



## CCEA GCSE Specification in Business and Communication Systems

For first teaching from September 2009

For first assessment from Summer 2010

For first award in Summer 2011

Subject Code: 8240

# business and communication systems

## Foreword

This booklet contains CCEA's General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) Business and Communication Systems for first teaching from September 2009.

We have designed this specification to meet the requirements of the following:

- GCSE Subject Criteria for Business Subjects;
- GCSE Qualifications Criteria;
- Common Criteria for all Qualifications;
- GCSE Controlled Assessment Regulations for Business Studies and Business Related Subjects; and
- GCSE Controlled Assessment Generic Regulations.

We will make the first full award based on this specification in summer 2011.

This specification is a unitised course. This structure increases flexibility and choice for teachers and learners.

The first assessment for the following unit will be available in summer 2010:

- Unit 1: Use of ICT.

The first assessment for the following units will be available in summer 2011:

- Unit 2: The Business Environment; and
- Unit 3: E-Commerce.

We will notify centres in writing of any major changes to this specification. We will also publish changes on our website at [www.ccea.org.uk](http://www.ccea.org.uk)

The version on our website is the most up-to-date version. Please note that the web version may be different from printed versions.

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## 1 Introduction

This specification sets out the content and assessment details for our GCSE Business and Communication Systems course. First teaching begins from September 2009, and we will make the first awards for this specification in 2011. You can view and download the latest version of this specification on our website at [www.ccea.org.uk](http://www.ccea.org.uk)

The specification builds on the broad objectives of the Northern Ireland Curriculum. It is also relevant to key curriculum concerns in England and Wales.

### 1.1 Aims

This specification aims to encourage students to:

- develop a lifelong interest in business and enjoyment of business subjects;
- be inspired, moved and changed by following a broad, coherent, satisfying and worthwhile course that could potentially lead to further related study;
- actively engage in the study of business and economics to develop as effective, independent learners and reflective thinkers;
- use an enquiring, critical approach to distinguish between facts and opinions in order to make informed judgements;
- be familiar with relevant terms, concepts and methods and use these effectively to describe business and economic behaviour;
- appreciate the range of perspectives that different stakeholders bring to business and economic activities;
- consider the extent to which business and economic activity can be ethical and sustainable;
- understand the changing role of ICT in business and economic activities;
- recognise that their business knowledge, understanding and skills provide a basis for their future roles as active citizens; and
- apply what they learn to deepen their understanding of current events and contemporary issues in a range of local, national and global contexts.

### 1.2 Key features

The key features of the specification appear below:

- This is a unitised specification. This means that students have the opportunity to complete Unit 1: Use of ICT in the first year of teaching.
- It emphasises practical ICT skills that enhance business activity.
- It develops skills that are useful in a diverse range of employment roles.
- It reflects the ways in which market environments are changing because of ICT, for example the rise of the e-business.
- The course offers opportunities to build on the skills and capabilities developed through the delivery of the Key Stage 3 curriculum in Northern Ireland.

### **1.3 Prior attainment**

This qualification is suitable for students who have completed Key Stage 3 of the statutory curriculum. It is also suitable for post-16 students who have had limited exposure to ICT.

### **1.4 Classification codes and subject combinations**

Every specification is assigned a national classification code that indicates the subject area to which it belongs. The classification code for this qualification is 8240.

#### **Progression to another school/college**

Should a student take two qualifications with the same classification code, schools and colleges that they apply to may take the view that they have achieved only one of the two GCSEs. The same view may be taken if students take two GCSE qualifications that have different classification codes but have content that overlaps significantly. Students who have any doubts about their subject combinations should check with the schools and colleges that they wish to attend before embarking on their planned study.

#### **Centres in England**

Centres in England should also be aware that, for the purpose of the School and College Achievement and Attainment Tables, if a student enters for more than one GCSE qualification with the same classification code, only one grade (the highest) will count.

## 2 Specification at a Glance

The table below summarises the structure of this GCSE course:

Content	Assessment	Weighting	Availability
<b>Unit 1: Use of ICT</b>	<b>External computer-based exam</b>  This <b>2 hour</b> exam tests students' ICT skills in a business context.	40%	Every Summer (beginning in 2010)
<b>Unit 2: The Business Environment</b>	<b>External written exam</b>  This paper lasts <b>1 hour</b> .  Synoptic*	35%	Summer  Terminal assessment
<b>Unit 3: E-Commerce</b>	<b>Controlled assessment</b>  Students design a website and explain its business rationale through a PowerPoint presentation.	25%	Summer  Terminal assessment

**At least 40 percent of the assessment (based on unit weightings) must be taken at the end of a GCSE course as terminal assessment. The terminal assessment weighting for this GCSE course is 60 percent, (Units 2 and 3).**

\* Synoptic assessment requires candidates to identify and use, from across the full course studied, those aspects/elements/knowledge/skills which are required to address a particular task or question.

### 3 Subject Content

We have divided the course into three main themes. The content of each theme, as well as the respective learning outcomes, appears below.

#### 3.1 Unit 1: Use of ICT

ICT now plays a vital role in business. By increasing the efficiency of the way a business trades, it can add value. It can cut down on the amount of time it takes to carry out a manual task, and it helps greatly with the keeping of records. ICT can also enhance the way businesses communicate with their stakeholders.

In this section, students have the opportunity to develop their ICT skills in a business context and learn about relevant functions in the types of software applications shown in the table below.

When using these applications, students should be conscious of good practice and standard ways of working when managing files; for example, they should organise their files and folders logically, saving regularly and backing up work.

Content	Learning Outcomes
<b>Word-Processing</b>	<p>Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• compose the content of a document using appropriate:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– font sizes;</li> <li>– font styles;</li> <li>– line spacing;</li> <li>– centring of text;</li> <li>– justification of text; and</li> <li>– bullet points;</li> </ul> </li> <li>• control pagination;</li> <li>• make effective use of headers and footers;</li> <li>• move text using cut, copy and paste;</li> <li>• rearrange material in the following sequences:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– alphabetical;</li> <li>– numerical; and</li> <li>– chronological;</li> </ul> </li> <li>• search and replace;</li> <li>• correctly carry out amendments; and</li> <li>• create and use tables appropriately.</li> </ul>

Contents	Learning Outcomes
<b>Word-Processing (cont.)</b>	Students should be able to:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● use graphics and charts from two sources;</li> <li>● demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how mail merge can be used with a database file;</li> </ul>
<b>Spreadsheets</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● design a spreadsheet from given information;</li> <li>● make appropriate use of rows and columns;</li> <li>● format and align text and numbers;</li> <li>● sort rows in numerical, alphabetical or chronological order;</li> <li>● use and replicate formulae correctly;</li> <li>● display and print formulae;</li> <li>● replicate values and formulae;</li> <li>● enter text and numbers;</li> <li>● collect data;</li> </ul>
<b>Charts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● import data from spreadsheets to create charts;</li> <li>● use a variety of chart formats;</li> <li>● insert appropriate data legends;</li> <li>● insert a title;</li> </ul>
<b>Databases</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● design a data capture form;</li> <li>● create a structure for a database with appropriate fields and records to meet specific needs;</li> <li>● add and edit fields (headings, widths and data types);</li> <li>● identify appropriate data types – for example alphabetic, numeric and alphanumeric; and</li> <li>● create, delete and add records.</li> </ul>



### 3.2 Unit 2: The Business Environment

In this section, students gain a broad introduction to different types of business, their aims, and factors that influence the business environment. They have opportunities to learn about uncertainty, risk and reward, business ethics, marketing, competition and training. They consider different people's roles, including stakeholders and customers, as well as how best to communicate a message. They look at all these factors in the context of the changing nature of the business environment today. This unit is synoptic.

Content	Learning Outcomes
<p><b>Business Activity</b></p> <p><b>Types of Business Ownership</b></p> <p><b>Aims of Business</b></p> <p><b>The Role of Social Enterprise</b></p> <p><b>Uncertainty, Risk, Reward and Change</b></p>	<p>Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– why and how a business starts;</li> <li>– the main types of business ownership in the private sector; and</li> <li>– the advantages and disadvantages of the main types of business ownership in the private sector;</li> </ul> </li> <li>• demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the aims of business;</li> <li>• discuss how these aims may be in conflict;</li> <li>• demonstrate a knowledge and understanding of:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– the role of a social enterprise; and</li> <li>– how a social enterprise will aim to deliver across a range of economic, social and environmental outputs;</li> </ul> </li> <li>• analyse how the aims of a social enterprise can differ from those of other business organisations;</li> <li>• demonstrate a knowledge and understanding of the balance between uncertainty, risk and reward, and the role of the entrepreneur; and</li> <li>• demonstrate a knowledge and understanding of the changing nature of business in relation to the changing role of ICT in the following areas:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– changes in work patterns;</li> <li>– job displacement and retraining;</li> <li>– job creation;</li> <li>– home based employment; and</li> <li>– video conferencing and teleconferencing.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Content	Learning Outcomes
<p><b>Uncertainty, Risk, Reward and Change (cont.)</b></p> <p><b>Stakeholders</b></p> <p><b>Customers</b></p> <p><b>Communication</b></p>	<p>Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how businesses may succeed or fail depending on how they manage the balance between risk and reward;</li> <li>• demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how a business must manage change in order to be successful;</li> <li>• demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the different groups who might have an interest in a business;</li> <li>• consider the business from the perspective of each of these stakeholders;</li> <li>• analyse how the aims of these stakeholders may be in conflict;</li> <li>• demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– how important customers are to a business;</li> <li>– how a business must meet the needs of its customers in order to succeed; and</li> <li>– the importance of effective communication in relation to customer focus;</li> </ul> </li> <li>• describe the main methods of internal, external, formal and informal communication used in business;</li> <li>• demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the barriers to effective communication and the consequences of poor communication; and</li> <li>• demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the main types of communication:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– verbal;</li> <li>– written;</li> <li>– electronic; and</li> <li>– visual.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>



Content	Learning Outcomes
<p><b>Marketing Mix:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Price</li> <li>• Product</li> <li>• Promotion</li> <li>• Place</li> </ul> <p><b>Remuneration</b></p>	<p>Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify and discuss a range of pricing policies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– value-based pricing;</li> <li>– competitor-based pricing; and</li> <li>– cost-plus pricing;</li> </ul> </li> <li>• demonstrate a knowledge of the product life cycle and discuss the strategies used to extend it;</li> <li>• demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the most commonly used methods of promotion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– advertising;</li> <li>– sales promotion; and</li> <li>– publicity;</li> </ul> </li> <li>• identify the most appropriate methods of promotion in particular circumstances;</li> <li>• demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the most commonly used channels of distribution of goods and services;</li> <li>• demonstrate an understanding of the main methods of transport used to distribute goods and explain why particular methods are chosen in particular circumstances;</li> <li>• explain the difference between a wage and a salary;</li> <li>• identify and explain the contents of a payslip (gross pay, income tax, National Insurance and net pay); and</li> <li>• describe the impact that technology has had on the processing of wages and salaries.</li> </ul>



### 3.3 Unit 3: E-Commerce

This section focuses on how ICT has changed the business environment. In many cases it has revolutionised the way businesses sell their goods and how consumers purchase them. People are increasingly choosing to use credit and debit cards instead of cash to make transactions, and, thanks to the internet, they can now make purchases 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

Content	Learning Outcomes
<p><b>E-Commerce:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Role of ICT</li> <li>• Advantages and Disadvantages of E-Business</li> <li>• Effective Business Websites</li> <li>• Legal Implications of E-Business</li> </ul> <p><b>Web Design</b></p>	<p>Students should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the role of ICT in the modern business;</li> <li>• demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the advantages of an e-business to the business itself and to consumers;</li> <li>• analyse the advantages and disadvantages of e-business to the business and the consumer;</li> <li>• demonstrate knowledge and understanding of what makes a good e-commerce or business website;</li> <li>• evaluate a business website and make recommendations for improvement;</li> <li>• demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the legal implications of an e-business in relation to:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– data protection;</li> <li>– copyright, designs and patents;</li> <li>– computer misuse; and</li> <li>– payment security over the internet;</li> </ul> </li> <li>• design an appropriate website for a given business scenario;</li> <li>• create a home page and five additional pages;</li> <li>• add features such as a suitable background colour, text colour and graphics to their website;</li> <li>• have working links between home and additional pages;</li> <li>• add other features, such as a ‘Contact Us’ area; and</li> <li>• add links to other relevant sites.</li> </ul>

## 4 Scheme of Assessment

### 4.1 Assessment opportunities

The availability of examinations and controlled assessment appears in Section 2 of this specification.

Candidates can choose to resit individual assessment units once. The better result for each assessment unit counts towards their GCSE qualification. Results for individual assessment units remain available to count towards a GCSE qualification until we withdraw the specification.

### 4.2 Assessment objectives

Below are the assessment objectives for this specification. Candidates must:

- recall, select and communicate their knowledge and understanding of concepts, issues and terminology (AO1);
- apply skills, knowledge and understanding, in a variety of contexts and in planning and carrying out investigations and tasks (AO2); and
- analyse and evaluate products, make reasoned judgements and present appropriate conclusions (AO3).

### 4.3 Assessment objective weightings

The table below sets out the assessment objective weightings for each examination component and the overall GCSE qualification:

Assessment Objective	Component Weighting			Overall Weighting
	External Computer-Based Exam (Unit 1)	External Written Exam (Unit 2)	Controlled Assessment (Unit 3)	
<b>AO1</b>	12%	9%	6%	27%
<b>AO2</b>	18%	16%	10%	44%
<b>AO3</b>	10%	10%	9%	29%
<b>Total</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>100%</b>

## 4.4 Quality of written communication

In GCSE Business and Communication Systems, candidates must demonstrate their quality of written communication. In particular, they must:

- ensure that text is legible and that spelling, punctuation and grammar are accurate so that meaning is clear;
- select and use a form and style of writing appropriate to their purpose and to complex subject matter; and
- organise information clearly and coherently, using specialist vocabulary where appropriate.

The examiners assess the quality of candidates' written communication in their responses to questions or tasks that require extended writing, within all assessment objectives.

## 4.5 Reporting and grading

We report the results of individual assessment units on a uniform mark scale that reflects the assessment weighting of each unit. We determine the grades awarded by aggregating the uniform marks obtained on individual assessment units.

We award GCSE qualifications on an eight grade scale from A\*–G, with A\* being the highest. For candidates who fail to attain a grade G, we report their results as unclassified (U).

The grades we award match the grade descriptions published by the regulatory authorities (see Section 5).

## 5 Grade Descriptions

Grade descriptions are provided to give a general indication of the standards of achievement likely to have been shown by candidates awarded particular grades. The descriptions must be interpreted in relation to the content in the specification; they are not designed to define that content.

The grade awarded depends in practice upon the extent to which the candidate has met the assessment objectives overall. Shortcomings in some aspects of candidates' performance in the assessment may be balanced by better performances in others.

Grade	Description
<b>A</b>	<p>Candidates recall, select and communicate detailed knowledge and thorough understanding of concepts, theories, issues and current practice in business. They understand and use business terminology accurately and appropriately.</p> <p>They plan and carry out effectively a range of investigations and tasks using a wide range of skills competently. They apply their knowledge and critical understanding effectively to select and organise information from a wide range of sources, and to investigate business organisations in a variety of contexts.</p> <p>They use and evaluate quantitative and qualitative evidence effectively with a high degree of accuracy to analyse problems and issues, and make informed and reasoned judgements to present reasoned and substantiated conclusions.</p>
<b>C</b>	<p>Candidates recall, select and communicate sound knowledge and understanding of concepts, theories, issues and current practice in business. They use business terminology appropriately.</p> <p>They plan and carry out investigations and tasks using a range of skills appropriately. They apply their knowledge and understanding to select and organise relevant information from a variety of sources to investigate business organisations in different contexts.</p> <p>They use and evaluate evidence to analyse problems and issues with some accuracy, make reasoned judgements and present conclusions that are supported by evidence.</p>

Grade	Description
<b>F</b>	<p>Candidates demonstrate knowledge and understanding of some basic aspects of concepts, theories, issues and current practice in business. They communicate their ideas using everyday language. They use some basic business terminology.</p> <p>They carry out straightforward investigations and tasks using a limited range of skills. They apply some knowledge and understanding to select and organise basic information from a limited range of sources to investigate business organisations.</p> <p>They identify some evidence to analyse problems and issues and make judgements. They present simple conclusions that are sometimes supported by evidence.</p>

## 6 Guidance on Controlled Assessment

### 6.1 Controlled assessment review

We review our controlled assessment tasks every year to ensure that they continue to set an appropriate challenge and remain valid, reliable and stimulating.

### 6.2 Skills assessed by controlled assessment

Teachers must assess the following skills through controlled assessment:

- decision-making – use of data and problem-solving; and
- analysis and evaluation.

In addition, elements of all these skills may be assessed externally.

### 6.3 Level of control

Rules for controlled assessment in GCSE Business and Communication Systems are defined for the three stages of the assessment:

- task setting;
- task taking; and
- task marking.

### 6.4 Task setting

There are six tasks for Business and Communication Systems. Students should complete **all** tasks.

Tasks	Marks Available	% of Controlled Assessment	% of Overall Qualification
Task 1	3 marks	6%	1.5%
Task 2	6 marks	12%	3%
Task 3	6 marks	12%	3%
Task 4	6 marks	12%	3%
Task 5	14 marks	28%	7%
Task 6	15 marks	30%	7.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>50 marks</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>25%</b>

The level of control for task setting is high. We provide the controlled assessment for centres to use.

Centres have the opportunity to contextualise the controlled assessment tasks to better suit their specific circumstances, including the availability of and access to resources.

## 6.5 Task taking

The following requirements for candidates and teachers apply to all the controlled assessment tasks.

Areas of Control	Detail of Control
Authenticity	<p><b>Task 1: Project Planning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Candidates may carry out planning under limited supervision. (It is acceptable for work to be done outside formal supervision.)</li> <li>• Teachers must be able to authenticate candidates' work.</li> </ul> <p><b>Task 2: Research of E-Business and E-Commerce</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Candidates may carry out research under limited supervision. (It is acceptable for work to be done outside formal supervision.)</li> <li>• Teachers must be able to authenticate candidates' work.</li> <li>• Teachers must ensure that candidates acknowledge and reference any sources they use.</li> </ul> <p><b>Task 3: PowerPoint Presentation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Candidates should complete their PowerPoints under formal supervision.</li> <li>• Candidates should have access to their research from Task 2.</li> <li>• Teachers must be able to authenticate candidates' work.</li> <li>• Teachers must ensure that candidates acknowledge and reference any sources they use.</li> </ul> <p><b>Task 4: Evaluation of Existing E-Commerce Sites</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Candidates may carry out research under limited supervision. (It is acceptable for work to be done outside formal supervision.)</li> <li>• Teachers must be able to authenticate candidates' work.</li> <li>• Teachers must ensure that candidates acknowledge and reference any sources used.</li> </ul> <p><b>Task 5: Development of Website</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Candidates should complete their website under formal supervision.</li> <li>• Candidates must have access to the research they have carried out in Task 4.</li> <li>• Teachers must be able to authenticate candidates' work.</li> <li>• Teachers must ensure that candidates acknowledge and reference any sources used.</li> </ul>

Areas of Control	Detail of Control
<b>Authenticity (cont.)</b>	<p><b>Task 6: Evaluation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Candidates must complete their evaluation under formal supervision.</li> <li>• Candidates must have access to Tasks 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5.</li> <li>• Teachers must be able to authenticate candidates' work.</li> <li>• Teachers must ensure that candidates acknowledge and reference any sources used.</li> </ul>
<b>Feedback</b>	<p>In all six tasks, teachers should guide and supervise candidates in relation to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• monitoring progress;</li> <li>• preventing plagiarism;</li> <li>• compliance with health and safety requirements; and</li> <li>• ensuring that work is completed in accordance with the specification requirements.</li> </ul> <p>Teachers must assess work in accordance with the procedures and marking criteria.</p> <p>All candidates' conclusions must be their own.</p>
<b>Time Limits</b>	<p>The overall limit for the six tasks is 30 hours. The suggested time allocation for each task is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Task 1 – 2 hours</b></li> <li>• <b>Task 2 – 4 hours</b></li> <li>• <b>Task 3 – 4 hours</b></li> <li>• <b>Task 4 – 4 hours</b></li> <li>• <b>Task 5 – 8 hours</b></li> <li>• <b>Task 6 – 8 hours.</b></li> </ul>
<b>Collaboration</b>	Candidates must complete all tasks independently.
<b>Resources</b>	<p>The following guidance applies to all tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Candidates' access to resources is determined by those available to the centre.</li> <li>• Access is limited to those appropriate for the task.</li> <li>• Use of the internet must be properly referenced.</li> </ul>

## 6.6 Task marking

The level of control for task marking is medium.

Teachers mark the controlled assessment tasks using the criteria that we provide.

Teachers must ensure that the work they mark is the candidates' own. For up to date advice on plagiarism or any other incident in which candidate malpractice is suspected, please refer to the Joint Council for Qualifications' *Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments: Policies and Procedures* on the JCQ website at [www.jcq.org.uk](http://www.jcq.org.uk)

## 6.7 Internal standardisation

Centres with more than one teaching group must carry out internal standardisation of the controlled assessment tasks before submitting them to us. This is to ensure, as far as possible, that each teacher has applied the assessment criteria consistently when marking assessments.

## 6.8 Moderation

Centres must submit the sample we request by the 1<sup>st</sup> of May.

We may adjust centres' marking. This is to bring the assessment of the candidates' work into line with our agreed standards.

We issue full instructions about the details of the moderation procedures and the nature of the sample we require at the appropriate time.

**See Appendix 1 for a glossary of controlled assessment terms.**

## 7 Links

### 7.1 Support

We provide the following resources to support this specification:

- our website;
- a subject microsite within our website;
- specimen papers, controlled assessment tasks and mark schemes; and
- a resource list.

Some support material from the previous specification may also remain useful.

We intend to expand our range of support to include the following:

- past papers and mark schemes;
- Chief Examiner's reports;
- Principal Moderator's reports;
- schemes of work;
- student guides;
- student worksheets;
- PowerPoints;
- controlled assessment guidance for teachers;
- controlled assessment tasks;
- centre support visits;
- support days for teachers; and
- agreement trials.

You can find our Annual Support Programme of events and materials for Business and Communication Systems on our website at [www.ccea.org.uk](http://www.ccea.org.uk)

### 7.2 Curriculum objectives

This specification addresses and builds upon the broad curriculum objectives for Northern Ireland, England and Wales. In particular, it enables students to:

- develop as individuals and contributors to the economy, society and environment;
- progress from Key Stage 3 Northern Ireland Curriculum requirements;
- focus on spiritual, moral, ethical, social, legislative (including equality and disability discrimination), economic and cultural issues;
- learn about sustainable development, health and safety considerations and European developments;
- address aspects of the 'skills agenda' and employability; and
- develop skills in the effective use of technology.

For further guidance on how this specification enables progression from the Northern Ireland Curriculum at Key Stage 3, go to our subject microsite, which you can access at [www.ccea.org.uk](http://www.ccea.org.uk)

### 7.3 Key Skills

This specification provides opportunities for students to develop and generate evidence for assessing the following nationally recognised Key Skills:

- Application of Number;
- Communication;
- Improving Own Learning and Performance;
- Information and Communication Technology;
- Problem-Solving; and
- Working with Others.

You can find details of the current standards and guidance for each of these skills on the QCA website at [www.qca.org.uk](http://www.qca.org.uk)

### 7.4 Examination entries

Entry codes for this subject and details on how to make entries are available on our Examinations Administration Handbook microsite, which you can access at [www.ccea.org.uk](http://www.ccea.org.uk)

Alternatively, you can telephone our Examination Entries, Results and Certification team using the contact details provided in this section.

### 7.5 Equality and inclusion

We have considered the requirements of equalities legislation in developing this specification.

GCSE qualifications often require the assessment of a broad range of competences. This is because they are general qualifications and, as such, prepare students for a wide range of occupations and higher level courses.

The revised GCSE and qualification criteria were reviewed to identify whether any of the competences required by the subject presented a potential barrier to any students with disabilities. If this was the case, the situation was reviewed again to ensure that such competences were included only where essential to the subject. The findings of this process were discussed with disability and equality groups and with people with disabilities.

During the development process, we carried out an equality impact assessment. This was to ensure that we identified any additional potential barriers to equality and inclusion. Where appropriate, we have given consideration to measures to support access and mitigate against barriers.

Reasonable adjustments are made for students with disabilities in order to reduce barriers to access assessments. For this reason, very few students will have a complete barrier to any part of the assessment. It is important to note that where access arrangements are permitted, they must not be used in any way that undermines the integrity of the assessment. **You can find information on reasonable adjustments in the Joint Council for Qualifications' document *Access Arrangements and Special Consideration: Regulations and Guidance Relating to Candidates Who Are Eligible for Adjustments in Examinations*.**

## 7.6 Contact details

The following list provides contact details for relevant staff members and departments:

- Specification Support Officer: Arlene Ashfield  
(telephone: (028) 9026 1200, extension 2291, email: [aashfield@ccea.org.uk](mailto:aashfield@ccea.org.uk))
- Officer with Subject Responsibility: Amanda Swann  
(telephone: (028) 9026 1200, email: [aswann@ccea.org.uk](mailto:aswann@ccea.org.uk))
- Examination Entries, Results and Certification  
(telephone: (028) 9026 1262, email: [entriesandresults@ccea.org.uk](mailto:entriesandresults@ccea.org.uk))
- Examiner Recruitment  
(telephone: (028) 9026 1243, email: [appointments@ccea.org.uk](mailto:appointments@ccea.org.uk))
- Distribution (past papers and support materials)  
(telephone: (028) 9026 1242, email: [cceadistribution@ccea.org.uk](mailto:cceadistribution@ccea.org.uk))
- Support Events Administration  
(telephone: (028) 9026 1401, email: [events@ccea.org.uk](mailto:events@ccea.org.uk))
- Information Section (including Freedom of Information requests)  
(telephone: (028) 9026 1200, email: [info@ccea.org.uk](mailto:info@ccea.org.uk))
- Business Assurance (appeals)  
(telephone: (028) 9026 1244, email: [appealsmanager@ccea.org.uk](mailto:appealsmanager@ccea.org.uk)).

## Appendix 1

### Glossary of Terms for Controlled Assessment Regulations

Term	Definition
<b>Component</b>	<p>A discrete, assessable element within a controlled assessment/qualification that is not itself formally reported and for which the awarding body records the marks</p> <p>May contain one or more tasks</p>
<b>Controlled assessment</b>	<p>A form of internal assessment where the control levels are set for each stage of the assessment process: task setting, task taking, and task marking</p>
<b>External assessment</b>	<p>A form of independent assessment in which question papers, assignments and tasks are set by the awarding body, taken under specified conditions (including detailed supervision and duration) and marked by the awarding body</p>
<b>Formal supervision (High level of control)</b>	<p>The candidate must be in direct sight of the supervisor at all times. Use of resources and interaction with other candidates is tightly prescribed.</p>
<b>Informal supervision (Medium level of control)</b>	<p>Questions/tasks are outlined, the use of resources is not tightly prescribed and assessable outcomes may be informed by group work.</p> <p>Supervision is confined to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensuring that the contributions of individual candidates are recorded accurately; and</li> <li>• ensuring that plagiarism does not take place.</li> </ul> <p>The supervisor may provide limited guidance to candidates.</p>
<b>Limited supervision (Low level of control)</b>	<p>Requirements are clearly specified, but some work may be completed without direct supervision and will not contribute directly to assessable outcomes.</p>

Term	Definition
<b>Mark scheme</b>	<p>A scheme detailing how credit is to be awarded in relation to a particular unit, component or task</p> <p>Normally characterises acceptable answers or levels of response to questions/tasks or parts of questions/tasks and identifies the amount of credit each attracts</p> <p>May also include information about unacceptable answers</p>
<b>Task</b>	<p>A discrete element of external or controlled assessment that may include examinations, assignments, practical activities and projects</p>
<b>Task marking</b>	<p>Specifies the way in which credit is awarded for candidates' outcomes</p> <p>Involves the use of mark schemes and/or marking criteria produced by the awarding body</p>
<b>Task setting</b>	<p>The specification of the assessment requirements</p> <p>Tasks may be set by awarding bodies and/or teachers, as defined by subject-specific regulations.</p> <p>Teacher-set tasks must be developed in line with awarding body specified requirements.</p>
<b>Task taking</b>	<p>The conditions for candidate support and supervision, and the authentication of candidates' work</p> <p>Task taking may involve different parameters from those used in traditional written examinations. For example, candidates may be allowed supervised access to sources such as the internet.</p>
<b>Unit</b>	<p>The smallest part of a qualification that is formally reported and can be separately certificated</p> <p>May comprise separately assessed components</p>

