



FCSE – Foundation Certificate of Secondary Education

Getting Started
Spring 2017

Foundation Certificate of Secondary Education

- The Foundation Certificate of Secondary Education (FCSE) is available in the following languages:
 - Chinese (Mandarin)
 - French
 - German
 - Spanish.
- It can be taken as a:
 - full course (Listening, Reading, Speaking and Writing)
 - or a short course (Listening and Speaking or Reading and Writing).

Objectives

- Introduce the new specification structure, teaching content and assessment criteria.

Why choose AQA's FCSE in languages?

- To provide formal certification of skills routinely acquired in KS3 study.
- To foster the uptake of MFL in KS4.
- As an alternative to GCSE.
- For post-16/adult learners.
- As preparation for GCSE including the new elements of the reformed GCSE.

What are the benefits for students?

- Get a nationally recognised language qualification even if not continuing to GCSE.
- Get an FCSE in their second language if only continuing with one language at GCSE.
- Motivational – students share in the learning process, see their progress and learn how to improve their performance.
- Manageable content.
- Achievable targets across four skill areas.

What are the benefits for students?

- Flexible content and vocabulary.
- On demand assessment when a topic area is complete.
- Resit opportunity.
- Can mix and match levels across the skills to maximise their own strengths.
- Preparation for sitting external examinations/GCSE.

What are the benefits for teachers?

- Keeps Year 9 motivated and focused even if dropping languages at the end of KS3.
- Helps motivate learners to continue with their language studies at KS4.
- No need to change schemes of work or styles of teaching: FCSE slots in easily.
- No need for new course books/resources.
- Minimal paperwork and simple administrative procedures.
- Assessments are very easy to mark.

What are the benefits for teachers?

- Versatile – suitable for any age or ability.
- Manageable – only three units required for portfolio, easily achievable in one year.
- You can look at the tests before giving them to your students.
- Large element of choice – choose three out of a total of eight topics.
- Reliable data to help you track progress.

What is FCSE?

- Portfolio-based qualification.
- Full Course:
 - Listening, Reading, Speaking and Writing.
- Short Course:
 - Listening and Speaking
 - Or Reading and Writing.
- Marked by the teacher, moderated by AQA.
- We provide externally set assignments in Listening and Reading, available on e-AQA.
- Speaking and Writing are now a mixture of internally set and externally set assignments. For the internally set elements there are exemplar tasks available on e-AQA.

What is FCSE?

- Students complete three out of a total of eight units, each unit from a different theme.
- Two sets of externally set Listening and Reading assignments provided (allowing for resits).
- Teachers may mix and match from each set of assessment materials.
- All tests, transcripts and mark schemes provided on e-AQA. Teacher downloads chosen units only.
- Full Course – students produce a total of 12 pieces of evidence, three for each skill.
- Short Course – students produce a total of six pieces of evidence, three for each skill.

Assessment materials

	Set C	Set D	Set E
Listening	✓	✓	
Reading	✓	✓	
Writing	Exemplar tasks available	Compulsory translation task	
Speaking	Exemplar tasks available	Exemplar tasks available	Compulsory role-play task

Themes and topics

Students must submit evidence from three units, each unit to be selected from a **different** theme.

<p>Theme 1 My World</p> <p>Unit 1 – Relationships, Family & Friends</p> <p>Unit 2 – Education and Future Plans</p>	<p>Theme 3 Lifestyle</p> <p>Unit 5 – Healthy Lifestyle</p> <p>Unit 6 – Food and Drink</p>
<p>Theme 2 Holidays and Leisure</p> <p>Unit 3 – Holidays & Travel</p> <p>Unit 4 – Leisure</p>	<p>Theme 4 My Community</p> <p>Unit 7 – Local Area & Environment</p> <p>Unit 8 – Celebrations</p>

Listening and Reading

- All students must do the externally set Listening and Reading assignments.
- Students complete all assignments in supervised conditions.
- Teachers mark the assignments.
- Three levels of award are available:
 - Pass
 - Merit
 - Distinction.
- All externally set assignments are marked out of 10 for ease of marking:
 - for Pass, marks are out of 10
 - for Merit, multiply by 2 to give a mark out of 20
 - for Distinction, multiply by 3 to give a mark out of 30.
- Students can mix and match different levels, including within a unit.

Listening and Reading: what's new?

- Reading assignments amended to reflect the requirements of the new GCSE.
- First task is a translation from the target language into English.
- The task will consist of one sentence.
- Increased challenge through the levels.

Speaking

- Students complete three assignments, each from a different theme.
- All tasks must include an opinion (students cannot get maximum marks without an opinion).
- Pass: one time frame (plus at least one opinion).
- Merit: two timeframes (plus at least one opinion).
- Distinction: three timeframes (plus at least one opinion).
- When students would have achieved full marks at any level but there is no opinion, they lose one item of information from the maximum mark. There is no penalty, however, where the student would not have achieved full marks at that level.

Speaking

- The final version of the assignment must be completed in one session under supervised conditions.
- One Speaking assignment must be recorded and submitted.
- Students who do not submit a Speaking assignment will get zero marks for all three assignments as no evidence has been provided.

Internally set assignments: Speaking

- Students are expected to produce different tasks for Speaking and Writing.
- AQA provides exemplar tasks which you can use if you wish but you can create your own if you prefer. AQA Assessment Advisers are available for advice if you do this.
- Marks are awarded for each item of information which communicates without ambiguity (an item of information = a sentence or clause containing a verb, which contains a new idea in a manner which would be readily understood by a sympathetic native speaker without ambiguity).

Internally set assignments: Speaking

- Speaking tests can be in the form of a monologue or a conversation between two people.
- Students may know the task in advance.
- In preparing the Speaking task students may write a script and practise the task before producing the final assignment.
- When producing the final version of the assignment they must not read aloud from a script. They may have the task sheet and notes containing a maximum of 10 words (target language or English). There should be no full sentences or conjugated verbs.
- Students are allowed two attempts at producing each internally set assignment.

Speaking: what's new? Externally set assignments

- All students must complete a compulsory role play as one of the three speaking tasks in their portfolio.
- One role play is provided for each unit covering each of the three levels.
- The role play should not be seen before it is completed under supervised conditions.
- The task is prescriptive.
- Only one attempt is allowed at each role play.

Assessment criteria for speaking

Level		Number of Items of Information								
		0-1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8(+)	
Pass	Marks	0	4	7	10	10	10	10	10	
	Students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ask for and/or give simple information, using one time frame select appropriate vocabulary and phrases express at least one opinion, including likes, dislikes and feelings. Verb forms are usually simple and easily recognisable. Pronunciation is understandable but comprehension is sometimes delayed.									
Merit	Marks	0	3	4	6	8	10	10	10	
	Students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ask for and/or give information making successful reference to more than one time-frame successfully express at least one opinion sometimes produce more extended responses. There may be a few mistakes in grammar but the meaning is clear and unambiguous. Pronunciation is generally accurate but there is some inconsistency.									X2
Distinction	Marks	0	0	4	5	6	8	9	10	
	Students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ask for and/or give information making successful references to past, present and future events and actions successfully express at least one opinion sometimes produce more detailed responses. It is possible for a student to gain full marks despite a few errors. Pronunciation is generally accurate.									X3

Writing

- Students submit three assignments, each from a different theme.
- All tasks must include an opinion (students cannot get maximum marks without an opinion).
- Pass: one timeframe (plus at least one opinion).
- Merit: two timeframes (plus at least one opinion).
- Distinction: three timeframes (plus at least one opinion).
- When students would have achieved full marks at any level but there is no opinion, they lose one item of information from the maximum mark. There is no penalty, however, where the student would not have achieved full marks at that level.
- The final version of the assignment must be completed in one session under supervised conditions.

Internally set assignments: Writing

- Students are expected to produce different tasks for Speaking and Writing.
- AQA provides exemplar tasks which you can use if you wish but you can create your own if you prefer. AQA Assessment Advisers are available for advice if you do create your own tasks.
- Marks are awarded for each item of information which communicates without ambiguity. (An item of information = a sentence or clause containing a verb, which contains a new idea in a manner which would be readily understood by a sympathetic native speaker without ambiguity).
- One attempt at producing each Writing assignment.
- There is no specified total number of words required.

Internally set assignments: Writing

- Students will have prepared tasks on the topic before producing their final assignments and these may be commented on and corrected.
- The students will be given sight of the task before the date they are to produce their teacher controlled assignment but must not take the test paper home.
- Students may write a draft but this must not be commented on or taken home.
- They are not allowed to write up their final version of the assignment with their draft in front of them, but may have notes in front of them containing a **maximum of 10 words**. There should be no full sentences or conjugated verbs.
- Dictionaries may be used during the production of the assignment.

Writing: what's new? Externally set assignments

- All students must complete one compulsory translation from English into the target language as one of the three writing tasks in their portfolio.
- One translation task is provided for each unit covering each of the three levels.
- The translation should not be seen before it is completed under supervised conditions.
- The task is prescriptive.

Writing: use of IT

- Students must declare if they have used spell/grammar check on the Candidate Record Form.
- Students must not use translation software or translation websites.
- Students are not advantaged or disadvantaged by using ICT.
- Work produced using ICT is assessed according to the same criteria as work produced without ICT.
- Students must check their work carefully – especially for typing errors and missing accents.

Assessment criteria for Writing

Level		Number of Items of Information								
		0-1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8(+)	
Pass	Marks	0	4	7	10	10	10	10	10	
	Students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> give simple information using one time frame express at least one opinion, including likes, dislikes and feelings. Verb forms are usually simple and easily recognisable.									
Merit	Marks	0	3	4	6	8	10	10	10	
	Students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> give information making successful reference to more than one time-frame successfully express at least one opinion sometimes produce more extended responses. There may be a few mistakes in grammar but the meaning is clear and unambiguous.									X2
Distinction	Marks	0	0	4	5	6	8	9	10	
	Students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> give information making successful reference to past, present and future events and actions successfully express at least one opinion sometimes produce more detailed responses use a range of structures. It is possible for a student to gain full marks despite a few errors.									X3

Marking the assignments

- For each student you will submit a total of 12 marks for moderation – four skills (Listening, Reading, Speaking and Writing) x 3 units.
- Pass assignment = maximum 10 marks.
- Merit assignment = maximum 20 marks (10 x 2).
- Distinction assignment = maximum 30 marks (10 x 3).
- Overall award based on total number of marks gained out of a possible 360.
- **It is essential that all totals, additions and transfers of marks are checked meticulously.**

What is a portfolio of work?

- A fully completed Candidate Record Form, signed and dated by the teacher and the student.
- One piece of evidence per skill per unit.
- 10 pieces of evidence:
 - three Listening assignments
 - three Reading assignments
 - three Writing assignments which include one compulsory translation task
 - one recorded Speaking assignment plus details and marks for the other two, entered on the Speaking Record Form which include one compulsory role-play task.
- Short Course students submit:
 - one Speaking assignment and three Listening assignments
 - Or three Writing assignments and three Reading assignments.
- Evidence should come from three complete units, each unit to be selected from a different theme.

Key dates

- First teaching of new specification – September 2017.
- Assessment Adviser details sent out – each September.
- Assignments available on e-AQA – Summer 2017.
- Final entries – February of the year of certification.
- First award of new specification – Summer 2018.

Further information

For further information and resources please visit our [FCSE subject pages](#)

Contact details

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Thank you
