

GCSE MATHEMATICS SNAPSHOT

OVERVIEW

This specification has two tiers: Foundation and Higher.

- Each tier offers a choice of units that are suited to a wide range of abilities and enable students to demonstrate achievement.
- The assessment model enables students to monitor their progress and offers opportunities to improve their results.
- Each assessment unit gives students enough time to consider different problem-solving strategies and to decide on the best approach.

SPECIFICATION SUMMARY

All units address the three assessment objectives and, where appropriate, questions may require students to know and use problem-solving strategies. Each written paper has a range of question types. Some questions are set in both mathematical and non-mathematical contexts. Students choose one option from the two available at either Foundation or Higher Tier. Students take two units. To receive an award, one of these must be a completion test.

ASSESSMENT UNIT COMBINATIONS	AVAILABLE FINAL GCSE GRADES	COMMENT
M1 and M5	D–G	All grades in this range are available.
M2 and M6	C*–F	All grades in this range are available.
M3 and M7	B–E	All grades in this range are available.
M4 and M8	A*–C	All grades in this range are available.

This is a unitised specification. Candidates must complete at least 40 percent of the overall assessment requirements at the end of the course, in the examination series in which they request a final subject grade. This is the terminal rule.

Candidates may resit individual assessment units once before cash-in. The better of the two results will count towards their final GCSE grade unless a unit is required to meet the 40 percent terminal rule. If it is, the more recent mark will count (whether or not it is the better result). Results for individual assessment units remain available to count towards a GCSE qualification until we withdraw the specification.

BENEFITS TO STUDENTS

This specification aims to encourage students to:

- develop fluent knowledge, skills and understanding of mathematical methods and concepts;
- acquire, select and apply mathematical techniques to solve problems;
- reason mathematically, make deductions and inferences and draw conclusions; and
- comprehend, interpret and communicate mathematical information in a variety of forms appropriate to the information and context.

CROSS-CURRICULAR SKILLS, THINKING SKILLS AND PERSONAL CAPABILITIES THAT WILL BE DEVELOPED

This specification builds on the knowledge, understanding and skills developed through the statutory requirements for Mathematics (including Financial Capability) at Key Stage 3 in the Northern Ireland Curriculum.

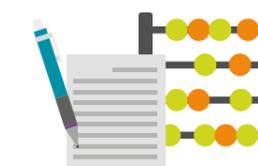
UNIQUE FEATURES OF THIS SPECIFICATION/ IMPROVEMENTS MADE

Candidates must use calculators in assessment units M1, M2, M3 and M4 and in Paper 2 of each Completion Test (M5, M6, M7 and M8). Candidates must not use calculators in Paper 1 of each Completion Test. Calculators should have the following functions: +, -, x, ÷, √, xy and single memory. These are the minimum functions required. For the Higher Tier papers, candidates must use electronic calculators with trigonometric and relevant statistical functions. For the Foundation Tier papers, candidates must use electronic calculators with relevant statistical functions.

CONTENT AND ASSESSMENT

FOUNDATION TIER: GRADES C*– F WILL BE ASSESSED

CONTENT	ASSESSMENT	WEIGHTINGS	AVAILABILITY
Unit M1 or M2: Foundation Tier	External written examination with calculator 1 hour 45 mins	45 %	Summer from 2018 and January from 2019
Unit M5 or M6: Foundation Tier Completion Test	Two external written examinations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paper 1 without calculator 1 hour • Paper 2 with calculator 1 hour 	55 %	Summer from 2019 and January from 2020



CONTENT AND ASSESSMENT

HIGHER TIER: GRADES A*– C WILL BE ASSESSED

CONTENT	ASSESSMENT	WEIGHTINGS	AVAILABILITY
Unit M3 or M4: Higher Tier	External written examination with calculator 2 hours	45 %	Summer from 2018 and January from 2019
Unit M7 or M8: Higher Tier Completion Test	Two external written examinations: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Paper 1 without calculator 1 hour 15 mins• Paper 2 with calculator 1 hour 15 mins	55 %	Summer from 2019 and January from 2020

SUPPORTING YOU

We also intend to provide:

- past papers;
- mark schemes;
- Chief Examiner's reports;
- Principal Moderator's reports;
- guidance on progression from Key Stage 3;
- planning frameworks;
- centre support visits;
- support days for teachers; and
- a resource list.

CONTACT US

If you have a query or require advice or guidance, please contact:

Subject Officer with overall responsibility:

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SPECIFICATION SNAPSHOT



For first teaching from September 2017
For first assessment in Summer 2018
For first award in Summer 2019