

Edexcel Advanced Subsidiary GCE in General Studies (8206)

For teaching from September 2004

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Issue 1 November 2003

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This specification is Issue 1 and is valid for examination from September 2004. Key changes to requirements are sidelined. Centres will be informed in the event of any necessary future changes to this specification. The latest issue can be found on the Edexcel website, www.edexcel.org.uk

Acknowledgements

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Authorised by Peter Goff

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Introduction

Key features

The Edexcel Advanced Subsidiary and Advanced GCE specification in General Studies has been developed by an experienced team of examiners and teachers. The aim has been to provide a specification which will lead to a qualification of significant status for students, teachers, employers and university departments. The specification provides:

- ◆ Opportunities for the assessment of all six key skills of communication, information technology, application of number, working with others, improving own learning and performance and problem solving, together with suggestions for key skills development opportunities
- ◆ Opportunities for optional coursework in AS or 100 per cent examination assessment
- ◆ Access to Coursework Guide and Teacher's Guide
- ◆ Separate Teacher's Guide to General Studies and key skills
- ◆ Opportunities to develop students' skills of analysis and critical thinking.

Unit availability

	Unit code	Jan 2005	June 2005	Jan 2006	June 2006
Unit 1	6451	✓	✓	✓	✓
Unit 2	6452	✓	✓	✓	✓
Unit 3 (examination)	6453/01	✓	✓	✓	✓
Unit 3 (coursework)	6453/02	✗	✓	✗	✓
Unit 4 (examination)	6454/01	✓	✓	✓	✓
Unit 5	6455	✗	✓	✗	✓
Unit 6	6456	✗	✓	✗	✓

Summary of scheme of assessment

AS (50%) 8206

The AS comprises Units 1, 2 and 3 and may be awarded as a discrete qualification; it also counts as 50 per cent of the full Advanced GCE. Option 01 consists of Units 1, 2 and 3a. Option 02 consists of Units 1, 2 and 3b.

Unit	Method	Contribution to full Advanced GCE %	Amount/length
Unit 1	Written	20	1 hr 30mins
Unit 2	Written	15	1 hr 15mins
Either Unit 3a <i>Or</i>	Written	15	1 hr 30mins
Unit 3b	Coursework	15	1–2 assignments

Advanced GCE 9206

The Advanced GCE comprises all of the AS plus Units 4, 5 and 6 (together Units 4, 5 and 6 are known as A2.)

Unit	Method	Contribution to full Advanced GCE %	Length
Unit 4	Written	15	1 hr 30mins
Unit 5	Written	15	1 hr 30mins
Unit 6	Written	20	1 hr 30mins

Students may enter **one** of the following:

- 1 8206 Option 01 and 9206 Option 01 or
- 2 8206 Option 02 and 9206 Option 01.

Summary of the specification content

AS (50%)

There will be three units.

Unit 1 (20%)

Aspects of Culture — 1 hour 30 minutes

Students answer questions based on unit content. Assessment for the unit will focus on stimulus material drawn from these areas.

Unit 2 (15%)

Scientific Horizons — 1 hour 15 minutes

Students answer questions based on unit content. Assessment for the unit will focus on stimulus material drawn from these areas.

And **either**

Unit 3(a) (15%)

Social Perspectives — 1 hour 30 minutes

Students answer questions based on unit content, including multiple choice and data response questions; assessment for the unit will focus on stimulus material drawn from these areas;

OR

Unit 3(b) (15%)

Social Perspectives

Coursework folder 1,500 words approx.

Advanced GCE

Advanced GCE consists of the three AS units and:

Unit 4 (15%)

Cultural Expressions — 1 hour 30 minutes

Students answer two questions from a choice of three

Unit 5 (15%)

Modern Society — 1 hour 30 minutes

Students answer three questions based on data response.

Unit 6 (20%)

The Contemporary World — 1 hour 30 minutes

Students answer two questions from a choice of three.

Specification overview

Aims

Students who follow a course leading to AS or Advanced GCE in General Studies will be encouraged by this specification to:

- develop a greater awareness of human knowledge, understanding and behaviour
- integrate knowledge from a range of disciplines in order to develop a synoptic view of how they relate to one another and how each may contribute to the understanding of issues being studied
- appreciate that there are various ways of interpreting different types of information and assess the relative merit of evidence in order to understand such concepts as objectivity, neutrality and bias
- think critically, logically and constructively about significant problems, acquire an appreciation of the strengths and limitations of different approaches and demonstrate an ability to justify their own
- develop a critical awareness and understanding of perennial and contemporary issues and develop a greater awareness of their historical and contemporary contexts in order to enhance skills of evaluation
- communicate with coherence and clarity in an appropriate format and style.

Knowledge, understanding and skills

The AS and Advanced GCE specifications incorporate the following framework:

Thinking and analytical skills

Thinking and analytical skills are present in all units of the AS and Advanced GCE specifications.

Thinking and analytical skills will be assessed in two ways:

- a) Types of knowledge. Students will be required to identify and differentiate: scientific knowledge, knowledge based on moral values, knowledge based on belief, objective knowledge, subjective knowledge, truth and falsity.
- b) Types of argument. Students will be required to identify and evaluate different types of argument: deductive, inductive, arguments from analogy, arguments from authority, arguments from cause.

The assessment of analytical skills will require students to analyse and evaluate types of knowledge and argument especially in terms of whether: the argument is justified, is based on a fallacy, is subjective rather than objective, is implied rather than entailed, is true.

Thinking and analytical skills will be assessed by requiring students to analyse passages on the subject content of each unit and to present their own arguments in answer to an essay question, based on the subject content of the specifications.

Thinking and analytical skills will be assessed according to the criteria for AO3 and AO4 and their expansion in the mark schemes for individual units. Further amplification of thinking and analytical skills, produced by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, is contained in *Appendix 3*, (page 51).

Knowledge and understanding

Core knowledge and understanding is reflected in the study of issues identified between and within the following three overlapping areas:

Science, Mathematics and Technology

- characteristics of the sciences (physical, life and earth)
- the nature of scientific objectivity and the question of progress
- understanding of scientific methods, principles, criteria and their application
- moral responsibility: the social, ethical and environmental implications of scientific discoveries and technological development
- mathematical reasoning and its application
- the relationship between technology, science, culture (past and/or present) and ideology

Culture, Morality, Arts and Humanities

- beliefs, values and moral reasoning
- religious belief and experience, and connections between them
- understanding and appreciation of the nature and importance of culture
- creativity and innovation
- aesthetic evaluation
- media and communication

Society, Politics and the Economy

- examination and appreciation of ideologies and values in society
- political processes and goals
- the nature of objectivity in social sciences; explanation and evaluation of human behaviour
- relationship between law, culture and ethics
- social and economic trends and constraints.

Rationale for the specification

As a discipline, General Studies draws elements from English, history, geography, economics, politics, sociology and science, amongst other subjects. It is differentiated from traditional subjects by its focus on thinking and analytical skills and the requirement to examine questions from a broader standpoint than that of a single discipline.

General Studies now holds a key position in the curriculum given the increasing importance of students demonstrating breadth of knowledge, depth of knowledge, an ability to transfer skills and make connections, integrate ideas and develop concepts. Each of these areas is a feature of work in specifications for General Studies.

In supporting the development of an understanding of these challenges and choices, the specification can make a key contribution to enhancing the spiritual, moral, social and cultural education of students, beyond the requirements of the National Curriculum. In addition, it supports the development of a range of key skills and research competencies that will be of value to students of all ages, studying and working in differing academic and vocational contexts.

The specification has been developed following extensive consultation meetings with teachers and lecturers in the subject. The findings of the consultation exercises demonstrate that the specification meets the needs and expectations of centres in the ways identified below:

- the overall scheme is simple and transparent; options are clearly identified
- breadth in choice of topics is maximised
- as well as drawing on established knowledge, the subject matter is modern, contemporary and relevant to a range of vocational areas
- there is a focus on application, as well as theory, knowledge and understanding
- content and units of assessment are appropriate and accessible to a range of levels of experience and ability
- there is continuity with current provision, which will allow the use of existing resources
- reading lists contain both contemporary and more established texts
- a mixture of examination formats and question types is used, including short answer, data response and essay.

Prior requirements, progression and outcomes

Prior requirements

There are no prior knowledge requirements for AS and Advanced GCE specifications in General Studies. However, students will find it helpful to have attained a standard of literacy and numeracy equivalent to level 2 of the National Framework.

Progression

The AS and Advanced GCE specifications provide opportunities for students to demonstrate breadth of knowledge, depth of knowledge, an ability to transfer skills and make connections, integrate ideas and develop concepts, use arguments, make judgements and evaluate evidence, and examine questions from a broader standpoint than that of a single discipline. The Advanced GCE specification differs from the AS specification in that it presents a greater challenge in the nature and depth of content studied, the wide range of links and connections that can be made, the greater variety of contexts and issues encountered, and the complexity of the concepts dealt with. The Advanced GCE specification extends beyond the AS specification, therefore, in terms of breadth, depth and the higher level skills reflected in the assessment objectives.

Outcomes

The subject will extend in a natural way beyond AS and Advanced GCE into a wide range of related courses in higher education. Students will be able to use the skills they develop in General Studies in a wide variety of careers.

Language of assessment

Assessment of this specification will be available in English only. Assessment materials will be published in English only and all work submitted for examination and moderation must be produced in English.

Assessment objectives

Students should be able to:

	AS % weighting	A2 % weighting	Advanced GCE % weighting
AO1 demonstrate relevant knowledge and understanding with application to a range of issues, using skills from different disciplines	34	24	28½
AO2 communicate clearly and accurately in a concise, logical and relevant way	12	12	12
AO3 marshal evidence and draw conclusions; select, interpret, evaluate and integrate information, data, concepts and opinions	34	40	37
AO4 demonstrate understanding of different types of knowledge and of the relationship between them, appreciating their limitations	20	24	22½

Quality of written communication

Students will be assessed for the quality of their written communication in each unit within the framework of the Communication assessment objective (AO2), according to the following criteria.

Students will be required to:

- select and use a form and style of writing which is appropriate to the purpose and to complex subject matter
- organise relevant material clearly and coherently using specialist vocabulary where appropriate
- ensure that writing is legible, with accurate spelling, grammar and punctuation, to make meaning clear.

Spiritual, moral, ethical, social and cultural aspects

The specification provides students with opportunities to study the ways in which this subject can contribute to an understanding of spiritual, moral, ethical, social and cultural issues. For example, there are opportunities to consider moral and ethical issues such as genetic engineering in Unit 2 and abortion and euthanasia in Unit 4. The specification gives students the opportunity to examine questions from a broader standpoint than a single discipline.

European, health and environmental dimensions

The specification provides students with the opportunity to gain an understanding of environmental education, the European dimension in education and health education in connection with the report 'Environmental Responsibility — An agenda for further and higher education' (HMSO, 1993) and the *Resolutions of the Councils of Ministers* (EC, 1988). For example, there is an opportunity to study the European Community in Units 3 or 5.

Key skills

The specification will provide opportunities for developing and generating evidence for the key skills of:

- communication
- application of number
- information technology
- problem solving
- working with others
- improving own learning and performance.

The key skills of communication and application of number contribute to the assessment of the specification. There are many opportunities for teachers to assess key skills in the teaching of General Studies. For example:

- communication can be assessed in all units
- application of number can be assessed in Unit 3
- information technology can be assessed in coursework for Unit 3b
- improving own learning and performance can be tested in coursework for Unit 3b and Unit 4b
- working with others can be assessed in coursework for Unit 4b
- problem solving can be assessed in all units.

Further guidance on the assessment of key skills and General Studies is included in *Appendix 2*, 'Key skills development suggestions' (page 33). Edexcel will also publish a *Teacher's Guide to General Studies and Key Skills* as a separate booklet.

Synoptic assessment

The AS and Advanced GCE specifications encourage students to integrate knowledge and skills from a range of disciplines in order to develop an appreciation of how they relate to one another and how each may contribute to the understanding of issues being studied. Synoptic assessment involves the explicit drawing together and application of knowledge, understanding and skills acquired and developed in different parts of the Advanced GCE course. In this specification synoptic assessment will be made in Unit 6 and will consist of an assessment of the three areas of the specification: Science, Culture and Society.

Forbidden combinations

Every specification is assigned to a national classification code indicating the subject area to which it belongs.

Centres should be aware that students who enter for more than one GCE qualification with the same classification code, will have only one grade (the highest) counted for the purpose of the School and College Performance Tables.

The classification code for this specification is 7810.

These specifications may not be taken with any other Advanced Subsidiary GCE or Advanced qualification with the title General Studies at the same examination sitting. None of the units in General Studies specifications overlaps with units in any other qualifications. There are no forbidden combinations with any other level 3 qualifications.

The relationship between AS and A2

AS General Studies consists of 50 per cent of the total assessment for the specification and A2 consists of 50 per cent of the total assessment of the specification. Certification for AS will be available on its own for those who do not go on to take the full Advanced GCE.

The pattern of assessment

The pattern of assessment comprises a unit-based AS followed by a unit-based A2. However, students may take both the AS and the A2 at the end of the course if they wish.

Rules of combination

It is expected that the AS units will normally be taken at the end of the first year of a two-year course. However, the AS units and the A2 units may be taken together at the end of the course. Individual unit results will be certificated and the AS and full Advanced GCE will be graded A to E. Students who fail to meet the minimum standard for an award will be recorded as 'unclassified'. These specifications will comply with the grading, awarding and certification requirements of the revised GCE Code of Practice for courses, starting in September 2002.

Resitting of units and the validity of unit credits

There is no restriction on the number of times a unit may be attempted prior to claiming certification for the qualification. The best available result for each unit will count towards the final grade.

Results of units will be held in Edexcel's unit bank for as many years as this specification remains available. Once the AS or Advanced level qualification has been certificated, all unit results are deemed to be used up. These results cannot be used again towards a further award of the same qualification at the same level.

Students with particular requirements

Regulations and guidance relating to students with particular requirements are published annually by the Joint Council for General Qualifications and are circulated to examinations officers. Further copies of guidance documentation may be obtained from the address below or by telephoning 0870 240 9800.

Edexcel is happy to assess whether special consideration can be made for students with particular requirements. Requests should be addressed to:

Special Considerations
Edexcel
Stewart House
32 Russell Square
London WC1B 5DN

Scheme of assessment

AS (50%)

Unit	Method	Contribution	Amount/length	Objectives assessed
Unit 1	Written	Advanced GCE 20% AS 40%	1hr 30mins	1 (34%) 2 (12%) 3 (34%) 4 (20%)
Unit 2	Written	Advanced GCE 15% AS 30%	1hr 15mins	1 (34%) 2 (12%) 3 (34%) 4 (20%)
Either Unit 3a Or Unit 3b	Written	Advanced GCE 15% AS 30%	1hr 30mins	1 (34%) 2 (12%) 3 (34%) 4 (20%)
	Coursework	Advanced GCE 15% AS 30%	1,500 words	

Advanced GCE

Advanced GCE consists of the three AS units and:

Unit	Method	Contribution	Amount/length	Objectives assessed
Unit 4	Written	15%	1hr 30mins	1 (24%) 2 (12%) 3 (40%) 4 (24%)
Unit 5	Written	15%	1hr 30mins	1 (24%) 2 (12%) 3 (40%) 4 (24%)
Unit 6	Written	20%	1hr 30mins	1 (24%) 2 (12%) 3 (40%) 4 (24%)

Specification content

The specification content is set out by unit. Amplification is included in order to give guidance concerning the level of detail expected. Throughout the assessment, students will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of the breadth and nature of knowledge and of the relationship between various types of knowledge, appreciating their limitations. The specified themes to be covered in each unit of the course are described in the section on *Specification Content* (pages 18 to 24). Students and teachers may make links between the specified themes, as appropriate.

Students answering examination questions will be expected to draw on their knowledge and understanding of the relevant specified themes and may be required to apply their skills to a discussion of topical issues and current affairs which fall naturally within the area being tested. Where appropriate, further stimulus material will be provided in the examination papers.

Key skills in the specification

The specification provides opportunities for developing and generating evidence for the assessment of the key skills of communication, application of number, information technology, improving own learning and performance, working with others and problem solving. A summary table showing the opportunities for the assessment of key skills in the specification is given in *Appendix 1* (page 31). The section 'Key skills development suggestions' (page 33), gives examples of suggested activities which could provide evidence for the assessment of key skills and could also provide evidence for assessment in General Studies. The same work could provide evidence for the assessment of key skills and General Studies, provided that the work is assessed separately for each.

AS (50%)

A full description of the subject content for Units 1, 2 and 3 is given in the section entitled *Specification Content* on pages 18 to 21 of the specification.

Students take the following units.

Unit 1 (20%)

Aspects of culture — 1 hour 30 minutes

Students answer questions based on the subject areas of culture, morality, arts and humanities. The paper will consist of three sections: Section A, Section B and Section C. Students must attempt all three sections. Section A will consist of short answer questions relating to the subject areas of the unit, Section B of short answer questions relating to given stimulus material, and Section C of three questions requiring extended writing which will relate to the subject areas of the unit. Students must answer **all** the questions in Sections A and B, and **one** question in Section C.

Unit 2 (15%)

Scientific horizons — 1 hour 15 minutes

Students answer questions based on the subject areas of science, mathematics and technology. The paper will consist of three sections: Section A, Section B and Section C. Students must attempt all three sections. Section A will consist of short answer questions relating to the subject areas of the unit, Section B of short answer questions relating to given stimulus material, and Section C of three questions requiring extended writing which will relate to the subject areas of the unit. Students must answer **all** the questions in Sections A and B, and **one** question in Section C.

And either Unit 3(a) (15%)

Social perspectives — 1 hour 30 minutes

Students answer questions based on the subject areas of society, politics and the economy. The paper will consist of three sections: Section A, Section B and Section C. Students must attempt all three sections. Section A will consist of short answer questions relating to the subject areas of the unit, Section B of short answer questions relating to given stimulus material, and Section C of three questions requiring extended writing which will relate to the subject areas of the unit. Students must answer **all** the questions in Sections A and B, and **one** question in Section C.

Some questions in this paper will involve the application of number and students might need a calculator and a ruler.

or Unit 3(b) (15%)

Social perspectives coursework folder

Students will be required to complete a coursework folder of approximately 1,500 words in length. The area of study for the folder must be drawn from **one** of the following specified themes:

- Race, Gender, Age or Disability
- Government and Politics: Britain and Europe
- Work, Leisure and Unemployment
- Crime, Deviance and the Legal System
- Family Life.

The coursework may consist of a single study of approximately 1,500 words or two related studies of approximately 750 words each. Students' topics must be selected from one of the above specified themes. Students may choose their own topic within their selected specified theme, provided they indicate which theme they have chosen. Students should select a topic which will allow them to pursue a subject of personal interest. The topic title may be chosen by the student or provided by the centre. In either case, it must be agreed with the teacher before planning and research begin. The selected topic must satisfy the subject content of the unit and be linked to one of the specified themes. The topic must allow the student to demonstrate evidence of ability in each of the assessment objectives.

Examples of the kinds of topics which would satisfy the assessment objectives for coursework are:

- Identify the needs of a particular social group (based on race, age, gender or disability). What different types of knowledge are used by sociologists in investigating the costs, nature and suitability of the provision made specifically to meet the needs of that group in a local facility (sporting, leisure, retail or public service)? How effective do you think their arguments are and what recommendations for improvement would you make?
- ‘The proportion of single-parent families has increased in the last decade as a result of a rising divorce rate and changing social attitudes’. Investigate the social and economic consequences of this development.

The issue chosen for the topic should be sufficiently demanding to allow study in appropriate depth. The issue should also enable students to demonstrate their ability in application of number. Centres may, if they wish, define a single topic which all students are expected to study or provide a list of approved titles for topics. Further details of the possible subject content of the specified themes are given on pages 21 and 22 of the specification. Further details of the coursework requirements are given in the Edexcel Coursework Guide for General Studies.

Coursework which has been submitted for assessment in other subjects may also be submitted for assessment in General Studies, provided that it is assessed according to the Assessment Criteria for Coursework for General Studies.

The final date for submission of coursework is May 15th.

Advanced GCE (Advanced GCE consists of the three AS units and A2)

Subject areas will be examined in greater depth for Advanced GCE. Students will be expected to make a wide range of links and connections between the material studied. They will also be required to study a greater variety of contexts and issues and to deal with more complex concepts in the subject areas. Advanced GCE will extend beyond the AS in terms of breadth, depth and higher level skills, as reflected in the assessment objectives. A full description of the specified themes for Units 4, 5 and 6 is given in the section entitled *Specification Content* on pages 22 to 25 of the specification.

Students take the following units.

Either Unit 4 (15%)

Cultural expressions — 1 hour 30 minutes

Students answer questions based on the subject areas of culture, morality, arts and humanities. The paper will consist of three sections: Section A, Section B and Section C. Students must attempt all three sections. Section A will consist of short answer questions relating to the subject areas of the unit, Section B of short answer questions relating to given stimulus material, and Section C of three questions requiring extended writing which will relate to the subject areas of the unit. Students must answer **all** the questions in Sections A and B, and **one** question in Section C.

Unit 5 (15%)

Modern society — 1 hour 30 minutes

Students will be assessed on stimulus material drawn from the areas of society, politics and the economy. The paper will consist of three sections: Section A, Section B and Section C. Students must attempt all three sections. Section A will consist of short answer questions relating to the subject areas of the unit, Section B of short answer questions relating to given stimulus material, and Section C of four questions requiring extended writing which will relate to the subject areas of the unit. Students must answer **all** the questions in Sections A and B, and **one** question in Section C.

Some questions in this paper will involve data response and students might need a calculator and a ruler.

Unit 6 (20%)

The contemporary world — 1 hour 30 minutes

Students answer questions based on the subject areas of science, culture and society. The paper will consist of four questions requiring extended writing. Students must answer **two** questions and they will be expected to make a range of links between the areas studied. This unit will be the synoptic unit for the specification.

Unit descriptions

Specification content

Unit 1: Aspects of Culture

Content

Culture, Morality, Arts and Humanities

Students should have knowledge and understanding of:

- 1 **understanding and appreciation of the nature and importance of culture**
- 2 **beliefs, values and moral reasoning**
- 3 **religious belief and experience and connections between them**
- 4 **creativity and innovation**
- 5 **aesthetic evaluation**
- 6 **media and communication**

Specified themes

The unit will assess the understanding of:

the nature of culture: national cultures, western culture, popular culture, high culture; the relationship between cultures; the importance of culture to individuals

the basis of moral reasoning; religious teaching, utilitarianism, social contract; the relationship of moral reasoning to contemporary moral problems

the reasons why people have a religious belief: religious experience, the symbolism of religion, the need for purpose in life

the development of an artistic style or a literary or musical form

the key elements in **at least two** differing styles of literature, painting, music, architecture

the power and influence of the media, including media ownership and control and the issue of censorship

Unit 2: Scientific Horizons

Content

Science, Mathematics and Technology

Students should have knowledge and understanding of:

- 1 **characteristics of the sciences (physical, life and earth)**
- 2 **the nature of scientific objectivity and the question of progress**
- 3 **understanding of scientific methods, principles, criteria and their application**
- 4 **moral responsibility: the social, ethical and environmental implications of scientific discoveries and technological development**
- 5 **mathematical reasoning and its application**
- 6 **the relationship between technology, science, culture (past and/or present) and ideology**

Specified themes

The unit will assess the understanding of:

- some of the revolutions which have occurred in the physical sciences, in the life sciences, in astronomy and the earth sciences
- the nature of experimental procedures in the physical sciences and astronomy or the earth sciences
- the difference between the build-up of scientific knowledge through inductive processes and the formulation of scientific laws by creative insights
- ethical questions in medicine and genetic engineering; the environmental effects of modern technology
- descriptions and arguments with number statements and statements involving physical quantities
- the relationship between scientific progress and technological development
- the manner in which media reports describe issues with a scientific or technological component

Unit 3a/3b: Social Perspectives

Content

Society, Politics and the Economy

Students should have knowledge and understanding of:

1 **examination and appreciation of ideologies and values in society**

2 **political processes and goals**

3 **the nature of objectivity in social sciences; explanation and evaluation of human behaviour**

4 **relationship between law, culture and ethics**

5 **social and economic trends and constraints**

Specified themes

The unit will assess the understanding of:

race, gender, age and disability

the nature and development of social values; different social and cultural influences: religion; law; government; protest movements etc

effect of increasingly ageing population on the economy; increased expenditure on pensions and reduction of working population paying tax; pressures for private pensions

government and politics: Britain and Europe

identity of major political parties in Britain; similarities and differences; protest groups and single-issue politics; economic factors influencing electoral performance (lower taxes or higher spending); the organisation and functions of the European Community

work, leisure and unemployment

what are social sciences? Similarities and differences between the natural and Social Sciences

unemployment; costs to society and the individual

the growth of leisure and recent leisure time changes; the role of the state as a provider (of work, unemployment benefit and leisure facilities) contrasted with private provision

crime, deviance and the legal system

the role and purpose of law; the relationship of law to the concept of right and wrong; the arguments for and against universal human rights; law in different societies; the nature and purpose of punishment (retribution, deterrence, reformation)

family life

the meaning of 'family'; the purpose of 'family'; its role in society; socialisation; stability; transmission of values; oppression etc. Supply and demand; the importance and economic effects of the youth market in a consumer society; different types of family.

Unit 4: Cultural Expressions

Content

Culture, Morality, Arts and Humanities

Students should have knowledge and understanding of:

- 1 **understanding and appreciation of the nature and importance of culture**
- 2 **beliefs, values and moral reasoning**
- 3 **religious belief and experience and connections between them**
- 4 **creativity and innovation**
- 5 **aesthetic evaluation**
- 6 **media and communication**

Specified themes

The unit will assess the understanding of:

the relationship between culture and society; the arguments for and against high culture as preferable to popular culture; the arguments for and against government funding of the arts

arguments for and against contemporary moral positions; the relationship of moral reasoning to the following issues: genetic engineering, the nature of the family, artistic freedom of expression

the nature of religious belief; the relationship between religious belief and behaviour: religion and science, religion and morality; the symbolism of religion

the development of an artistic style or a literary or musical form, to show that creativity is in part, a response to the context of social structures and traditions in which it takes place and that innovation is a continuous process within that response

the principles of aesthetic evaluation; the issue of subjectivity or universal standards, as shown by reference to examples from literature, music or art

the nature of the mass media in the United Kingdom; ownership and control of the media; the influence of market forces on the media; the influence of the media on people's lives

Unit 5: Modern Society

Content

Society, Politics and the Economy

Students should have knowledge and understanding of:

- 1 **examination and appreciation of ideologies and values in society**
- 2 **political processes and goals**
- 3 **the nature of objectivity in social sciences; explanation and evaluation of human behaviour**

Specified themes

The unit will assess the understanding of:

race, gender, age and disability

why do different societies and cultures have different value systems?

the pressures created in and by a multi-cultural (or mixed-cultural) society

the impact of government action to improve equality of opportunity; legislation; government commissions; positive discrimination; education; costs and benefits of equality legislation on the economy.

government and politics: Britain and Europe. democracy and dictatorship; nationalism; purposes of 'politics' — economic and social

UK Government and elections; reform of the electoral process

the legislative process; the nature and role of taxation; economic policy and social policy. conflict between Europe and UK legislation. possible benefits of devolved government in stimulating regional economies.

work, leisure and unemployment

the nature of social sciences

the human need to work — the 'work ethic'; compare economic and social factors; the needs of the individual compared to the needs of society; impact of work on the economy — GDP; taxation; welfare provision; infra-structure of society

leisure facilities — who should provide? The role of the state and of private enterprise; forced and unforced leisure time; social and economic costs and benefits to society and the individual; the growth of a leisure industry; the minimum wage; what makes an entrepreneur?

the impact of work and leisure on age; gender; culture; status; education and training etc.

4 relationship between law, culture and ethics

crime, deviance and the legal system

differences between crime and deviance; does society create crime? Who determines the status of an action? Societal variations in definitions of actions; variations over time and circumstance within a given society

the role of law; the moral concept of right and wrong; good and bad; is there an absolute standard? Examine the benefits and costs of legal aid

how does the legal system work in the UK? The place of European Law.

the purpose of punishment; revenge; protection; rehabilitation; miscarriages of justice; the nature of punishment; victims' rights; moral and economic issues.

5 social and economic trends and constraints

family life

changes in attitudes to marriage; legal and economic changes affecting family and marriage; changes in attitudes in society; views of different cultures; social and economic effects of changes in attitude; the rise of single parent families; children's needs and rights.

demographic changes affecting family life (mobility; smaller families; longevity etc); economic and/or environmental pressures influencing change; changes in traditional industries and the development of new industries; role of government subsidy in encouraging investment in depressed areas.

Unit 6: The Contemporary World

Content

This unit will be the synoptic unit for the specification. The unit will assess themes from Science, Culture and Society.

Students should have knowledge and understanding of:

1 science and culture

2 culture and society

3 science and society

Specified themes

The unit will assess the understanding of:

the specified themes from Unit 2: Scientific Horizons, together with those from Unit 4: Cultural Expressions.

the unit will also assess the understanding of:

The influence of technology on the arts.

The growth of science in western culture; the cultural acceptance of revolutions in science, eg the expanding universe or wave-particle dualities and of technological developments, eg genetic engineering, as well as their impact on the practice of science.

The similarities and differences between religious and scientific beliefs; the testing of scientific hypotheses leading to their rejection or continued acceptance; the inherent uncertainties in modern science

the specified themes from unit 1: Aspects of Culture, Unit 4: Cultural Expressions and unit 5: Modern Society.

the specified themes from Unit 2; Scientific Horizons, together with those from Unit 3: Social Perspectives and Unit 5: Modern Society. The unit will also assess the understanding of:

The international nature of scientific endeavour and the role of governmental committees, eg the Centre European de Recherche Nucleaire or the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority; the relationship between technological advances and the significantly improved quality of life for most people including economic aspects; the dominance of men in the history of science and technology; scientific development in other societies, eg China.

The nature of experimental evidence in the sciences, including an appreciation of statistical measures; the different nature of evidence in the physical sciences, the life sciences, and in astronomy and the earth sciences.

Grade descriptions

The following grade descriptions indicate the level of attainment characteristic of grades A, C and E at Advanced GCE. They give a general indication of the required learning outcomes at specified grades. The descriptions should be interpreted in relation to the content of the specification; they are not designed to define that content. The grade awarded will depend in practice on the extent to which the student has met the assessment objectives overall. Shortcomings in some aspects of the examination may be balanced by better performances in others.

Grade A

Students demonstrate knowledge and understanding of a wide range of issues, drawing on different disciplines. There is evidence of a clear ability to interrelate these issues in different contexts. They use their knowledge and understanding to interpret and evaluate information, communicating clearly and accurately in a concise, logical and relevant way. They are clearly able to reason, demonstrating skills of analysis, interpretation, evaluation and synthesis. They are able to appreciate different types of knowledge, the relationship between its different forms and their limitations.

Grade C

Students demonstrate knowledge and understanding of a range of issues, drawing on different disciplines. There is a clear attempt to interrelate these in different contexts. They use their knowledge and understanding to interpret and evaluate information, communicating clearly. They use skills of reasoning to analyse, interpret, evaluate and synthesise. They recognise that there are different types of knowledge, clearly distinguishing between examples of fact and opinion.

Grade E

Students demonstrate knowledge and understanding of a range of issues, drawing on different disciplines. They use this knowledge and understanding to begin to interpret and evaluate information. They will distinguish between some examples of fact and opinion. They demonstrate some skills in organising and presenting information.

Moderation of coursework

Information about moderation procedures will be sent to centres making entries for this specification.

Assessment criteria for AS coursework

The coursework should be marked as a whole, using the banded mark scheme below to assess AO1, AO2, AO3 and AO4. If two assignments have been completed, the coursework should be reassessed as a whole without regard to the marks awarded for separate assignments. The coursework should be awarded a separate mark for each assessment objective; ie a mark out of 17 for AO1, a mark out of 6 for AO2, a mark out of 17 for AO3 and a mark out of 10 for AO4. These marks should then be aggregated to give a single overall mark out of 50. There are no definitive answers and students may make a variety of valid responses. Answers must be judged on their own merits within the guidelines of the mark scheme.

Unit 3b: Social Perspectives

AO1 Band 1: 1–3 marks

- Student demonstrates limited relevant knowledge from different disciplines

AO1 Band 2: 4–8 marks

- Student demonstrates a range of relevant knowledge and understanding from different disciplines

AO1 Band 3: 9–13 marks

- Student understands and applies a range of relevant knowledge and skills from different disciplines

AO1 Band 4: 14–17 marks

- Student understands and applies a wide range of relevant knowledge and skills from different disciplines

AO2 Band 1: 1–2 marks

- Student communicates in a relevant way generally making some use of appropriate terminology and vocabulary

AO2 Band 2: 3–4 marks

- Student communicates clearly and accurately in a relevant way generally making use of correct terminology and vocabulary

AO2: Band 3: 5–6 marks

- Student communicates clearly and accurately in a concise, logical and relevant way, showing good command of appropriate terminology and vocabulary

AO3 Band 1: 1–3 marks

- Student uses a selected range of evidence to make unsupported assertions

AO3 Band 2: 4–8 marks

- Student marshals a selected range of evidence to support an argument

AO3 Band 3: 9–13 marks

- Student marshals and interprets a range of evidence to draw conclusions

AO3 Band 4: 14–17 marks

- Student selects, interprets and evaluates evidence to justify conclusions

AO4 Band 1: 1–3 marks

- Student demonstrates an awareness that there are different types of knowledge

AO4 Band 2: 4–7 marks

- Student demonstrates some understanding of different types of relevant knowledge with some awareness either of the relationships between them or their limitations

AO4 Band 3: 8–10 marks

- Student demonstrates understanding of different types of relevant knowledge and the relationships between them, appreciating their limitations

Textbooks and other resources

General Studies is mainly about significant contemporary and perennial issues. There is a considerable amount of relevant material available for the use of students and teachers. Teachers should draw on their own specialist knowledge of resources. In addition, the following are recommended:

- broadsheet daily or weekly newspapers and magazines
- internet and CD-Roms
- documentary television programmes.

There are a number of resource books available to teachers. Two that take a broad approach to ways in which this course can be covered are:

- Davies, G and Little, E — *General Studies* — (Longman, 2001) ISBN: 0-582-44761-5
- Watton, V/Hobson, D and Walton, D — *General Studies: an AS/A Level Course Text* — (Hodder & Stoughton, 2000) ISBN: 0-340-77539-4

Edexcel Publications

Coursework Guide to General Studies

Teacher's Guide to General Studies

Teacher's Guide to Key Skills and General Studies

In addition, Edexcel intends to produce a webpage for General Studies on the Edexcel website to provide details of additional support for the specification.

Support and training

Training

Each year Edexcel provides a programme of training courses covering aspects of the specifications and assessment. These courses take place throughout the country. For further information on what is planned, please consult the annual training and Professional Development guide, which is sent to all centres, or contact:

Professional Development and Training

Edexcel

Stewart House

32 Russell Square

London WC1B 5DN

Telephone: 0870 240 9800

Fax: 020 7758 5951

Email: trainingbookings@edexcel.org.uk

Appendices

Appendix 1: Mapping of key skills

Opportunities for the assessment of the key skills in the AS and Advanced GCE in General Studies Specification Subject Content

Key skills (Level 3)	Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4	Unit 5	Unit 6
Application of number						
N3.1		✓	✓		✓	✓
N3.2		✓	✓		✓	✓
N3.3		✓	✓		✓	✓
Communication						
C3.1a	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
C3.1b	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
C3.2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
C3.3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Information technology						
IT3.1		✓	✓		✓	✓
IT3.2		✓	✓		✓	✓
IT3.3		✓	✓		✓	✓

Key skills (Level 3)	Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4	Unit 5	Unit 6
Working with others						
WO3.1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
WO3.2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
WO3.3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Improving own learning and performance						
LP3.1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
LP3.2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
LP3.3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Problem solving						
PS3.1		✓	✓		✓	✓
PS3.2		✓	✓		✓	✓
PS3.3		✓	✓		✓	✓
PS3.4		✓	✓		✓	✓

Appendix 2: Key skills development suggestions

The AS/Advanced GCE in General Studies offers a range of opportunities for students to both:

- develop their key skills and
- generate assessed evidence for their portfolios.

In particular, the following key skills can be developed and assessed through this specification at level 3:

- application of number
- communication
- information technology
- improving own learning and performance
- working with others
- problem solving.

Copies of the key skills specifications can be ordered through our publications catalogue. The individual key skills units are divided into three parts:

- Part A: what you need to know — this identifies the underpinning knowledge and skills required
- Part B: what you must do — this identifies the evidence that students must produce for their portfolios
- Part C: guidance — this gives examples of possible activities and types of evidence that may be generated.

This Advanced GCE specification signposts development and internal assessment opportunities which are based on Part B of the level 3 key skills units.

Additional guidance is available for those students who are working towards levels 2 or 4 for any of the individual key skills units.

The evidence generated through this Advanced GCE will be internally assessed and contribute to the students' key skills portfolio. In addition, in order to achieve the key skills qualification, students will need to take the additional external tests associated with communication, information technology and application of number.

Each unit within the Advanced GCE in General Studies will provide opportunities for the development of all six of the key skills identified. This section identifies the key skills evidence requirements and also provides a mapping of those opportunities. Students will need to have opportunities to develop their skills over time before they are ready for assessment. For each skill, you will find illustrative activities that will aid this key skill development and facilitate the generation of appropriate portfolio evidence. To assist in the recording of key skills evidence, Edexcel has produced recording documentation which can be ordered from our publications catalogue.

Application of number — level 3

The AS/Advanced GCE in General Studies provides opportunities for students to both develop the key skill of application of number and also to generate evidence for their portfolio. As well as undertaking tasks related to the three areas of evidence required students are also required to undertake a substantial and complex activity. This will involve students obtaining and interpreting information, using this information when carrying out calculations and explaining how the results of the calculations meet the purpose of the activity.

Key skill portfolio evidence requirement	AS/A unit	Opportunities for development or internal assessment
N3.1 Plan and interpret information from two different types of sources, including a large data set.	2, 3, 5, 6	Students are required to plan how to obtain and use the information required. They should obtain relevant information (which may be from a large data set of over 50 items) using appropriate methods. Social Perspectives, Scientific Horizons, Modern Society and Contemporary World units all offer opportunities to develop and assess applied number skills. Students should plan how to gather and use the information required, obtain the information and choose appropriate methods for obtaining results. They will need to be able to break down activities into a series of tasks, use estimation to help plan and make and use accurate observations. For example: AS: plan an examination of the different types of family (Unit 3.5) or changes in attitudes to the family (Unit 3.5) A2: plan an examination of the likely patterns of future demographic change (Unit 5.5), obtaining information from different sources.

Key skill portfolio evidence requirement	Unit	Opportunities for development or internal assessment
N3.2 Carry out multi-stage calculations to do with: - a amounts and sizes - b scales and proportions - c handling statistics - d rearranging and using formulae. You should work with a large data set on at least one occasion.	2, 3, 5, 6	Students must carry out their calculations, which could relate to volumes, powers, averages, formulae, etc, and show their methods of working. They must show how they have checked results and corrected their work when necessary. The Social Perspectives, Scientific Horizons, Modern Society and Contemporary World units all allow for a wide range of number use. Students need to carry out accurate calculations, check their methods and ensure that any errors are found and corrected. Examples include the use of given statistics, the collection of statistics, proportional change and large sets of data and multi-stage calculations. Working should be clearly shown and should be accurate, with checking procedures used. Where possible work should incorporate multi-stage calculations, powers and roots, proportional change, actual measurements from scale drawings and large sets of data. Lengths of sides and angles of triangles, formulae, equations and expressions are more difficult to incorporate but teaching staff should look for opportunities. For example: AS: examining mathematical reasoning, such as the production of an assignment on the correlation between possible factors and probable outcomes in assessing risk (Unit 2.5) A2: practical exercises in the formulation and testing of hypotheses (Unit 6.1) and the analysis of statistics on work, unemployment or crime (Unit 5) will offer many opportunities for calculations using a variety of data.

Key skill portfolio evidence requirement	Unit	Opportunities for development or internal assessment
N3.3 Interpret results of your calculations, present your findings and justify your methods. You must use at least one graph, one chart and one diagram.	2, 3, 5, 6	Based on their findings, students must select appropriate methods of presentation, using charts, diagrams and tables, as appropriate and draw relevant conclusions from their findings. Students should explain why they have chosen a particular approach and how this work relates to the purpose of the activity undertaken. They should identify possible sources of error in their work. The Social Perspectives, Scientific Horizons, Modern Society and Contemporary World units will offer many opportunities to draw conclusions from findings and present results. Presentation of results involves the selection and justification of appropriate methods to illustrate findings. Students should construct charts, graphs, diagrams and scale drawings. They should draw conclusions from the findings and explain how results relate to the focus of their investigations. Possible sources of error and their influence on results should be examined. For example: AS: give a presentation of findings from a research project on astronomy or earth sciences (Unit 2.1) A2: present findings based on the examination of social and economic trends (Unit 5.5).

Evidence

Student evidence for application of number could include:

- copies of students' plans
- records of information obtained
- justification of methods used
- records of calculations showing methods used
- reports of findings.

Communication — level 3

For the communication key skill, students are required to hold discussions and give presentations, read and synthesise information and write documents. Students will be able to develop all of these skills through an appropriate teaching and learning programme based on this Advanced GCE.

Key skill portfolio evidence requirement	Unit	Opportunities for development or internal assessment
C3.1a Contribute to a group discussion about a complex subject.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	Many of the topics in this specification are suitable as the basis of a group discussion. The discussion must be about a complex subject. This may be based on a number of ideas, some of which may be abstract, very detailed and/or sensitive. Specialist vocabulary may be used in the discussion. During the discussion students should make clear and relevant contributions, and develop points and ideas whilst listening and responding sensitively to others. They should also create opportunities for others to contribute as appropriate. Discussions should be held on a wide variety of subjects and in a variety of contexts (eg classroom, visits, debates) and on topics linked to gender or cultural aspects. For example: AS: discussions could be held on the power and influence of the media (Unit 1.6) or on arguments for and against the monarchy (Unit 3.2) A2: discussions could be held on subjects such as a comparison of scientific and religious beliefs (Unit 6.1) or on the rights of victims (Unit 5.4).

Key skill portfolio evidence requirement	Unit	Opportunities for development or internal assessment
C3.1b Make a presentation about a complex subject, using at least one image to illustrate complex points.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	Following a period of research, students could be given the opportunity to present their findings to the rest of the group. For example, students could present their key findings and conclusions resulting from their coursework study. During the presentation students should speak clearly and use a style that is appropriate to their audience and the subject. The presentation should have a logical structure that allows the audience to follow the sequence of information and ideas. The presentation should include an appropriate range of techniques such as: • the use of examples to illustrate complex points • audience experience used to involve the audience • tone of voice varied, etc. Where appropriate, images should be used to both illustrate points and help engage the audience. Images could include, charts and diagrams, pictures or models, maps, etc. At least one image should be used to illustrate and help convey a complex point. Any specific topic or topics can be used as the subjects for presentations. Topics where students have personal experience or involvement are usually more successful. For example: AS: make a presentation on genetically modified food, using graphs and/or diagrams (Unit 2.4) A2: make a presentation on a comparative study of a work of art, explaining whether its appeal is universal or subjective (Unit 4.5).

Key skill portfolio evidence requirement	Unit	Opportunities for development or internal assessment
C3.2 Read and synthesise information from two extended documents about a complex subject. One of these documents should include at least one image.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	Students will have a number of opportunities to read and synthesise information from two extended documents. For example, as part of their preparation for the discussion and presentation of a complex subject, students will need to carry out preliminary research. Also, as students undertake research for their coursework they will need to refer to and synthesise information from a variety of sources. Extended documents may include textbooks, reports and articles of more than three pages. At least one of these documents should contain an image from which students can draw appropriate and relevant information. Students will need to select and read material that contains relevant information. From this information they will need to identify accurately and compare the lines of reasoning and main points from the text and images. Students will then need to synthesise this information into a relevant form, eg for a presentation, a discussion or an essay. Selecting and synthesising information will occur throughout the course. As students gather information they will need to know how to find and skim documents, scan and read the material, use sources of reference, recognise opinion and bias and be able to synthesise the information for a purpose. Much of this may emerge from the application of the <i>Thinking and analytical skills</i> which underpin the specification. For example: AS: examine the effects of changes in leisure and leisure time (Unit 3.3) A2: plan and carry out research into the latest theories of the expanding universe (Unit 6.1).

Key skill portfolio evidence requirement	AS/A unit	Opportunities for development or internal assessment
C3.3 Write two different types of documents about complex subjects. One piece of writing should be an extended document and include at least one image.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	Students are required to produce two different types of document. At least one of these should be an extended document, for example a report or an essay of more than three pages. The document should have a form and style of writing which is fit both for its purpose and the complex subject matter covered. At least one of the documents should include an appropriate image which contains and effectively conveys relevant information. Specialist vocabulary should be used where appropriate and the information in the document should be clearly and coherently organised through the use of headings, paragraphs, etc. Students should ensure that the text is legible and that spelling, punctuation and grammar are accurate. The coursework unit and all set essays or assignments will offer opportunities to demonstrate written skills. Students should be given the choice of the method which they use to present information (essay, reports, etc), select an appropriate style, organise material appropriately and check work (and, if necessary, re-draft it) to ensure it meets standards for spelling, grammar and punctuation. For example: AS: write essays or assignments on such topics as the media reporting of scientific issues (Unit 2.6), the development of a literary or musical form (Unit 1.4), or the social cost of unemployment (Unit 3.3) A2: produce essays or assignments on the relationship between culture and ideology (Unit 4.1), whether society creates crime (Unit 5.4), or the implications of scientific and technological developments (Unit 2.4).

Evidence

Student evidence for communication could include:

- tutor observation records
- preparatory notes
- audio/video tapes
- notes based on documents read
- essays.

Information technology — level 3

When producing work for their Advanced GCE in General Studies, students will have numerous opportunities to use information technology. The internet or CD-Roms could be used to collect information. Documents can be produced using relevant software and images may be incorporated in those documents. Early drafts of documents could be emailed to tutors for initial comments and feedback.

For this key skill, students are required to carry out at least one ‘substantial activity’. This is defined as ‘an activity that includes a number of related tasks, where the results of one task will affect the carrying out of the others’. The activity should generate evidence for all three areas of evidence required in Part B of the IT unit. If students undertaking coursework as part of their AS/A in General Studies use information technology, they will have opportunities to generate evidence for all three sections identified as part of a ‘substantial activity’.

In addition, students will be able to use information technology to generate evidence for the communication key skill. For example, the extended document with images, required for C3.3, could be generated using appropriate software.

As part of their General Studies programme, students may not be able to generate sufficient evidence required for this unit. For example Working with Numbers through the use of a spreadsheet application or some aspects of database use. In this situation, students may use stand-alone IT sessions for development and evidence generation and/or other parts of their Advanced GCE course.

Key skill portfolio evidence requirement	Unit	Opportunities for development or internal assessment
IT3.1 Plan, and use different sources to search for, and select, information required for two different purposes.	2, 3, 5, 6	Students will need to plan, and document, how they are to use IT as part of the activity, including how they will search for and incorporate relevant information from different electronic sources. These may include the internet and CD-Roms. Information selected must be relevant and of the appropriate quality. Suitable databases and spreadsheets with relevant information which should cover the requirements can be provided. Structured research topics with a checklist will cover this element effectively. For example, a research project on a specific topic (genetic engineering, feminism, political parties), comparing sources (internet, CD-Roms, scanning), choosing techniques for gathering information and making appropriate selections of sources. For example: AS: use CD-Roms and the internet to find information on political parties or topical political issues such as nationalism or animal rights (Unit 3.2) A2: use CD-Roms and the internet to find information on Europe, on UK politics or current government economic and social policy (Unit 5.2).

Key skill portfolio evidence requirement	Unit	Opportunities for development or internal assessment
IT3.2 Explore, develop, and exchange information and derive new information to meet two different purposes.	2, 3, 5, 6	Students are required to bring together, in a consistent format, their selected information and use automated routines as appropriate. For example, using icons and macros to generate standard forms of lists, tables, images, etc. Students should sort and group the information generated, producing graphs and charts if appropriate, to allow them to draw conclusions. For example, students could be working towards giving a presentation based on their findings. Information could be presented in handouts and/or as part of an automated slide show. Early drafts could be emailed to their tutor for feedback, or could be stored on a shared drive for access by others. Students should bring information together in a consistent form, create and use appropriate structures to explore and develop information and use effective methods for exchanging information. For example AS: enter social, economic or environmental statistics onto a spreadsheet or database so that forecasts can be made and hypotheses tested (Unit 3.5) A2: produce images and graphs to resource a presentation on political processes and goals (parties, pressure groups, protest, etc) in the UK (Unit 5.2; also see working with others).

Key skill portfolio evidence requirement	Unit	Opportunities for development or internal assessment
IT3.3 Present information from different sources for two different purposes and audiences. This work must include at least one example of text, one example of images and one example of numbers.	2, 3, 5, 6	In presenting information, students will need to develop a structure which may involve the modification of templates, the application of page numbers, dates, etc. Tutors may provide early feedback on layout, content and style that will result in formatting changes (early drafts should be kept as portfolio evidence). The final format should be suitable for its purpose and audience, eg AS coursework, OHTs/handouts for a presentation, etc. The document should have accurate spelling (use of spell-checker) and have been proof read. Students should present information effectively, using an appropriate style and format, ensuring that the work is accurate and makes sense. Information can be presented using a variety of methods (word processing, presentation software, desktop publishing) and in a variety of ways (computer presentations using lists, tables, graphs, predictive models). For example AS: present social, economic or environmental statistics and the forecasts made or hypotheses tested. Screen displays, text, paper copies of spreadsheets, databases or presentation software, etc may be used (Unit 3.5) A2: use images and graphs to resource a presentation on political processes and goals (parties, pressure groups, protest, etc) in the UK (Unit 5.2; also see working with others).

Evidence

Student evidence for information technology could include:

- tutor observation records
- preparatory plans
- printouts with annotations
- draft documents.

Working with others — level 3

To achieve this key skill, students are required to carry out at least two complex activities. Students will negotiate the overall objective of the activity with others and plan a course of action. Initially the component tasks of the activity, and their relationships, may not be immediately clear. Within the activity, the topics covered may include ideas that may be some or all of the following: detailed, abstract, unfamiliar, sensitive.

During the activity, the student must work in both group-based and one-to-one situations.

Key skill portfolio evidence requirement	Unit	Opportunities for development or internal assessment
WO3.1 Plan the activity with others, agreeing objectives, responsibilities and working arrangements.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	Students could work in groups of 6 to 8 and be required to investigate a given topic. Initial work will require identification of and agreeing objectives and planning how to meet them, including any necessary action and resources required. The group needs to agree responsibilities and working arrangements. Groups must agree realistic objectives, identify the necessary resources, provide information and agree suitable working arrangements. All units can provide opportunities for working with others. These opportunities can include groups collaborating to locate information and data, groups working together to produce a presentation. For example: AS: form groups to plan the location and collection of statistics on a chosen topic, eg views on crime and punishment (Unit 3.4) AS: students plan for a broad survey of national newspapers on a set of agreed criteria (Unit 1.6) A2: groups plan the examination of aspects of a wide range of religious beliefs and plan the presentation of findings in a structured group presentation (Unit 4.3) A2: plan research into a range of political processes (parties, pressure groups, protest, etc) and plan the delivery of an oral presentation on political processes and goals in the UK (Unit 5.2).

Key skill portfolio evidence requirement	Unit	Opportunities for development or internal assessment
WO3.2 Work towards achieving the agreed objectives, seeking to establish and maintain co-operative working relationships in meeting your responsibilities.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	When working towards their agreed objectives, students could work in pairs, with each pair taking specific perspectives, etc. Students will need to plan and organise their work effectively so that they meet agreed deadlines and maintain appropriate working relationships. Students need to carry out tasks in effective and efficient ways. They must maintain co-operative working relationships and agree methods to solve any difficulties. They also need to exchange accurate information on timescales and quality and agree changes where necessary. For example: AS: locate and collect statistics on a chosen topic, eg views on crime and punishment (Unit 3.4) AS: carry out a broad survey of national newspapers on a set of agreed criteria (Unit 1.6) A2: examine aspects of a wide range of religious beliefs and present findings in a structured group presentation (Unit 4.3) A2: explore a range of political processes (parties, pressure groups, protest, etc) and deliver an oral presentation on political processes and goals in the UK (Unit 5.2).

Key skill portfolio evidence requirement	Unit	Opportunities for development or internal assessment
WO3.3 Review the activity with others against the agreed objectives and agree ways of enhancing collaborative work.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	Once completed, the full group needs to review outcomes against the agreed objectives. In doing this they should identify factors that have influenced the outcome and agree on the ways in which the activity could have been carried out more effectively. Students should agree the extent to which objectives have been met, identify the main factors in the process and agree on possible improvements. For example: AS: review the collection of statistics and the effectiveness of methods used for collection and group work (Unit 3.4) AS: review the success of the survey of national newspapers and examine ways of improving group work methods (Unit 1.6) A2: review the group work, findings and presentation on a wide range of religious beliefs (Unit 4.3) A2: review the information and the presentation on a range of political processes and goals; explore ways of improving collaborative approaches (Unit 5.2).

Evidence

Student evidence for working with others could include:

- tutor observation records
- preparatory plans
- records of process and progress made
- evaluative reports.

Improving own learning and performance — level 3

Within Advanced GCE in General Studies programmes, students will have opportunities to develop and generate evidence which meets part of the evidence requirement of this key skill.

To achieve this key skill, students will need to carry out two study-based learning activities and two activity-based learning activities. The Advanced GCE will provide opportunities for students to undertake study-based learning. Evidence for activity-based learning may come from other Advanced GCEs in the students' programme or from enrichment activities.

One of the study-based learning activities must contain at least one complex task and periods of self-directed learning. Activities that generate evidence for this skill should take place over an extended period of time, eg 3 months. Over the period of the activity, students should seek and receive feedback, from tutors and others, on their target setting and performance.

Any substantial project work (including coursework) is a suitable study-based learning activity and may be used to generate evidence for this key skill.

Key skill portfolio evidence requirement	Unit	Opportunities for development or internal assessment
LP3.1 Agree targets and plan how these will be met, using support from appropriate others.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	Students plan how they are to produce their coursework. This will include setting realistic dates and targets and identification of potential problems and alternative courses of action. This will be determined with advice from others, eg their tutor. Students need to seek information on ways to achieve what they want to do and about possible obstacles. This information must be used to agree realistic targets and plan how they will meet those targets. For example: AS: the application of mathematical reasoning requires skills in using mathematical formulae, statistical representation and probability. Each student needs to set their own particular skills targets in an action plan and work to meet those targets (Unit 2.5) A2: set targets and plan how to improve essay writing, examination or data response skills (all units).

Key skill portfolio evidence requirement	Unit	Opportunities for development or internal assessment
LP3.2 Use your plan, seeking feedback and support from relevant sources to help meet your targets, and use different ways of learning to meet new demands.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	Students use the plan effectively when producing their coursework. This will involve prioritising action, managing their time effectively and revising their plan as necessary. The student should seek and use feedback and support and draw on different approaches to learning. Students need to set priorities and manage time effectively. They should seek feedback and support and use a variety of approaches to learning. For example: AS: improve mathematical skills seeking feedback and support where appropriate (Unit 2.5) A2: students work to improve their essay writing, examination or data response skills; this development can form a very effective focus for a tutorial programme, or a study skills unit can be used to monitor progress and develop career awareness and skills, as well as forming part of an induction programme (all units).
LP3.3 Review progress establishing evidence of achievements, and agree action for improving performance.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	Students should review their own progress and the quality of their learning and performance. They should identify targets met, providing evidence of achievements from relevant sources. They should agree with others, eg their tutor, what action to take to improve their performance. Students must provide information on the quality of their learning and performance. They should identify the targets they have met and explore action for future improvement. For example: AS: review progress with mathematical skills and agree action for further improvement (Units 2.5) A2: review improvement in essay writing, examinations or data response skills (all units).

Evidence

Student evidence for improving own learning and performance could include:

- tutor records
- annotated action plans
- records of discussions
- learning log
- work produced.

Problem solving — level 3

For this key skill, students are required to apply their problem solving skills to complex activities. They need to show that they can recognise, explore and describe problems, generate ways of solving problems, implement options and check whether the problem has been solved. For this Advanced GCE, students may only be able to complete the first two stages of this process as there may be difficulties in implementing practical solutions in a school or college context.

Key skill portfolio evidence requirement	Unit	Opportunities for development or internal assessment
PS3.1 Recognise, explore and describe the problem, and agree the standards for its solution.	2, 3, 5, 6	Students will need to identify the problem and explore its main features and agree what standards have to be met to successfully resolve the problem. Students need to recognise the existence of a problem, select methods for describing and exploring the problem and agree standards which have to be met to show the problem has been resolved. Problems should be practical and it should be possible to work them through to a conclusion. For example: AS: discuss and write about the problem of the school/college environment and its waste of resources (energy, water, recyclable waste, etc). How can a more environmentally friendly approach be successfully adopted? (Unit 2.4) A2: examine problems associated with issues such as race, gender, age or disability within the school or college (Unit 5.1).
PS3.2 Generate and compare at least two options which could be used to solve the problem, and justify the option for taking forward.	2, 3, 5, 6	Students are required to select and use appropriate methods for generating different options for tackling the problem and compare the features of each option, selecting the most suitable one. Options for solving problems should be explored and compared. Difficulties should be anticipated and resources and time-scales agreed. The best option should be selected and justified. For example: AS: explore possible environmental solutions and select the most promising (Unit 2.4) A2: examine possible solutions to problems associated with the issues mentioned in 3.1 (Unit 5.1).

Key skill portfolio evidence requirement	Unit	Opportunities for development or internal assessment
PS3.3 Plan and implement at least one option for solving the problem, and review progress towards its solution.	2, 3, 5, 6	The implementation of the chosen option will need to be planned and permission gained to implement it. Implementation of the plan should involve full use of support and feedback from others with progress reviews and alterations to the plan as necessary. A suitable method of implementing the option should be selected. The plan should be implemented and progress should be reviewed, revising the plan as necessary. For example: AS: implement at least one practical solution to an environmental problem (Unit 2.4) A2: implement at least one solution to resolve or improve problems associated with race, gender, age or disability (Unit 5.1).
PS3.4 Agree and apply methods to check whether the problem has been solved, describe the results and review the approach taken	2, 3, 5, 6	On completion, the outcomes need to be checked against the standards agreed at the start. The results of this should be recorded and the approach taken reviewed. Methods should be agreed upon to assess whether the standards set have been met. A report or presentation should be used to describe the results. The chosen approach and actions should be reviewed. Alternative methods should be examined. For example: AS: review the approaches taken and check whether the environmental problems have been solved (Unit 2.4) A2: review the approaches taken and check whether problems associated with race, gender, age or disability have been solved (Unit 5.1).

Evidence

Student evidence for problem solving could include:

- description of the problem
- tutor records and agreement of standards and approaches
- annotated action plans
- records of discussions
- descriptions of options
- records of reviews.

Appendix 3: Topic — thinking and analytical skills

Definitions of key terms

- 1 Knowledge — a statement (such as ‘the book is on the table’ ... ‘the sky is blue’ ... ‘murder is wrong’) expresses something that is **known** (and counts, therefore, as **knowledge**) only if:
 - a some person (or persons) **believe(s)** that statement;
(so, if a statement is such that *no one* believes it, then even if this statement is true, what it expresses is not *known*)
 - b the person or persons who believe that statement are **justified** in believing it;
(so, if a person believes a statement, but cannot offer any reasons for believing it, he or she does not *know* what is expressed by that statement)
 - c the statement is **true**;
(so, no false statement expresses something that is *known* — though people can *believe* that they know something false).

These conditions are necessary for knowledge (ie if they are not satisfied with respect to a statement then what is expressed by that statement is not known), but they are not sufficient; we can be justified in believing something that is in fact true without thereby *knowing* it.

Consider, for example, the situation in which Susan believes, of Fred, that he owns a Porsche, a belief that is justified (to some degree) because James told Susan that Fred owns a Porsche. Unbeknownst to Susan however, James was lying. But since James told the lie Fred has in fact bought a Porsche, so Susan’s justified belief is true. It does not count as knowledge, however, because it is simply luck that Susan’s belief is true, the justification for it does not match up with what makes it true.
- 2 Belief — what is expressed by a statement is **believed** only if some person or persons would accept that the statement is **true** (or would *act* as if they accept it as true, even if they would deny it). It is not a necessary condition of a statement expressing a belief that the statement is true — many of the statements that people would accept — that people believe — are not true.
- 3 Analytical skills — (skills of analysis) — the ability to break down an issue or an argument into its parts and to identify how these parts relate to each other. To **analyse** an argument is to identify the conclusion of the argument, the reasons for believing this conclusion (the premises) and to try to decide whether or not these premises are good reasons for believing the conclusion. To be able to **analyse** an issue is to identify the different ways of thinking about the issue, to be able to see how these ways of thinking of the issue relate to each other, and to be able to evaluate them.
- 4 Argument — an **argument** consists in a person’s offering (perhaps to himself or herself) a statement (the **conclusion**) and a (number of) reason(s) for believing that statement (the **premises**). Arguments can be strong or weak. An argument is strong if the reasons given for believing the statement are good reasons for believing that statement. An argument is weak if the reasons given for believing the statement are not good reasons.
- 5 Thinking — **thinking** is a process by which a person moves (mentally) from one belief to another in accordance with what that person believes or hopes (not necessarily consciously) to be reasonable steps.

- 6 Fallacy — a **fallacy** is a bad argument that can easily be mistaken for a good argument because it sounds like, looks like, or has the same form as, a good argument. For example, because the argument ‘Einstein believes that time is relative, therefore time is relative’ is a good argument (because Einstein was an expert in this area) and the argument ‘Einstein believes that we should be pacifists, therefore we should be pacifists’ has the same form as the first argument, it is easy to think that the second argument is a good argument (it isn’t because Einstein was not an expert in *this* area).
- 7 Deduction — **deduction** is a type of argument (used famously by Sherlock Holmes). The hallmark of a deductive argument is that, if the premises are true and the argument is a good one, the conclusion must be true.

For example:

If the dog barked, he must have seen a stranger.

The dog barked. Therefore he must have seen a stranger.

The premises of a deductive argument might not, of course, be true, but if they *are* true and the argument is a good one, then the conclusion will be true. This tells us that, if we have a good deductive argument, and we discover that the conclusion is false, we know that one of the premises is false. One of the reasons deduction is useful is because, if we want to test a hypothesis and we can construct a good deductive argument, with the hypothesis as the premise, then, if we can show that the conclusion is false, we can be certain that one of the premises (perhaps the hypothesis) is false.

- 8 Induction — **induction** is also a type of argument. The hallmark of an **inductive argument** is that, even if the premises are true, and the argument is good, the conclusion is still only more or less probable.

For example:

The sun has risen every day in the history of the universe, therefore, the sun will rise tomorrow.

Induction is often thought of as the scientist’s argument, because it goes from the particular (a number of observations of, perhaps, white swans) to the general (all swans are white). Induction rests on the belief that nature is uniform: that the future will be like the past, a claim that is itself based on induction.

- 9 Validity and deduction — **validity and deduction** go together because only deductive argument can be valid (ie such that their premises entail their conclusions).
- 10 Analogy — **analogies** are another type of argument. Analogies rest upon the premise that something is somehow similar to something else and the idea that things that are similar in one way will be similar in another.

For example:

The world is like a watch, regular and intricate.

Watches have makers, therefore the universe has a maker.

- 11 Cause — arguments from **cause** rest on the premise that when one type of state of affairs is invariably correlated with another state of affairs then the two types of affairs are causally related.

For example:

Every time a person eats more calories than that person expends, that person becomes overweight.

No person becomes overweight without eating more calories than that person expends.

Therefore, a person eating more calories than that person expends, causes that person to become overweight.

- 12 Arguments from **authority** rest on the premise that a particular person or group of people is/are expert in some subject. If they believe something about that subject then what they believe is true. For an example see Fallacy.
- 13 Objectivity — a person tries to be **objective** (or strives for objectivity) if he or she attempts to abstract away from his or her own point of view to see the world either as others see it, or as it is in itself. For example, science is said to strive for objectivity because it tries to describe nature as it is in itself and not simply from the point of view of a particular person or culture.
- 14 Subjectivity — persons — and perhaps animals — are **subjects** in that they are capable of enjoying experiences that are uniquely their own and of forming beliefs on the basis of a unique perspective of the world. In communicating with each other and observing each other's behaviour we can learn how things appear from the point of view of others. This ability to communicate with, and interpret others, enables us to construct, from a subjective point of view (from the point of view of a unique subject), an objective picture of the world. It is important to remember that there are objective facts about subjective issues.
- 15 Justification — a belief or the verbal expression of a belief is **justified** if reasons can be given for it. These reasons can be good or bad (although sometimes if they are bad we will deny that the belief is justified) but they need not be conclusive. A belief can be justified without being **true**. For example, I am justified in believing you own a Porsche because last week you told me you own a Porsche, but my belief could be false (eg if you lie), or if you have since sold your Porsche.
- 16 Truth — a belief is **true** if it corresponds to the way the world is. A belief is false if it does not correspond to the way the world is.

To have a belief is to believe that that belief is **true** (it is to accept the statement that expresses the belief), but this belief may nevertheless be false if it does not correspond to the facts.

A belief can be true without being **justified**, eg it might be a lucky guess in which case it is not knowledge, and a belief can be **justified** without being **true** (but again it will not be knowledge).

- 17 Values — to give an account of someone's **values** is to give an account of what matters to them, of what they believe to be important. So to say that someone values solitude is to say that being able to be alone matters to them; it is something they believe to be important.

Moral values, eg the belief that honesty or integrity matter, are an important sub-set of **values**. In particular they are important to other people because they constrain our pursuit of personal happiness. They also matter to ourselves: living up to them is an important part of self-esteem. Some people believe that God is the source of our values, others that human nature is their source.

Values inform behaviour in that the behaviour chosen by a person at a time will be chosen by that person because, in part, of what that person values (and in part because of what he or she *believes* about the world).

- 18 Valid — although the word ‘valid’ is used as a general term of approval in ordinary language it has a special role to play when thinking about thinking and analytical skills. Only arguments (ie not sentences, beliefs, opinions, etc) are valid, and only deductive arguments at that. A deductive argument is valid if, and only if, its premises entail its conclusion, ie when there is no possible situation in which its premises are true and its conclusion false. Validity must be carefully distinguished from truth. A valid argument can have a false conclusion (in fact it is very useful to discover that a valid argument has a false conclusion because this tells us one of its premises must be false). An argument with a true conclusion, on the other hand, can be invalid.
- 19 Entailment — **entailment** is the relation between the premises and the conclusion(s) of a valid argument. When a set of premises entail a conclusion, they *necessitate* it; ie, if the premises are true, the conclusion *must* be true.
- 20 Implication — **implication** is a relation between propositions. If proposition P implies proposition Q, then the truth of P strongly suggests (though it does not necessitate) the truth of Q. Implication is importantly different from entailment, the latter being much stronger.
- 21 Epistemology — the theory of knowledge. **Epistemology** is concerned with what knowledge is, what we can know, how we acquire knowledge and how knowledge is related to belief, justification, truth, etc. Epistemological questions must be distinguished from metaphysical questions; the question of whether we know P, for example, is a very different question from the question of whether P is the case. The former is epistemological, the latter metaphysical.
- 22 Metaphysics — the theory of what exists, what is possible and what is actual. **Metaphysics** is concerned with ontology (the theory of what is) and with questions about the nature of what exists. Metaphysics is importantly linked to truth, because our beliefs, and the sentences that express them, are made true by what is (or isn’t) the case. Metaphysical questions must be distinguished from epistemological questions; to ask whether a sentence is true or false is not to ask whether the sentence is known to be true or false.
- 23 Types of knowledge

The division between the subjects of the curriculum cannot be taken as a reliable guide to the division between different types of knowledge. Knowledge of geography and of biology, for example, both involve perceptual knowledge and experiential knowledge.

Therefore, in asking pupils to distinguish between different types of knowledge it is not sufficient for pupils to demonstrate knowledge of different subjects. This is merely ‘first order’ knowledge, (knowledge of these subjects). What is required is ‘second order’ knowledge, (knowledge about *knowledge* of these subjects). A pupil who demonstrates awareness of the fact that scientific knowledge involves observation and experimentation and that moral knowledge involves understanding of self and others, is a pupil who is satisfying the requirements of AO4.

MARK RECORD SHEET UNIT 3B

GCE GENERAL STUDIES

Specification no. and title	Unit no.	Max. mark	Advanced Subsidiary GCE				Centre no.
		50					
Examiner/moderator Number: Name: Signature: Date:			Centre name:				
			This form should be used for recording marks for teacher assessed units.				
			Senior moderator: Signature: Date:				
Student name	Total mark	Student number	Moderator use only	Senior moderator use only			

Name of **teacher-examiner**.....

Signed..... Date.....

Centre number	Student number	EDEXCEL General Certificate of Education JUNE 20 EXAMINATION ADVANCED SUBSIDIARY GENERAL STUDIES 8206 COURSEWORK MARK SHEET	Final marks: AO1 /17 AO2 /6 AO3 /17 AO4 /10
Surname and initials			Total mark: /50
Unit Code: 6453/02 Unit 3(b) Coursework			
Specified theme _____ _____ _____ Assignment _____ _____ _____ Total no. of words _____ _____			
Student's declaration: I declare that I have produced the work involved without external assistance apart from any which is acceptable under the scheme of assessment and is recorded. Signature: Date:			
Teacher's assessment and comments: Teacher's declaration: I declare that the student's activities have been kept under regular supervision and that, to the best of my knowledge, no assistance has been given apart from any which is acceptable under the scheme of assessment and has been identified and recorded. Signature: Date:			
Moderator's comments:			Moderator's mark:

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