



# Awarding Principles

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## **Version History**

This is version 2 of Qualifications Wales' Awarding Principles and was published on 17 January 2022.

This document was revised due to the discontinuation of the WJEC Foundation (Post-16) and WJEC National (Post-16) Skills Challenge Certificate (Welsh Bacculaureate) qualifications and associated Welsh Bacculaureate frameworks in 2020.

This document is also available in [Welsh](#).

We keep our Regulatory Documents under review and welcome feedback at any time. Please send any comments to [policy@qualificationswales.org](mailto:policy@qualificationswales.org).

## **Application of this Regulatory Document**

This Regulatory Document outlines the overarching principles in the award of general qualifications including reformed GCSEs (section 1), reformed GCEs (section 2), and relevant Skills Challenge Certificate qualifications (section 3).

Due to the discontinuation of the WJEC Foundation (Post-16) and WJEC National (Post-16) Skills Challenge Certificate (Welsh Bacculaureate) qualifications and their associated Welsh Bacculaureate frameworks in 2020, section 3 applies only to the following relevant Skills Challenge Certificate qualifications and their associated Welsh Bacculaureate frameworks:

- WJEC Foundation/National Skills Challenge Certificate (Welsh Bacculaureate) – QWAN C00/0721/7 (and framework WJEC National/Foundation Welsh Bacculaureate – QWAN C00/0721/3)
- WJEC Advanced Skills Challenge Certificate (Welsh Bacculaureate) – QWAN C00/0721/2 (and framework WJEC Advanced Welsh Bacculaureate – QWAN C00/0721/6).

## **Section 1 - Awarding Principles for reformed GCSE qualifications**

1. A 'comparable outcomes' approach should be applied to the award of reformed qualifications to ensure that learners taking the new qualifications are neither advantaged nor disadvantaged compared to those who took the legacy qualification.
2. Awarding should take account of statistical predictions derived from national cohort analysis and be supported by a review of candidate work.
3. Where data is used to provide an aggregate statistical context for the award, this should be based on candidates from Wales' centres only.
4. Grade boundaries at qualification and component/unit level should be set according to the regulatory document Requirements for setting specified levels of attainment for GCE and GCSE qualifications.
5. In unitised qualifications, grade outcomes must be awarded and reported at both unit and qualification level. (A unitised qualification is one that is awarded on the basis of uniform marks).
6. When awarding each GCSE qualification, regard to an appropriate range of qualitative and quantitative evidence must be given; a rationale must be documented to justify the selection, prioritisation and weight of the evidence considered.
7. Where a reporting tolerance applies, it will operate for the key grade outcomes at qualification level.

## **Section 2 - Awarding Principles for reformed GCE qualifications**

1. A 'comparable outcomes' approach should be applied to the award of reformed qualifications to ensure that learners taking the new qualifications are neither advantaged nor disadvantaged compared to those who took the legacy qualification.
2. Awarding should take account of statistical predictions derived from national cohort analysis and be supported by a review of candidate work.
3. Where data is used to provide an aggregate statistical context for the award, this should be based on candidates from Wales' centres only.
4. Grade boundaries at qualification and component/unit level should be set according to the technical requirements document provided for each examination series.
5. Consideration should be given to intermediate grades relative to predictions; where there is a significant difference, there will be an expectation that a phased approach will be taken to realigning them.
6. In unitised qualifications, grade outcomes must be awarded and reported at both unit and qualification level. (A unitised qualification is one that is awarded on the basis of uniform marks).
7. When awarding each GCE qualification, regard to an appropriate range of qualitative and quantitative evidence must be given; a documented rationale must be kept to justify the selection, prioritisation and weight of the evidence considered.
8. Where a reporting tolerance applies, it will operate for the key grade outcomes at qualification level.

### **Section 3 - Awarding Principles for relevant Skills Challenge Certificate qualifications**

1. Component key grade boundaries for each series should be set judgmentally, informed by relevant qualitative and quantitative evidence.
2. In awarding each Skills Challenge Certificate, regard to an appropriate range of qualitative and quantitative evidence must be given; a documented rationale must be kept to justify the selection, prioritisation and weight of the evidence considered.
3. The overall grade for the Skills Challenge Certificate should be calculated using the Uniform Mark Scale (UMS).
4. Grade outcomes must be awarded and reported at both component and qualification level.
5. Where a reporting tolerance applies, it will operate for the key grade outcomes at qualification level.