

# FUNCTIONAL SKILLS **ENGLISH**

8720/S/W/R Report on the Examination

8720 November 2021

Version: 1.0



# Please note that this report covers Functional Skills English for Level 1 (8720)

# 8720/S - Speaking

#### Introduction

A number of centres took the opportunity to enter this round of submissions. For some centres it was straightforward to verify their work. They had assimilated the standard by looking at the AQA standardising materials and they had completed the necessary record forms accurately.

General improvement was seen in the range of topic students covered, and in the improved quality of questions, especially from teachers. Some students were recorded on site visits (one memorably handling a snake in a zoo), and these were always interesting to view. When teachers used recordings from zoom sessions these also worked very well, and helped teachers to ask good questions.

Problems remain though in two key areas. The first is that too many students read their presentation, without any attempt to engage with their audience. If this is the case then teachers must question the students at length and in depth for all criteria to be fulfilled.

The second problem area is the completion of paperwork for the submission. A centre declaration sheet (CDS) must be sent with the submission. Each student in the sample must have a centre record form (CRF), and for each student all criteria must be indicated to have been fulfilled.

Please note that submissions on DVD can no longer be accepted.

### The nature of the component

The spoken component is an integral part of the Functional Skills package called English. Along with Reading and Writing it is a required element, and the subject as a whole cannot be passed without it. As part of the component there are two activities that must be completed. These involve giving a presentation and taking part in a discussion. These are separate assessments. If both tasks are not completed and if no evidence is provided, a pass cannot be awarded to the student.

For a presentation there must be a recording, plus a completion of the presentation part of the record form. For a discussion there must be a completion of the discussion part of the record form.

Each of the activities has a sub set of skills that must be delivered for a pass. These are listed on the record form, and all of them must be achieved. This is called a mastery model of assessment, so even one cross in the 'no' column means that the student has not passed and should be entered at a later date. For example, if a student is not asked any questions after their presentation, or does not answer them, then they cannot be awarded a pass.

#### In advance of submission of entry and grades

- 1. During the Functional English course students should regularly take part in presentations with questions and in discussions. The questions should, at least in part, be from teachers/adults and should be designed to ensure that students can reach the required criteria. There is guidance in section 5 of the specification.
- 2. When preparing for/practising presentations, students must be discouraged from reading verbatim notes or PowerPoints. Students should be speaking on a suitable topic of their own choice.

3. Teachers should collect evidence which will be a video recording of a presentation for each student in the sample to be submitted and notes on the discussions to be entered on the AQA Student Record Form (CRF)

If there are reasons that make it impossible to conduct visual recordings then exemptions must be sought from AQA in advance of the submission deadline.

The Student Record form should be completed at the time of the activity. This will indicate to the teacher whether the student has fulfilled all criteria, and is ready to be entered, or whether the student needs further opportunities and needs to be entered at a later date.

- 4. When students are entered the centre must already have collected the evidence that will allow them to give the student a Pass. This means they must have fulfilled **all** the criteria for both presenting and discussing. To ensure that you are familiar with the required standards (which for 8725 are obviously higher than for 8720) please watch the AQA standardisation videos, which are available via the AQA website. Please **do not** enter students if you do not have the required evidence to do so.
- 5. To summarise: The procedure is: collect the evidence, complete the paperwork, check that all standards have been met by looking at criteria and watching standardisation videos, enter the student, wait to forward the evidence to the verifier.

A check list of what is required once you are asked to submit your evidence for verification.

- Check that you are submitting the required sample size, that each student's presentation is on a separate clearly labelled file and that 8720 are separated from 8725.
- Check that the files play on windows media player, on a computer. Check that visuals can be seen and that sound can be heard.
- Do not compress files and do not encrypt with passwords known only to you. AQA does not require encryption. If you do, then please use the official password supplied by AQA.
- Check that you have completed and forwarded a Centre Declaration Sheet and a CRF form for each student in the sample. Double check that every student you have entered as Pass is shown to have fulfilled all the criteria on the CRFs.
- Have all materials ready for verification by the deadline.
- When notified of your verifier the sample should be posted to the verifier using first class
  post (fully paid) and without the need for a signature. It is helpful if the centre submits a
  short piece of correspondence to the verifier, making it clear what centre is sending the
  materials and which specification is being entered. Do not use Special/Signed for Delivery.

## Conclusion

The very best talks are those where students talk about often unusual and very challenging experiences, which are then teased out for their implications by subtle and sensitive questioning.

Many teachers had worked very hard to work within covid-related constraints and their efforts are much appreciated.

AQA | Notes and guidance: non exam assessment (NEA)

Centre Declaration Sheet 2022 - Centre declaration sheet 2022 (aqa.org.uk)

Functional Skills English Specification for first teaching in 2019 (aqa.org.uk)

# 8720/W - Writing

#### Overview

This is the seventh series under the reformed Functional Skills in English specification, Level 1 Writing (8720W). Unfortunately, due to the Coronavirus pandemic, there is still disruption to education and numbers are below the norm for this series, as is perfectly understandable.

The 2011 standards have now been superseded by 'scope of study' descriptors which apply to Writing Composition and Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar (SPG). These can now be found on page 9 of the AQA Specification <a href="https://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/english/specifications/AQA-8720-8725-SP-2019.PDF">https://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/english/specifications/AQA-8720-8725-SP-2019.PDF</a>.

At Level 1 learners are required to produce straightforward texts such as narratives, instructions, explanations and reports of varying lengths. Each writing task will require learners to address one of the above categories although it is important to note that narratives and explanations can be embedded within different formats such as emails, blogs, letters, reviews etc

The reformed qualification is intended to maintain very high standards and a pass at this level will be a strong indicator of ability in writing Standard English. It is consistent in its standard as a test of basic English writing skills and will be the foundation for secure progression. With the current demands of GCSE English, many schools and colleges are considering alternative routes for students. This qualification would also serve as a suitable alternative and an excellent progression route from The Entry Level Certificate (Step Up to English). It is important that schools and colleges enable students to have a realistic chance of acquiring valuable qualifications by mapping abilities against available qualifications. In this way, the reformed Functional English will provide important opportunities for both centres and students.

To ensure continuity under the reformed specification the writing papers have retained two questions. Each contains stimulus material leading into a task which is supported by bullet points, enabling students to use some of the information in the question. There is an element of problem solving and functional thinking in completing each task. A significant innovation is that there are word limits established for Question 1, which will have an impact on the achievement of students and this is looked at in more detail below. The time allocated for the paper is now 1 hour with an advisory 20 minutes for the 1st question. The total mark available for the paper has been increased to 27, with 9 marks for Question 1 (6 for composition, 3 for SPaG) and 18 marks for Question 2 (9 for composition, 9 for SPaG). An important point to note is that SPaG comprises 44% of total marks, an increase of 4% over the previous specification, reflecting its importance at this level. Mark schemes for both questions are now skill based and will remain unchanged for the lifetime of the specification and can be found at: <a href="https://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/english/AQA-87202-SMS.PDF">https://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/english/AQA-87202-SMS.PDF</a>

At this level, centres now very rarely enter students who have little or no chance of getting inside the middle level of Mark Scheme descriptors. In this series, though the entry was modest, students seemed generally confident and able to meet the requirements of the questions with 92% of

students gaining a mark of 10 or more while over 37% gained a mark of 18 or more. These figures are an improvement, particularly at the bottom end. In the circumstances, students achieving a mark of 18 are well suited to the demands of Level 2 and should be encouraged to progress. Students whose marks fall below a total of 18 need a little more in the way of skill development before they progress on to Level 2. Close examination of the centre's mark profile would be very useful in establishing appropriate progression routes for students.

#### **Question 1**

This question asked students to report an activity undertaken to 'pass the time' when at home. The stimulus material provided a number of prompts and hints which students could incorporate into their answer. At standardising, it became apparent that some students had interpreted the question to include activities outside of the house such as playing football or going fishing. This was felt to be at odds with the spirit of the question and whilst these answers had missed elements of purpose and audience, they were not unduly penalised, remaining in the appropriate level for their overall composition, but being awarded the lower mark. Thus an answer of this sort in the middle level of the mark scheme would receive 3 marks. It should be noted that this applied to a small minority of answers.

Students were asked to write between 80 and 120 words. It is important to understand that the length of answers is clearly addressed in the mark scheme and that marginal infringements of this aspect of the question would not deny a student access to the highest band provided the standard of writing composition justified it. As the time advised for this question is only 20 minutes, students who spent too long and wrote too much may have been doubly disadvantaged. Overall, although it is not possible to provide definitive figures, approximately 80% of students met the requirements of word length for this question. This would appear to be a better outcome than in previous series and might be linked to the way in which the question invited students to speak about experiences that may have been associated with the covid pandemic. Nevertheless very short answers, below 50 words or so, were unlikely to achieve marks above the bottom level (1-2 marks).

Generally, most students wrote a report that provided some information about valid activities. There was a huge range of activity included here: from the more obvious ones involving electronic devices; reading books sometimes for the first time; cooking with the family; hobby pursuits such as drawing; a surprising interest in board games and a host of others. There were very few irrelevant answers but some adopted a simple or narrow response by using a basic naming and listing approach.

Stronger answers provided a clear activity that enabled students to 'say what you found interesting and enjoyable about it'. This was a key discriminator and the best answers conveyed a sense of enthusiasm for the chosen activity alongside clear reasons. For example where board games were selected, the stronger answers provided a rationale for the game, as in the case of Monopoly which was depicted as a wealth and property management game, that reflected society. Some students even went on to say how this was a good indicator of the way human nature functioned.

A number of good answers were very clear about their chosen activity and provided solid reasons for their interest and enjoyment. Students chose their activity and provided clear focus on it. Where

an activity such as cheerleading was selected the student explained how this could be performed and practised in the home environment. Students named and explained moves and how these had an impact on the body and how improvements could take place. Others, writing enthusiastically about a television series, for example, chose key characters and explained why they enjoyed the traits and behaviour presented. They also approached theme and plot without being caught up in elaborate exposition. These better answers did not struggle in any way with providing information for this task and in a number of cases there was clearly a battle to provide an answer that met the word limits. In those answers that went marginally over the word limit, there was no penalty but one or two answers that were in the top band could not attain the maximum mark because they had gone disproportionately over the limit.

It is often the case that the language found in the better answers was able to reflect the content more effectively than that in weaker answers. The use of specific vocabulary such as 'let me elaborate' or 'incorporate elements of real life' were found in excellent answers. Sentences were varied and sometimes complex, again adding to the impact of the response.

Many weaker answers tended to name their chosen activity and describe it without really exploring the ideas of interest and enjoyment. Although the word limits are modest, some planning is called for to enable sufficient information to be provided. It is important that students understand that a key feature of the new type of Question 1 is how closely focused the answer is on the task.

The very weakest answers, at the bottom level were almost invariably too short, with students unable to provide much beyond referencing a task with a few details to support the choice. A number of students took a listing approach and chose an example for each of the questions in the stimulus material, so they would name a board game, name a film, name a book and so on. These were attempts with little sense of purpose or audience. However, achievement at this level is limited to a minority, and in this series approximately 13% of students failed to gain more than 2 marks for composition. This was an increase on the January performance perhaps as a result of 2% of students offering no answer at all.

Before leaving Question 1, it is important to remember that it carries a maximum of only 9 marks (including SPaG) and it is recommended that students spend no more than 20 minutes answering it. Students who spend too long on this question are putting themselves at a serious disadvantage because they are losing time on Question 2 which is worth twice as many marks. Also, it is extremely unlikely that the maximum mark for Question 1 would deliver a pass for the student, but this is not true for Question 2.

#### Question 2

This question was rather more specific than Question 1 although equally relevant to students during periods of lockdown, given the growth of delivery services. Students were asked to write an email to Jeni Myles of BrambyDelco, delivery company, following an unsatisfactory experience. The stimulus material for the question was an advertising flyer for the company, listing its strengths and students were able to use this as a way into an answer. It should be pointed out that students were not rewarded specifically for the what they chose to write about, but how well they wrote. This

was very familiar territory for functional skills students and they would have come across similar questions in previous papers.

The best answers, clearly in the top level for composition (7-9 marks) showed an understanding of the need to complete two sides of the task: firstly to identify the aspect of aspects of the delivery company which were not satisfactory and then, to explain why they were not happy. Many of the stronger answers also followed the advice of the third bullet point which was to ask BrambyDelco to do something to redress the issue. Students at this level were very clear about the transactional nature of the task and provided Jeni Myles with specific information about the date, time and nature of the delivery. Without these key features, complaints have little validity. Students would then provide a clear narrative account of what happened with facts laid out in a logical sequence. Further development of these facts entailed an explanation of why they were not satisfactory. For example, the lateness of an item's delivery was linked to the need to receive the item by a particular date. Also, in a number of strong responses, the students found unsatisfactory provision across a number of categories, such as the punctuality, attitude of the delivery driver, failure to get through to the customer services and so on. Approximately 20% of students were able to reach this standard.

One of the key descriptors for the top level is: 'Sentence structures, including complex sentences, convey meaning clearly'. This is often a determinant of a good mark as detailed, developed content can be delivered only through such a range of sentences. Simple, single clause sentences simply do not carry the information and ideas in a way that enables full understanding. In this series, approximately 20% of students were able to reach this standard and the quality of the language identified these answers and reflected their content very effectively. Such students have been well-prepared.

Answers in the middle level (marks 4-6) offered some relevant material, but there was evidence of a lack of depth and confidence in the answer. Many of the middle band answers adopted an almost entirely narrative approach without exploring the reasons for dissatisfaction. In some answer students made suggestions for redress and improvement, but these were often unrealistic, such as asking for huge sums of money for compensation. In many cases it was the lack of detailed information that did not allow a higher mark. Where there was distinct detail and specific events were selected, these answers would push at the top end of the band to reach a mark of 7.

The weakest answers, in the 1-3 level were often rather short and the student did not provide an explanation for why the delivery service was unsatisfactory. Answers were often two or three lines in length and contained only a simple statement of fact. In some cases students who were struggling to understand the task attempted to assemble an answer from elements of the stimulus material and these answers were incoherent. In this series, however, only 10% or so of students were at this level which was a significant improvement on the June performance which was perhaps expected of a cohort where a good number would be re-sits.

Students should be advised that this question carries 18 marks and should therefore be given enough time to gain as many of these marks as possible. There was clear evidence, in a large number of answers, that the students had not spent sufficient time on this answer in either planning or writing.

#### **SPaG**

Spelling: at the top level students used specialist language effectively. Words and phrases such as 'browing', 'instantly certain', 'strategy board game', 'real life like capitalism', 'flabbergasted with the service', and 'dismay' were spelt correctly. When ascribing a level to spelling it is not simply the correctness of the spelling that matters but the range and ambition of the vocabulary. At the bottom level, 'few examples of conventional spelling' is a key descriptor in the mark scheme.

Punctuation: sentence demarcation is the most significant issue in punctuation and answers in the top level displayed accuracy throughout. Occasionally, more complex punctuation is used but not always accurately. In the middle level, sentence punctuation is accurate when sentences are straightforward. At the bottom level, sentence punctuation is either inaccurate, barely present or not present at all.

Grammar: At the bottom level a range of grammatical errors are found which makes reading very difficult. The main problems were:

- issues around tense;
- subject/verb agreement;
- the use of definite and indefinite articles;
- the use of conjunctions or coherence markers.

In middle and top levels the scale of grammatical inaccuracy varied considerably but the crucial indicator was the ability to follow what was written.

The final mark for spelling, punctuation and grammar takes into account achievement across the three elements.

In relation to performance on Question 1, over 25% of answers were in the top level for SPaG while only 12% were in the bottom level.

On Question 2, approximately 18% were in the top level with 16% in the bottom level.

There is a clear drop off in SPaG performance between the two questions and it would be appropriate for centres to consider this, perhaps as an indicator of the need for better time management.

# 8720/R - Reading

A relatively small number of Level 1 students entered the November 2021 Functional Skills Reading examination. The source texts focused on a theme of chocolate. Source A highlighted the issues of child labour used in the picking of cocoa beans; Source B looked at the risks and benefits of chocolate consumption and Source C urged people to "Dechox" for charity, by giving up chocolate for one month. The sources were varied and interesting, provoking a large number of engaged responses.

**Questions 1, 4 and 15,** tick box style, require close reading in order to identify which statements are true and which false. Questions 1 and 15 had full mark rates well over 50% with Q1 somewhat less successful at just under half. In Q1, many students chose the wrong option by ignoring the "not" in the statement "But not many of us know where the beans for our chocolate come from". In Q4, the most common error was selecting "True" for the statement "The children have nowhere to sleep", failing to recognise that, uncomfortable though they may be, "wooden planks" still constitute a bed for the child workers on cocoa bean plantations. The most common mistake on Q15 lay in a failure to recognise that the instruction "...set up your JustGiving pages ready for donations" meant "JustGiving deals with the Dechox donations"...

**Question 16**, the test of fact and opinion, also in tick-box style, saw full-mark rates of just over 50%. A frequent error lay in transposing the final two options, citing "delicious choc-free recipes" as factual and "Chocolate isn't an essential part of a healthy diet" as opinion.

For all the tick box questions, the instruction is "put a tick ( $\checkmark$ )". A significant number of students choose to ignore this and utilise a variety of symbols, such as circles, dots, dashes, the letter V; diagonal lines which fill the entire box or a mixture of ticks and crosses according to whether they are selecting T or F. Some even write the full words in the chosen box. Whilst examiners are directed to award the mark if the symbol is in the correct box, this is a functional test, which includes the ability to follow instructions. It would also be worth making it absolutely clear that all four statements must be attempted. Some students tick only one or two boxes and immediately deny themselves any marks.

Questions 2, 5 and 13 are the dictionary questions. These had success rates of 83% - 66%. It may be that a significant proportion of students did not use a dictionary and guessed at the answer or relied on own knowledge. As noted in previous reports, whilst the success rates are pleasing overall, if the advice to use a dictionary is being followed, higher levels of accuracy may be expected. It is also worth noting that over 2% of students did not attempt any of the dictionary questions. Practice in developing dictionary skill could usefully form part of future lessons. It would also be worthwhile teaching students that alternative definitions sometimes appear and to look for the numerals which would indicate this. When students try to change an answer by overwriting, it can be difficult to discern which letter they wish to submit as their final answer. Please advise students not to overwrite, but clearly cross out and write the alternative next to the crossed out response. It is perfectly acceptable to write a second-attempt answer outside the box to ensure clarity.

**Question 3** – the picture question – proved problematic this series with only 40% securing the mark. The vast majority of incorrect answers selected Option A – "Children often work in the cocoa bean industry". This question clearly asks students to identify information given in the picture **which is missing in the words of the source text**. Since the bulk of the text was about children working in the industry, it is difficult to understand the reasons for selecting this option. A significant number also selected "The cocoa pods need to be cut open" which is already clearly referenced in the penultimate sentence: "Children also use sharp knives to cut open the bean

*pods*". Greater success was achieved in **Q9**, however, where over 70% correctly identified the function of the question mark in the subheading.

**Questions 7.1 and 7.2** looked at the benefits and risks of eating chocolate. Students were required to identify one way in which chocolate can improve one's health and one way it can harm one's health. 85% gained a mark for **Q7.1**, the most frequently cited answer being "can help to reduce blood pressure". However, the success rate of **Q7.2** fell to 65% with a considerable number of students suggesting the opposite of the correct answer in **Q7.1** – that eating chocolate can cause high blood pressure. This was taken from the first sentence under the subheading "Is Chocolate Completely Bad For Us?" and is a misreading of the text. Both parts of this question had a not-attempted rate of just over 2%.

**Q10 and 11** ask for two similarities and two differences respectively, between Source A and B. This was the first series in which the new question wording was used.

| 1 0 | Compare Source A and Source B.  |           |
|-----|---|-----------|
|     | Identify two ways these sources are similar to each other.                                      |           |
|     | You could write about:  |           |
|     | <ul><li>what they look like</li><li>how they are written</li><li>what they are about.</li></ul> | [2 marks] |
|     | 1. Both sources   | [2 marko] |
|     | 2. Both sources   |           |
|     |   |           |
|     |   |           |
|     |   |           |

It is very pleasing to report some progress in the performance on **Q10** with just under half of students achieving the full 2 marks and a further 38% gaining 1 mark. In essence, this constitutes an average 15% improvement compared with the previous three series. The not-attempted figure remains just above 3%. Most students identified the common theme of the subject matter of chocolate and there were some perceptive comments about the use of statistics on chocolate consumption in both texts.

# Q11:

1 1 Compare Source A and Source B.

Identify two ways these sources are different from each other.

| You could write about:  |          |
|---|----------|
| <ul><li>what they look like</li><li>how they are written</li><li>what they say.</li></ul> | [2 marks |
| Difference 1  |          |
| Difference 2  |          |
|   |          |

Success was more muted here with fewer than 10% achieving full marks but almost 60% securing one mark. This translates to an average increase of 19% achieving 1 mark compared to the previous three series. This is to be celebrated but there is more to do. The most noticeable issue is the lack of understanding of the two sections labelled "Difference 1" and "Difference 2", which numerous students are approaching as "Point 1" and "Point 2" or "Source Text 1" and "Source Text 2". In many cases, this leads to **one** correct answer which straddles both spaces and inevitably limits the performance to a maximum of 1 mark. Students must be aware that they need to write about both sources **twice** – once in each space in the answer booklet. An extra line is to be added to the **Q11** spaces to facilitate this but careful instruction on the correct approach to the question would also be helpful.

Students also need to comment on specific aspects of the texts, rather than making generic comments. **Differences** must be ways in which the texts are different, which may well need to include recognition of a similarity rather than simply restating that they are different – see the penultimate point in the guidance which follows. Responses need to be specific and students should avoid unrelated pronouns which often make it difficult to see where marks can be awarded. For example: "Source A tells you how it's made and Source B says it's bad for your health". A new point emerged in several scripts this series: "We know the name of the author in Source B but not in Source A" which is not sufficient for reward.

The following guidance, reproduced from previous reports, remains valid.

- The sources will always be linked thematically so students can say "Both sources are about.....chocolate". They can then identify a specific point relating to the content of the sources eg "Both sources contain a photograph showing chocolate bars".
- Advise students to look at the front of the insert, which clearly identifies the text type and this is a completely acceptable way to secure a valid difference.
- Students need to be specific in the points they make so steering them away from the type of generic comments would be advisable. Responses such as "Both texts use paragraphs"

or "Source A is a webpage and Source B / the other one isn't" will not be rewarded. The latter comment simply points out that the sources are different, which the question already indicates. Students need to say what the difference is.

- Some students appear to enter the examination with a pre-prepared response such as "Both texts use sub-headings", which, if wrong, simply indicates that the student has not even looked at the sources in an attempt to identify a similarity or difference. When identifying aspects of presentation, these must be linked to the source text, ie, both texts contain "a picture of children working"; "brown coloured font".
- Comments which are not comparing like with like are sometimes offered: "Source A uses sub-headings and Source B is a letter", for example.
- Finally, pictures. One of the sources will always contain a picture, in order to deliver the scope of study descriptor assessment for Q3. There is no guarantee that both sources will contain an image so the pre-planned response referred to above must be avoided. If both sources do contain an image, students will be able to gain a mark for identifying this in Q10. If only one source contains a picture, this will not form a valid route for a mark in Q11. However, if both sources contain an image, a mark can be gained in Q11 by identifying a difference in the content of the pictures such as this excellent comment: "Source A contains pictures of chocolate being made but Source B contains pictures of chocolate ready to eat".

**Question 17 –** This task required students to make a list of tips for people to follow during the Dechox challenge. The question specifically cited "**during**" and this word was emboldened to help students focus on the precise requirements of the task. There were eight possible correct answers to include but the statistics indicate that only 16% of entrants (approximately 125 students) were able to find three or more of these. The vast majority of those who lost marks included content from the wrong section of the text – clearly labelled "*During Dechox*" – and selected points from the section commencing "*Before Dechox*". This occurs for a combination of reasons: students not reading the question carefully and/or students indiscriminately copying. Both errors indicate a lack of functional skill. Over 38% achieved no marks on this question, including 6% who produced no response.

It would be helpful to remind students that this is a functional test: reading the question and complying with its precise requirements are important elements of the assessment. This is the highest tariff question on the paper and it is clear that a number of students arrive here depleted in terms of time and/or energy. There is no reason why Source C and its 10 marks of questions could not be attempted first, thus completing Q17 while still relatively fresh.

Overall this series was very satisfying in terms of improvement. The mean mark was 16.7 which is better than the June series. There was considerable success in the use of dictionaries and some careful reading leading to good success rates in Questions 7.1, 9 and 14. It is particularly pleasing to witness the increased success in both parts of the comparison questions – 10 and 11, where there is evidence of better coaching and greater application. Given the ongoing tribulations of the current cohort of students this year, the standard in the majority of responses seen deserves recognition. Once again, congratulations must go to all who persevered with their lessons and examinations in these unrelentingly stressful and challenging circumstances. Very well done to the students who took this exam and the teachers who have striven so hard to bring them to a successful conclusion. Hopefully, chocolate rewards for hard-working students and their inspiring teachers will be forthcoming in a couple of weeks.

# **Mark Ranges and Award of Grades**

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the <u>Results Statistics</u> page of the AQA Website.