

LEVEL 1
FOUNDATION
**PROJECT
QUALIFICATION**
(7991)

Specification

For teaching from September 2020 onwards
First assessment from May 2021 onwards



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This specification will be published annually on the AQA website (www.aqa.org.uk). The version on the website is the definitive version of the specification.

Vertical black lines indicate a significant change or addition to the specification published for 2019 onwards.

1 Introduction

1.1 Why choose AQA?

It's a fact that AQA is the UK's favourite exam board and more students receive their academic qualifications from AQA than from any other board. But why does AQA continue to be so popular?

- **Specifications**

These are designed to the highest standards so that teachers and students can be confident that an AQA award provides an accurate measure of what the student has achieved.

- **Support**

AQA provides free of charge standardisation meetings and online resources for Project qualifications and offers a wide range of CPD both face to face and online. These support and training meetings explain the specification, suggest practical strategies to help students produce successful projects and help staff development in new roles.

- **Service**

We are committed to providing an efficient and effective service and are at the end of the phone when you need to speak to someone about an important issue. We will always try to resolve issues the first time you contact us but, should that not be possible, we will come back to you (by telephone, e-mail or letter) and continue to work with you to find the solution.

- **Ethics**

AQA is a registered charity with no shareholders to pay. We exist solely for the good of education. Any surplus income is ploughed back into educational research and our service to you, our customers. We don't profit from education, you do.

If you are an existing AQA customer, we thank you for your support. If you are new to AQA, then we look forward to welcoming you.

1.2 What is the Level 1 Foundation Project?

The Level 1 Foundation Project is a Level 1 qualification first assessed in November 2008. It can contribute to a programme of study and can be taken as a stand alone qualification. Students may choose to take the Level 1 Foundation Project Qualification as an extension from studies for any other qualifications at Level 1 (GCSE, VRQ, BTEC, other academic or vocational qualifications including Modern Apprenticeships).

The Level 1 Foundation Project will develop and extend from one or more of the student's study areas and/or from an area of personal interest or activity outside their main programme of study. It will be based on a topic chosen by the student(s) and agreed as appropriate by the centre.

Delivery of the Level 1 Foundation Project Qualification in centres will involve some teaching of the necessary skills, supervision and assessment of the student's progress. It will involve extended autonomous work by the learner. It will require in total 60 guided learning hours.

Students are required, with appropriate supervision, to:

- choose an area of interest
- draft a title and aims of the project for formal approval by the centre
- plan, research and carry out the project
- deliver a presentation to a non specialist audience
- provide evidence of all stages of project development and production for assessment.

1.3 What are the Learning Outcomes of the Level 1 Foundation Project Qualification?

The student will:

- identify, design and complete an individual project, applying a range of organisational skills and strategies to meet agreed objectives
- obtain, critically select and use information from a range of sources. Analyse data, apply it relevantly and demonstrate understanding of any appropriate linkages, connections and complexities of the topic
- select and use a range of skills, where appropriate, solve problems, take decisions critically, creatively and flexibly, to achieve planned outcomes
- evaluate outcomes both in relation to agreed objectives and own learning and performance. Select and use a range of communication skills and media to present evidenced outcomes and conclusions in appropriate format.

2 Teaching, Supervising and Assessing the Level 1 Foundation Project Qualification

The Level 1 Foundation Project will require the teaching of relevant planning, organisational, project management, study and presentation skills and a piece of independent work undertaken by the learner. This work will be guided and overseen by the learner's Supervisor, monitored by the Centre Coordinator and internally assessed by the centre.

2.1 Aims

The Level 1 Foundation Project offers opportunities for students to:

- develop and improve their own learning and performance as inquisitive and independent students
- be inspired by new areas and/or methods of study
- support the experiential learning process and provide further opportunities for students to plan and review their learning
- use their learning experiences to support their personal aspirations for further study and career development

2.2 The Taught Element of the Level 1 Foundation Project Qualification

The Foundation Project Qualification will require teaching of the necessary skills. It is expected that up to a half of the total available resource i.e. 30 guided learning hours, will be spent on this taught element. The remaining 30 glh are allocated for the student's independent work and the individual supervision and guidance received. Teaching of the skills for the Project should be agreed by the supervisor as appropriate to the needs of the student and their chosen project.

The taught element is likely to include:

- research skills including the ability to search for and identify suitable sources of information in the chosen subject area
- skills or techniques that will be required for the safe and effective execution of the project which are not part of the candidate's course of study. e.g. conducting risk assessment, assessing ethical principles of project proposals and research, safe laboratory or workshop technique, professional codes of practice, ethical guidelines, research methodology
- ICT skills that will enhance the production of the report and/or the development of the project
- project management skills including time, resource and task management
- the format and structure of accepted academic forms of research report

2.3 What is the Project process?

Student

The student will develop an idea for a project that they wish to carry out and discuss their ideas with a supervisor.

Students will then:

- carry out research to enable them to sufficiently develop project aims and objectives to make a formal project proposal
- document their planning and research within the Production Log
- meet with the supervisor at specified meetings to discuss the project process and issues
- carry out the project by achieving the aims and objectives they set themselves
- prepare and give a presentation about the project product and process (including a question and answer session)
- evaluate the project process.

Group Projects

If students are working as part of a group each student's individual contribution to the end product must be pre-approved by the Centre Co-ordinator. Students working as a group must submit individual assessment evidence and complete an individual presentation.

Evidence submitted for assessment must show how each individual student has met the assessment objectives.

Supervisor

The centre will allocate a supervisor to each student. It is advised that the number of students allocated to each supervisor should take into account the supervisor's other commitments.

Supervisors will:

- meet with each student to review initial ideas
- agree the student's working title and proposal and complete the supervisor's sections in the Production Log and Assessment Record for each learner
- meet with each student for regular reviews including at least:
 - a meeting to discuss the record of initial ideas and how the student intends to develop the project
 - a planning review (post-proposal acceptance)
 - a mid-term review
 - a project product
- assess the project holistically applying AQA assessment objectives
- confirm that a presentation took place and provide a record of the questioning
- endorse each student's Production Log and Assessment Record by signing the appropriate sections including a declaration that the evidence submitted for assessment is the unaided work of the student
- **confirm that no dual accreditation has taken place and that the work submitted is a genuine extension and development of the student's course of study. No work assessed for the award of marks can be submitted for any other accredited qualification(s)**

Centre Coordinator

Each centre is required to appoint an appropriate Centre Coordinator who will be responsible to AQA for all Level 1 Foundation Project submissions from the centre.

The Centre Co-ordinator will:

- develop staff understanding of the requirements of the Foundation Project and the centre's relevant assessment policies and procedures
- approve the suitability of the project proposal and check that it constitutes a genuine extension and development of the student's programme of study. This includes material on that programme of study that may be covered after the completion of the project. **NB it is possible for the Centre Coordinator to also supervise projects. If this is the case a senior colleague should counter-sign Proposal part C**
- quality assure standards of internal assessment
- meet administrative requirements (both internal and external)
- review and evaluate assessment practice including feedback from AQA.

2.4 Assessing the potential of a Proposal

The supervisor assesses the potential project against the following checklist.

1. Does the working title of the project and proposed action allow the student to investigate and to access the concepts and skills in the assessment objectives, i.e. plan, research, analyse, evaluate and explain, rather than simply describe and narrate?
2. Are the title and proposed action clear and focused on an issue which can be managed within the timescale, available resources and word total?
3. Does the working title and proposed action indicate that the student will be capable of investigating and researching the topic or carrying out the activity or task independently, safely and ethically?
4. Is there a danger that the student will be unable to approach the project impartially and in a balanced way?
5. Is the student likely to face difficulties understanding the themes and issues associated with the project topic?

2.5 Assessing the Level 1 Foundation Project

2.5.1 Assessment Evidence

The evidence for assessment will comprise the following:

- the completed Production Log and Assessment Record including the Project Proposal Form, Presentation Record and Candidate Record Form
- the project product including a written report and any other evidence, as appropriate, depending on the topic or subject area chosen.

Completed Production Log and Assessment Record

The Production Log and Assessment Record will document the planning and progress of the project, including decision-making and the student's reflections on the process:

- formal proposal and approval
- initial idea and outline plan for the project
- record of research carried out and resources used
- record of advice and support offered and action taken as a result
- note of any changes made to plan and reasons for the changes
- a review of the completed Project Product
- a record of the presentation with the supervisor's record of relevant questioning.

The live presentation should be for a non-specialist audience and use media appropriate to the type of project. The presentation may involve the use of flipcharts, posters, Prezi, PowerPoint or short excerpts of video material. The presentation record should include examples of questions from the supervisor and the student's response to these.

All substantive advice given to the students should be recorded by them in the Production Log and Assessment Record and confirmed by the Supervisor.

The Production Log and Assessment Record can be downloaded from the projects website.

Appropriate Evidence of Project Product

Depending on the subject area or topic chosen, a variety of evidence may be submitted for assessment. Evidence can be provided in any form appropriate to the type of project chosen.

All project products must include a written report. The exact length of each written report will depend on the nature of the project, the subject area or topic chosen and the other evidence provided.

A project product which consists solely of a research based written report should be approximately 1000 words, for example a research report of a scientific investigation, exploration of a hypothesis or an extended essay or academic report in appropriate form. Where the chosen product is an artefact there must also be a research based written report of a minimum of 250 words. In order to appropriately evidence an artefact students may include photographs of each stage of development as well as the final product. It is not necessary to include large artefacts themselves as evidence, photographs or other media will suffice.

2.5.2 Assessment Objectives (AOs)

All candidates are required to meet the following Assessment Objectives. The Assessment Objectives are weighted as indicated below:

	Assessment Objectives	Weighting
AO1	Manage With appropriate support select, plan and carry out a project or task applying organisational skills to achieve agreed objectives.	20%
AO2	Use Resources Obtain and select information from a range of sources and apply in a relevant manner to achieve agreed objectives.	20%
AO3	Develop and Realise Select and use a range of skills, including appropriate technologies and working with others to achieve agreed objectives.	40%
AO4	Review Communicate project outcomes, presenting evidence in an appropriate format.	20%

2.5.3 Assessment Criteria

Assessment criteria statements are provided in three mark bands for each objective and should be regarded as hierarchical (i.e. each criterion assumes that any lower criteria are also met and that aspects of any higher criteria may be met in part).

When assessments are made, the criteria should be used to judge which mark best fits the candidate's work on their Level 1 Foundation Project.

The mark should be awarded on the basis of the general level of the candidate's work in relation to the criteria statements for each level (i.e. an isolated example of performance at a different level should not be used to raise or lower the overall assessment).

The work will clearly meet the criteria given in the appropriate level descriptor for the lowest available mark at that level as appropriate to the particular project. Higher marks at each level may be used where work is judged to meet the criteria readily, consistently and across different elements of the project.

The zero mark band should be awarded in the event of a candidate failing to demonstrate any achievement in the objective at Level 1.

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Assessment Objectives	Mark band	Assessment Criteria
AO1 Manage <ul style="list-style-type: none"> select a topic and agree project aims and objectives produce a project plan carry out the project applying organisational skills to achieve agreed objective 	7–10 marks	<p>Clear identification of the topic to be investigated and clear, relevant aims and objectives for the proposed project title.</p> <p>Detailed project plan, with clear evidence of monitoring progress of project work against the agreed project plan.</p>
	4–6 marks	<p>Some identification of the topic to be investigated and some related aims and objectives for the proposed project title.</p> <p>Project plan, with some evidence of project work relevant to the agreed project plan.</p>
	1–3 marks	<p>Limited identification of the topic to be investigated and limited aims and objectives for the proposed project title.</p> <p>Little evidence of planning and relevant project work relevant to the agreed project plan.</p>
	0 marks	No relevant response.

Assessment Objectives	Mark band	Assessment Criteria
AO2 Use resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> select information from a range of sources apply information in a relevant manner to achieve agreed objectives 	7–10 marks	The selection of a wide range of relevant sources. Relevant data collection and application of information.
	4–6 marks	The selection of a range of relevant sources. Some relevant data collection and application of information.
	1–3 marks	Limited selection of sources. Little or no data collection and application of information.
	0 marks	No relevant response.

Assessment Objectives	Mark band	Assessment Criteria
AO3 Develop and Realise <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use a range of skills including appropriate technologies • working with others • achieve agreed objectives 	14–20 marks	<p>The project plan is fully implemented and the outcome is fully realised to a high standard and consistent with the candidate's original plan.</p> <p>There is clear evidence of appropriate changes to, or development of, the initial project plan or title or aims and objectives, with clear and appropriate reasons for any changes.</p> <p>Candidates communicate their findings clearly in an appropriate format, using a variety of sources in a way that closely addresses the nature of the task.</p>
	7–13 marks	<p>The project plan is implemented and the outcome is sufficiently realised to an acceptable standard and consistent with the candidate's original plan.</p> <p>There is some evidence of appropriate changes to, or development of, the initial project plan or title or aims and objectives, with some reasons for any changes.</p> <p>Candidates communicate their findings in an appropriate format using different sources in a manner appropriate for the task.</p>
	1–6 marks	<p>The project plan is implemented in a limited way and the outcome is realised in a limited manner and not always consistent with the candidate's original plan.</p> <p>There is little or no evidence of appropriate changes to, or development of, the initial project plan or title or aims and objectives.</p> <p>Candidates communicate their findings, sometimes in an appropriate format, drawing on a limited number of sources and present them in a manner not always appropriate for the task.</p>
	0 marks	No relevant response.

Assessment Objectives	Mark band	Assessment Criteria
AO4 Review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> summarise own learning and performance communication skills present project outcomes in an appropriate format 	7–10 marks	<p>Ability to successfully summarise the key elements and the strengths and weaknesses of the completed project in relation to the planning, implementation and outcomes, and the candidate's own learning during the project.</p> <p>Material is consistently relevant and appropriately presented. Candidates clearly communicate their findings and outcomes.</p>
	4–6 marks	<p>Some ability to summarise the key elements and the strengths and weaknesses of the completed project in relation to the planning, implementation and outcomes, and the candidate's own learning during the project.</p> <p>Material is sometimes relevant and appropriately presented. Candidates communicate their findings and outcomes.</p>
	1–3 marks	<p>Limited ability to summarise the key elements and the strengths and weaknesses of the completed project in relation to the planning, implementation and outcomes, and the candidate's own learning during the project.</p> <p>Material is not always relevant or appropriately presented. Candidates communicate some of their findings and outcomes.</p>
	0 marks	No relevant response.

2.5.4 Standardisation

AQA will hold standardising meetings. Centres entering candidates for the first time should send their Centre Coordinator to the meetings. Attendance is also strongly recommended in the following cases:

- where there has been a serious misinterpretation of the specification requirements;
- where the nature of the projects agreed by a centre has been inappropriate;
- where a significant adjustment has been made to a centre's marks in the previous examination.

Otherwise attendance is at the discretion of centres. At these meetings AQA will provide support in using the assessment criteria.

Centre Coordinators must standardise marking within the centre to make sure that all candidates at the centre have been assessed to the same standard. The Centre Coordinator should sign the Centre Declaration Sheet to confirm that internal standardisation has taken place. Internal moderation should evidence the sampling and appropriate adjustment by the Centre Coordinator.

Internal standardisation and moderation may involve:

- all supervisors assessing some trial pieces of work and identifying differences in marking standards;
- discussing any differences in assessment at a training meeting for all supervisors;
- referring to reference and archive material such as examples from AQA's standardising meetings;
- sampling and appropriate adjustment by the Centre Coordinator

but other valid approaches are permissible.

Supervisors must show clearly how the marks have been awarded in relation to the marking criteria defined in the specification. This annotation will help the moderator to see as precisely as possible where the supervisor considers that the candidates have met the criteria in the specification.

Work could be annotated by either of the following methods:

- key pieces of evidence flagged throughout the work by annotation
- summative comments on the work, referencing precise sections in the work.

The total mark for each candidate must be submitted to AQA and the moderator on the mark forms provided or by Electronic Data interchange (EDI) by the specified date. Centres will be informed which candidates' work is required in the samples to be submitted to the moderator.

The centre must retain the work of all candidates, including Candidate Record Forms (CRFs), under secure conditions, from the time it is assessed, to allow for the possibility of an enquiry about results. The work may be returned to candidates after the deadline for enquiries about results. If an enquiry about a result has been made, the work must remain under secure conditions in case it is required by AQA.

2.5.5 Moderation

You must send all your students' marks to us by the date given at [aqa.org.uk/deadlines](https://www.aqa.org.uk/deadlines). You will be asked to send a sample of your students' NEA evidence to your moderator.

You must show clearly how marks have been awarded against the assessment criteria in this specification. Your comments must help the moderator see, as precisely as possible, where you think the students have met the assessment criteria.

You must:

- Record your comments on the candidate record form (CRF)
- Check that the correct marks are written on the CRF and that the total is correct

The moderator re-marks a sample of the evidence and compares this with the marks you have provided to check whether any changes are needed to bring the marking in line with our agreed standards. Any changes to marks will normally keep your rank order but, where major inconsistencies are found, we reserve the right to change the rank order.

3 Administration

3.1 Entries

Please refer to the current version of *Entry Procedures and Codes* for up to date entry procedures.

3.2 Private Candidates

This specification is not available to private candidates.

3.3 Access Arrangements and Special Consideration

We have taken note of the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995 in developing and administering this specification.

We follow the guidelines in the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) document: *Access Arrangements and Special Consideration: Regulations and Guidance Relating to Candidates who are Eligible for*

Adjustments in Examination GCE, AEA, GCSE, Entry Level & Key Skills. This is published on the JCQ website: <https://www.jcq.org.uk/exams-office/access-arrangements-and-special-consideration> or you can follow the link from our website <https://www.aqa.org.uk/exams-administration/access-arrangements>

3.4 Safeguarding

Some of the content within this curriculum may generate discussions or disclosures from students which raise safeguarding concerns. If this happens, please follow your centre's safeguarding policy to arrange support.

3.5 Language of the Assessment

We will provide this specification in English only.

3.6 Awarding Grades and Reporting Results

The Level 1 Foundation Project Qualification will be graded on a three grade scale: A*, A, B. Candidates who fail to reach the minimum standard for grade B

will be recorded as U (unclassified) and will not receive a qualification certificate.

3.7 Re-sits and Shelf-life of Results

Candidates may re-sit this qualification any number of times within the shelf-life of the specification. However, any re-sit must include the full projects

process and a new title. Candidates will be graded on the basis of the evidence submitted for assessment.

3.8 Supervision and Authentication of Coursework

In order to meet Ofqual's qualification and subject criteria AQA requires:

- **candidates** to sign the Candidate Record Form (CRF) page in the Production Log and Assessment Record to confirm that the work submitted is their own, and
- **supervisors** to confirm on the CRF page that the work assessed is solely that of the candidate concerned and was conducted under the conditions laid down by the specification, and the JCQ instructions for conducting coursework.

The completed CRF for each student must be included in the candidate's Log and Assessment Record. All supervisors who have assessed the work of any student entered must sign the declaration of authentication. Failure to sign the authentication statement may delay the processing of the student's result.

In centres where supervisors are familiar with candidates' work the supervisor should be sufficiently

aware of a student's standard and level of work to appreciate if the project submitted is beyond the ability of the student. Where this is not the case, Centre Coordinators should make sure that the project is completed under closer supervision. However, in all cases the initial planning, guidance, mid-term and final reviews will ensure that the supervisor is confident that the project is the candidate's own work. This will be recorded in the Production Log and Assessment Record.

If it is believed that a student has received additional assistance and that this is acceptable within the guidelines for the specification, the supervisor should award a mark which represents the learner's unaided achievement. The authentication statement should be signed and information given on the relevant form.

If the supervisor is unable to sign the authentication statement for a particular candidate, then the learner's work cannot be accepted for assessment.

3

3.9 Malpractice

Centre Coordinators/Supervisors should inform candidates of the AQA Regulations concerning malpractice.

Students must **not**:

- submit work which is not their own;
- lend work to other students;
- allow other students access to, or the use of, their own independently-sourced source material (this does not mean that candidates may not lend their books to another candidate, but candidates should be prevented from plagiarising other students' research);
- include work copied directly from books, the internet or other sources without acknowledgement and attribution;
- submit work typed or word-processed by a third person without acknowledgement.

These actions constitute malpractice, for which a penalty (e.g. disqualification from the qualification) will be applied.

Supervisors and coordinators must ensure they comply with JCQ instructions for conducting coursework. Copies of this document can be found at www.jcq.org.uk.

If malpractice is suspected, the Examinations Officer should be consulted about the procedure to be followed.

Where suspected malpractice in projects is identified by a centre after the student has signed the declaration of authentication, the Head of Centre must submit full details of the case to AQA at the earliest opportunity. The form JCQ/M1 should be used. Copies of the form can be found on the JCQ website: <http://www.jcq.org.uk/>

Malpractice in projects discovered prior to the student signing the declaration of authentication need not be reported to AQA, but should be dealt with in accordance with the centre's internal procedures. AQA would expect centres to treat such cases very seriously. Details of any work which is not the student's own must be recorded on the CRF in the Production Log and Assessment Record or other appropriate place.

Appendices

A Grade Descriptions

The following descriptions indicate the level of attainment characteristic of the given grade at Level 1. They give a general indication of the required learning outcomes at each specific grade. The descriptions should be interpreted in relation to the content outlined in the specification; they are not designed to define that content.

The award will depend in practice upon the extent to which the candidate has met the Assessment Objectives (see Section 2.5.3) overall. Shortcomings in some aspects of the project may be balanced by a better performance in other aspects.

Grade A*

Candidates select their project and show good organisational skills in planning the project. There is clear evidence that they have responded effectively to guidance given. They obtain and select relevant information and use a range of resources to good effect. Problems and issues are identified and conclusions drawn. Candidates use a range of skills including, where appropriate, new technologies, to achieve good quality outcomes that realise the intentions of the project. They use communication skills to present their project outcomes clearly and in an appropriate format. In their summary, candidates reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of their project and on their own learning. They demonstrate through their responses to questions good knowledge of the topic area studied at this level.

Grade B

Candidates select their project and produce plans that enable them to achieve some of their overall objectives. There is some evidence that they have responded to guidance given. Candidates obtain and use some information and make use of some resources. Some problems and issues are identified, some conclusions drawn, and intended outcomes are partially realised. Elements of the project are generally well presented through the use of communication skills. In their summary, candidates comment on their strengths and weaknesses in carrying out their project. They demonstrate through their responses to questions basic knowledge of the topic area studied at this level.

B Spiritual, Moral, Ethical, Social, Cultural and other Issues

The Level 1 Foundation Project provides students with many opportunities to develop their understanding of moral, ethical, social and cultural issues. The skills of planning, self-management of learning, collecting and analysing data and reviewing and evaluating learning will enhance the student's personal aspirations and career development.

European Dimension

AQA has taken account of the 1988 Resolution of the Council of the European Community in preparing this specification.

Avoidance of Bias

AQA has taken great care in the preparation of this specification to avoid bias of any kind.

C Overlaps with other Qualifications

The specification has been designed to allow maximum flexibility for centre and students.

The subject content allows the opportunity for candidates to pursue integrated critical, practical or theoretical study within the context of a Level 1 Foundation Project. There is some overlap in skills and/or subject content with GCSE courses. However the approach to, and the context of the skills and content in the specifications are distinctly different from those of GCSE courses. The Project qualifications are designed to extend and develop beyond a student's programme of study. If a student

attempts to submit a piece of coursework for another qualification as a project, relies heavily on text books or chooses a topic central to one of their other courses of study, they will not be extending or developing beyond what they have already learned or will learn before the end of the course. We would recommend that students use their studies as a springboard from which to launch their project into an area of particular interest to the student. If a project is deemed to be too similar in nature or content to a topic covered in one of their other courses of study this may be treated as malpractice.

Level 1 Foundation Project Qualification (FPQ) 2019 onwards.

Qualification Accreditation Number 600/9532/5

Are you using the latest version of this specification?

- You will always find the most up-to-date version of this specification on our website at **www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/projects/project-qualifications/PQI-7991**
- We will write to you if there are significant changes to this specification.