



19 July 2016

Dear Responsible Officer

### **Additional Standard Conditions of Recognition for GCSE and GCE Qualifications and Technical Requirements**

You will be aware that Ofqual has now confirmed the details of the new requirements it is introducing to coincide with the withdrawal of the *GCSE, GCE and Principal Learning and Project Code of Practice* (the 'Code of Practice'). As previously indicated, Qualifications Wales will align arrangements in Wales, as far as possible, with the changes being introduced in England. This will minimise the burden on awarding bodies and ensure consistency and fairness for learners in Wales.

To this end we have today published the following two new regulatory documents:

1. Additional Standard Conditions of Recognition for GCSE/ GCE qualifications - <http://qualificationswales.org/media/1907/160718-gcse-and-gce-additional-standard-conditions-final.pdf>
2. Requirements for setting specified levels of attainment for GCE and GCSE qualifications - <http://qualificationswales.org/media/1906/160707-requirements-for-setting-specified-levels-of-attainment-final.pdf>

#### **1. Additional Standard Conditions of Recognition for GCSE / GCE**

These new conditions cover two main areas:

- i. Reviews, Moderation and Appeals; and
  - ii. Setting new GCSE, A level and AS Boundaries
- i. *Additional Standard Conditions of Recognition A – P - Reviews, Moderation and Appeals*
- For GCE qualifications, these new conditions come into force from 00.01 hours on Thursday 18 August 2016.** From this date, the *Code of Practice* no longer applies to GCE qualifications.

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**For GCSE qualifications, these conditions will come into force from 00.01 hours on Thursday 25 August 2016.** From this date, the *Code of Practice* no longer applies for GCSE qualifications.

The *Code of Practice* will only remain in force for Project and Principal Learning qualifications.

To give Welsh learners the same opportunities for appeal as learners in England, we will require awarding bodies to extend the pilot required by Ofqual to learners in Wales as well as England. This means that for A Level Geography, A Level Religious Studies and A Level Physics, awarding bodies will be piloting the new grounds of appeal whereby centres can challenge a mark if they believe a Marking Error has been made.

ii. *Additional Standard Condition of Recognition Q – Setting GCSE, AS and A level grade boundaries*

**This condition comes into force with effect from 20 July.** Please note that the following sections of the *Code of Practice* no longer apply:

- Section 6 – Awarding, maintaining an archive and issuing results
- Appendix 2 – Grading for GCSEs that do not use uniform marks
- Appendix 3 – Aggregation and grading for qualifications that use uniform marks

Again, this aligns with Ofqual’s arrangements in relation to setting grade boundaries, as announced on 24 June 2016. The slight variances in wording to Ofqual’s condition are highlighted below and the rationale for the changes are as follows:

ASC.Q2 – “The range of evidence to which an awarding organisation has regard for the purposes of this Condition will only be appropriate if it includes evidence of **any one, or more, of the following**” – Qualifications Wales maintains that it may not always be possible for awarding bodies to provide evidence of every point listed.

ASC.Q3b – “its rationale for the selection of and **how it has taken that evidence into account.**” – Qualifications Wales do not need the ‘weighting’ of any evidence used, but instead require a description of how evidence has been taken into account.

## **2. Requirements for setting specified levels of attainment for GCE and GCSE qualifications**

These requirements have been introduced because, as **of 20 July 2016**, Qualifications Wales has withdrawn the sections of the *Code of Practice* which cover the current rules for the GCSE (A\* to G) qualifications and legacy AS and A levels. The new requirements reflect those in the *Code of Practice*. We are applying the same provisions to reformed AS and A levels.

If you need any further clarification on this, please get in touch.

Yours sincerely

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