<p>We require in an assessment requirement a minimum weighting for this aspect of a subject to optimise validity given the prescribed content.</p>	<p>Weightings are specified in geography and in the sciences but not in computer science.</p>
<p>Marks allocated to knowledge in isolation</p>	<p>Deciding a weighting for marks allocated to knowledge in isolation (recall) within a subject is a</p>	<p>Ofqual does not always take a position on prescribing a weighting for marks allocated to</p>	<p>We should determine a weighting for marks allocated to knowledge in isolation where a subject differentiates by task and allowing boards to take</p>	<p>We require in guidance a maximum weighting for knowledge in isolation to optimise the validity of the assessment.</p>	<p>Weightings are specified in the guidance for history (10%), religious studies (20%) and computer science (15%). In determining these weightings we</p>

	proper part of an exam board's responsibility when designing an assessment scheme for a qualification.	knowledge in isolation within a subject.	different positions on the weighting of knowledge in isolation may prevent demonstrably comparable standards being set between qualifications with the same title.		balance expectations of the qualification level with the nature of the subject and the curriculum intentions in terms of how the subject content is specified.
Practical work and fieldwork assessed in exam papers	Deciding a weighting for marks in exams allocated to practical work or fieldwork is a proper part of an exam board's responsibility when designing an assessment scheme for a qualification.	Ofqual does not generally take a position on the weighting for marks in exams allocated to practical work or fieldwork.	We select the mode of assessment required in each aspect of a subject that optimises validity and so is the most defensible one. In making that selection we balance what ought to provide the most valid assessment against threats to that validity and wider concerns. Where practical work or fieldwork features significantly in the prescribed content and we require that it is assessed only in exams. Allowing boards to include an amount that we would not consider reflects the curriculum intentions may threaten the validity of the assessment.	We require in an assessment requirement minimum weighting for this aspect of a subject to optimise validity given the prescribed content.	In the sciences and in geography a Condition requires that 15% of the marks must be made available from questions that assess practical skills/fieldwork.
Assessment length	Deciding the lengths of assessments is a proper part of an	Ofqual does not generally take a position on prescribing the	Ofqual specifies overall assessment times only in those subjects where it would be in the public	A Condition should specify a minimum overall exam time, the least that permits acceptably valid	Minimum overall examination times appear in guidance for English language, English literature

	<p>exam board's responsibility when designing an assessment scheme for a qualification.</p>	<p>lengths of assessments in a subject.</p>	<p>interest to prevent exam boards providing assessments with the same focus of very different lengths or all boards providing very short assessments (which may have negative washback effects). We specify minimum assessment times for particular assessments to ensure acceptably valid assessment and to prevent competition on these bases.</p>	<p>assessment and is sufficiently long to prevent there being reasonable public or professional concern.</p>	<p>and mathematics. In the sciences it is a Condition.</p> <p>In music we require the composition assessments to be at least three minutes of music in total. Similarly, in drama we specify the minimum lengths of the devised performance. In art and design we specify the time for the externally-set assessment.</p> <p>In ancient languages we use guidance to set an expectation that the compulsory literature assessment should comprise at least 110 lines of text. There is some similar guidance in MFL.</p>
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