



## Key Skills – GCE AS/A Level Economics

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This Appendix offers detailed guidance on the Key Skills evidence that candidates might produce during their programme. It focuses on the evidence required to meet the criteria for the internally assessed Key Skills portfolio. For example, in producing work for assessment as evidence of C3.2 (Read and synthesise information from two extended documents about a complex subject. One of these documents should include at least one image.) a candidate is required to:

- select and read material that contains the information you need;
- identify accurately, and compare, the lines of reasoning and main points from text and images; and
- synthesise the key information in a form that is relevant to your purpose.

The Key Skills and Evidence Requirements below are quoted from Part B of the QCA Key Skills specifications and, as such, are addressed to the candidate. The text below the Evidence Requirements is guidance for teachers about how the specifications might be used to provide teaching and learning opportunities and/or assessment opportunities for the Key Skill.

The opportunities signposted in this Appendix focus mainly on the compulsory modules, as well as in module 2888, *Economics in a European Context*. Further opportunities exist in each of the optional modules, but these may vary between modules.

For further information, teachers should refer to QCA's Key Skills specifications (for use in programmes starting from September 2000).

For further information about the assessment and certification of Key Skills, teachers should contact OCR.

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## C3 Communication Level 3

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There may be opportunities to combine all subsections of Communication through one project. For example, by taking the proposed BSkyB takeover of Manchester United FC as the focus of such a project, candidates could be asked to research the differing perspectives of the organisations and pressure groups involved in the takeover and contribute to a group discussion (C3.1a), under controlled conditions. This may form the foundation for exploring the opportunities to request individual candidate presentations (C3.1b), further research into the subject and possible implications for sport and the UK economy (C3.2), and a report (C3.3).

### C3.1a *Contribute to a group discussion about a complex subject.*

#### **Evidence requirements**

- i. Make clear and relevant contributions in a way that suits your purpose and situation.
- ii. Listen and respond sensitively to others, and develop points and ideas.
- iii. Create opportunities for others to contribute when appropriate.

#### **Possible opportunities**

There are various opportunities throughout these specifications to generate evidence for this subsection of Communication. For example, when preparing for a more substantial piece of work, such as an investigation or a report, candidates could be asked to *contribute to a group discussion* as part of the preparation. It is very important, however, to pay particular attention to the need to cover a *complex subject*.

#### **Module 2882**

Section 5.2.2 allows candidates to discuss the factors affecting public versus private versus merit goods. For example, this could be examined using the National Health Service as the focus of discussion.

Section 5.2.3 allows candidates to discuss the impact of environmental issues and government policy decisions affecting the UK economy, such as green taxes.

#### **Module 2888**

Section 5.8.2 allows candidates to discuss the advantages and disadvantages to the UK of monetary union within the European Union.

Section 5.8.2 allows candidates to discuss the impact of national and/or international disputes on UK trade. For example, the trade war between the European Union and the United States could be explored in terms of possible advantages and disadvantages to the UK economy.

### **C3.1b *Make a presentation about a complex subject, using at least one image to illustrate complex points.***

#### **Evidence requirements**

- i. Speak clearly and adapt your style of presentation to suit your purpose, subject, audience and situation.
- ii. Structure what you say so that the sequence of information and ideas may be easily followed.
- iii. Use a range of techniques to engage the audience, including effective use of images.

#### **Possible opportunities**

By building upon the approaches identified in C3.1a, candidates can prepare and deliver a presentation. Candidates may, for example, each take on the role of a key player in a given scenario and explore the argument from this viewpoint. By allocating different roles to each candidate an overall picture will form from all perspectives from which a report (or extended document) may be produced for C3.3. Evidence for C3.2 may also come from the research done in preparation for the presentation (and/or the group discussion).

#### ***Module 2881***

Section 5.1.3 allows candidates the opportunity to prepare and deliver a presentation on evaluating the alternative objectives firms may have, including but not exclusively profit maximisation.

Section 5.1.3 allows candidates the opportunity to prepare and deliver a presentation outlining the spectrum of competition within market structure and examining these models in the light of firms' actual behaviour.

#### ***Module 2882***

*Section 5.2.2 allows candidates the opportunity to prepare and deliver a presentation analysing the factors affecting public versus private versus merit goods. For example, this could be examined using the National Health Service as the focus of discussion.*

Section 5.2.3 allows candidates the opportunity to prepare and deliver a presentation on the impact of environmental issues and government policy decisions affecting the UK economy, such as road pricing.

#### ***Module 2888***

Section 5.8.2 allows candidates to prepare and deliver a presentation on the advantages and disadvantages to the UK of monetary union within the European Union.

Section 5.8.2 allows candidates to prepare and deliver a presentation on the impact of national and/or international disputes on UK trade. For example, the trade war between the European Union and the United States could be explored in terms of possible advantages and disadvantages to the UK economy.

**C3.2 *Read and synthesise information from two extended documents that deal with a complex subject. One of these documents should include at least one image.***

**Evidence requirements**

- i. Select and read material that contains the information you need.
- ii. Identify accurately, and compare, the lines of reasoning and main points from texts and images.
- iii. Synthesise the key information in a form that is relevant to your purpose.

**Possible opportunities**

Candidates have opportunities to undertake research into a range of topics in order to form a clear understanding of the concepts being covered. There are, as a result, various opportunities for candidates to generate evidence for this subsection of Communication whenever they are required to research a topic.

Candidates may also be encouraged to research a topic in preparation for their contribution to a group discussion (C3.1a) or delivering a presentation (C3.1b). Research to include two extended documents may also form the basis of a report which will also generate evidence for C3.3.

***Module 2881***

Section 5.1.3 allows candidates to undertake research into the nature of markets and market structures.

***Module 2882***

Section 5.2.3 allows candidates the opportunity to undertake research into the impact of minimum wage legislation on the UK labour market.

Section 5.2.3 allows candidates the opportunity to undertake research into the impact of the government's policy on competition in tackling problems of market pressure.

***Module 2883***

Section 5.3.1 allows candidates to undertake basic research into recent UK economic performance against other countries.

Section 5.3.3 allows candidates to undertake research into the implications of the government's 'macro' aims.

**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.**

**Evidence requirements**

- i. Select and use a form and style of writing that is appropriate to your purpose and complex subject matter.
- ii. Organise relevant information clearly and coherently, using specialist vocabulary when appropriate.
- iii. Ensure your text is legible and your spelling, grammar and punctuation are accurate so your meaning is clear.

**Possible opportunities**

There will be opportunities to generate evidence for this subsection of Communication throughout the delivery of this Advanced GCE specification. There are also opportunities to adopt an integrated and coherent approach linking this section with C3.1a and C3.1b and C3.2.

For example, a written document could be prepared using the data gathered from reading and synthesising information from two extended documents that deal with a complex subject (C3.2). Consequently, an essay or report could be prepared on any of the topics listed previously for C3.2.

It is important to note that the requirement is to produce *two different* types of documents to satisfy fully this subsection of the Communication Key Skill, and that *one piece...should be an extended document, to include at least one image.*

**Module 2888**

Module 2888, *Economics in a European Context*, provides candidates with appropriate opportunities to achieve this subsection of Communication. Evidence can be generated from the pre-issued case study and further supplemented by articles covering the same theme.

The issues chosen could cover the following areas:

- the nature of economic integration in a European context (5.8.2)
- why competitive markets do not operate in EU agriculture (5.8.2)
- an analysis of living standards across Europe and the evaluation of policies to reduce these variations (ie. the global aspect) (5.8.2)
- the economic implications of European Monetary Union for its present and prospective members (5.8.2)
- an analysis of how economic reforms have been applied in a range of transition economies in Central and Eastern Europe (5.8.3)

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## N3 Application of Number Level 3

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### You must:

Plan and carry through at least one substantial and complex activity that includes tasks for N3.1, N3.2 and N3.3.

There may be opportunities to generate evidence for all subsections of Application of Number through one project. For example, candidates could be asked to construct a simplified retail price index (RPI) based upon their own experience. They could be asked to compare the outcome to a range of official measures and use the data to distinguish between nominal and real values. This activity (described in more detail below) could also form the basis for **C3.1b** and **C3.3**. The activity could also contribute to skills relating to gathering information, either from written sources or IT sources, and would involve a certain degree of Working with Others. The signposted opportunities throughout this section concentrate on this theme, although similar principles may also be applied to the following areas:

- multipliers in Section 5.3.2, module 2883
- balance of payments in Section 5.3.3, module 2883
- costs versus revenue in Section 5.1.3, module 2881
- price inelasticity in Section 5.1.2, module 2881
- exchange rates in Section 5.3.4, module 2883

### N3.1 *Plan, and interpret information from two different types of sources, including a large data set.*

#### Evidence requirements

- i. Plan how to obtain and use the information required to meet the purpose of your activity.
- ii. Obtain the relevant information.
- iii. Choose appropriate methods for obtaining the results you need and justify your choice.

#### Possible opportunities

The requirement in N3.1 to obtain information from sources including a large data set, means that candidates for Advanced Subsidiary/Advanced GCE Economics may experience difficulty generating sufficient evidence for N3.1. With this exception, there are opportunities for the generation of evidence as regards planning how to obtain and use information, obtaining the relevant information and choosing appropriate methods for obtaining the results.

#### **Module 2883**

By constructing a simplified retail price index (RPI) for Section 5.3.1, module 2883, candidates are given the opportunity, in groups, to justify the ten most important items of their own expenditure and average out the importance of each (Note - this may also generate evidence for C3.1a).

### **N3.2 Carry out multi-stage calculations to do with:**

- (a) amounts and sizes;
- (b) scales and proportion;
- (c) handling statistics;
- (d) re-arranging and using formulae.

You should work with a large data set on at least **one** occasion.

#### **Evidence requirements**

- i. Carry out calculations to appropriate levels of accuracy, clearly showing your methods.
- ii. Check methods and results to help ensure errors are found and corrected.

#### **Possible opportunities**

Advanced Subsidiary/Advanced GCE Economics offer opportunities throughout the specifications for candidates to carry out multi-stage calculations. However, the requirement within Application of Number N3.2 that candidates work on at least one occasion with a large data set will need careful consideration. Possible opportunities include:

#### **Module 2883**

By constructing a simplified retail price index (RPI) for Section 5.3.1, module 2883, and following on from the evidence generated for N3.1, candidates can be asked to:

- attribute a weighting to each item (this also covers part of N3.3)
- agree price changes over the past year
- use the retail price index formula to calculate weighted averages and rate of price change (could also generate evidence for IT3.2)

### **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.**

#### **Evidence requirements**

- i. Select appropriate methods of presentation and justify your choice.
- ii. Present your findings effectively.
- iii. Explain how the results of your calculations relate to the purpose of your activity.

## **Possible opportunities**

Advanced Subsidiary/Advanced GCE Economics offer opportunities throughout the specifications for candidates to interpret results of calculations, present findings and explain results. However, the requirement within Application of Number N3.3 that candidates work on at least one occasion with a large data set will need careful consideration. Possible opportunities include:

### ***Module 2883***

By constructing a simplified retail price index (RPI) for Section 5.3.2, module 2883, and following on from the evidence generated for N3.1 and N3.2, candidates can be asked to:

- compare figures to official estimates, ie. RPI (headline), RPIX, RPIY, pensioner index (N3.3 - block chart). This could also generate evidence for C3.2 and IT3.1
- explain the different outcomes in relation to the purpose of the activity (N3.3)
- use a prepared RPI to deflate nominal GNP/other variables and compare to the outcome with the headline rate, using suitable diagrams to present the findings (this could also generate evidence for N3.2 and IT3.2)
- identify the effect of inflation on purchasing power, using suitable diagrams



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## IT3 IT Level 3

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### You must:

Plan and carry through at least one substantial activity that includes tasks for IT3.1, IT3.2 and IT3.3.

There may be opportunities to combine all subsections of Information Technology through one project. For example, candidates could be asked to compare the past performance of the UK economy in relation to the economies of other countries. This would provide opportunities to:

- search for information about economic performance using the Internet or CD-ROMs (IT 3.1)
- use software packages such as computer spreadsheets to make comparisons and to calculate new data (part of IT 3.2)
- use electronic mail or a computer networking framework to exchange information relevant to the project with others (part of IT 3.2)
- use information technology to present the results of the investigation (graphs, charts, reports etc) to an audience, using a written report or a visual presentation supported by information technology

### **IT 3.1 *Plan, and use different sources to search for, and select, information required for two different purposes.***

#### **Evidence requirements**

- i. Plan how to obtain and use the information required to meet the purpose of your activity.
- ii. Choose appropriate sources and techniques for finding information and carry out effective searches.
- iii. Make selections based on judgements of relevance and quality.

#### **Possible opportunities**

Candidates researching a topic for a specific purpose could use the Internet or CD-ROMs as a source of information. The opportunities indicated under Communication C2.2 and C3.2 where candidates can select and read material containing relevant information may also be suitable opportunities to search for and select information from these IT-based sources. In such cases, a candidate should be made aware of the need to plan how to obtain and use the information required, identify the appropriate information, carry out effective searches, and to select information that is relevant to the study. By doing so, the candidate is generating evidence for IT 3.1.

Opportunities to generate evidence in this way occur when candidates are given a certain degree of independence to practice investigative skills using information technology. The investigations could include those listed below:

### **Module 2883**

Section 5.3.1 allows candidates the opportunity to use data to measure economic performance in order to analyse recent UK economic performance against other countries. This information may be located on CD-ROMs or via the Internet.

Section 5.3.3 allows candidates the opportunity to search for information relating to the most up-to-date exchange rates and its effect on the balance of payments.

## **IT 3.2 *Explore, develop, and exchange information and derive new information to meet two different purposes.***

### **Evidence requirements**

- i. Enter and bring together information in a consistent form, using automated routines where appropriate.
- ii. Create and use appropriate structures and procedures to explore and develop information and derive new information.
- iii. Use effective methods of exchanging information to support your purpose.

### **Possible opportunities**

Once appropriate information has been gathered as the basis of an investigation, a candidate could be encouraged to structure the data in such a way as to meet their own needs. For example, computer spreadsheets, or other suitable software packages, could be used to explore and develop the data gathered and to present it in a form to suit their needs. In such a study where individuals within a group are allocated the task of finding out about the economic performance of different countries, information can be shared to save time either using electronic mail or a computer networking system.

### **Module 2883**

This module provides candidates with opportunities to generate evidence by evaluating the following:

- national income versus consumption
- investment versus changes in the rate of interest
- standard of living versus the distribution of income

**IT3.3 Present information from different sources for two different purposes and audiences. Your work must include at least one example of text, one example of images and one example of numbers.**

**Evidence requirements**

- i. Develop the structure and content of your presentation using the views of others, where appropriate, to guide refinements.
- ii. Present information effectively, using a format and style that suits your purpose and audience.
- iii. Ensure your work is accurate and makes sense.

**Possible opportunities**

Information technology and a range of software packages (word processor, graphics/design, spreadsheet) could be adopted in order to generate evidence for this subsection of the IT Key Skill.

For example, a word-processed report using images and data presented within a spreadsheet would meet the criteria listed. This approach may be appropriate for a presentation designed to generate evidence for C3.1b. Computer designed handouts and graphs/charts could be used to present the results of an investigation comparing the economic performance of different countries over a fixed period.

Suitable opportunities may be linked with any work that meets the evidence requirements for Communication C3.1b or C3.3. For example:

**Module 2881**

Section 5.1.3 allows candidates the opportunity to present their findings from the research into the nature of markets and market structures.

**Module 2882**

Section 5.2.3 allows candidates the opportunity to present their findings from the research into the impact of minimum wage legislation on the UK labour market.

Section 5.2.3 allows candidates the opportunity to present their findings from the research into the impact of the government's policy on competition in tackling problems of market pressure.

**Module 2883**

Section 5.3.1 allows candidates the opportunity to present their findings from the research into recent UK economic performance against other countries.

Section 5.3.3 allows candidates the opportunity to present their findings from the research into the implications of the government's 'macro' aims.

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## **WO3 Working with Others Level 3**

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### **You must:**

Provide at least one substantial example of meeting the standard for WO3.1, WO3.2 and WO3.3 (you must show you can work in both one-to-one and group situations).

### ***WO3.1 Plan complex work with others, agreeing objectives, responsibilities and working arrangements.***

#### **Evidence requirements**

- i. Agree realistic objectives for working together and what needs to be done to achieve them.
- ii. Exchange information, based on appropriate evidence, to help agree responsibilities; and.
- iii. Agree suitable working arrangements with those involved.

#### **Possible opportunities**

See WO3.3.

### ***WO3.2 Seek to establish and maintain co-operative working relationships over an extended period of time, agreeing changes to achieve agreed objectives.***

#### **Evidence requirements**

- i. Organise and carry out tasks so that you can be effective and efficient in meeting your responsibilities and produce the quality of work required.
- ii. Seek to establish and maintain co-operative working relationships, agreeing ways to overcome any difficulties.
- iii. Exchange accurate information on progress of work, agreeing changes where necessary to achieve objectives.

#### **Possible opportunities**

See WO3.3.

### ***WO3.3 Review work with others and agree ways of improving collaborative work in the future.***

#### **Evidence requirements**

- i. Agree the extent to which work with others has been successful and the objectives have been met.
- ii. Identify factors that have influenced the outcome.
- iii. Agree ways of improving work with others in the future.

## **Possible opportunities**

*A number of opportunities exist during the teaching and learning process for candidates to carry out tasks in groups.*

### **Module 2881**

Section 5.1.2 allows group research into the demand characteristics of a product or range of products, highlighting price, consumer incomes and fashion/consumer taste, etc as key elements.

Section 5.1.3 could be approached through a small group research topic investigating the business objectives of a range of local and/or national companies, focusing on the relative importance of profit maximisation as against other potential objectives.

### **Module 2882**

Section 5.2.3 would allow for a structured Cost-Benefit Analysis using a whole class investigating a key business/environmental issue from a variety of stakeholder viewpoints, perhaps of local concern (a proposed new superstore, for example, or road development).

### **Module 2883**

Section 5.3.1 could be approached through a group analysis of international comparisons of key macro-variables and economic performance at a basic level (this could be further extended when considering A2 units 2886 or 2887).

### **Module 2888**

In groups, candidates could present a range of views of various stakeholders on key European issues:

Section 5.8.2 entry into EMU or reform of CAP; Section 5.8.3 extension of the EU to include former communist bloc countries or Turkey.

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## LP3 Improving Own Learning and Performance Level 3

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**You must:**

Provide at least **one** substantial example of meeting the standard for LP3.1, LP3.2 and LP3.3.

### **LP3.1 *Agree targets and plan how these will be met over an extended period of time, using support from appropriate people.***

#### **Evidence requirements**

- i. Seek information on ways to achieve what you want to do, and identify factors that might affect your plans.
- ii. Use this information to agree realistic targets with appropriate people.
- iii. Plan how you will effectively manage your time and use of support to meet targets, including alternative action for overcoming possible difficulties.

#### **Possible opportunities**

See LP3.3.

### **LP3.2 *Take responsibility for your learning by using your plan, and seeking feedback and support from relevant sources to help meet targets.***

Improve your performance by:

- studying a complex subject;
- learning through a complex practical activity;
- further study or practical activity that involves independent learning.

#### **Evidence requirements**

- i. Manage your time effectively to complete tasks, revising your plan as necessary.
- ii. Seek and actively use feedback and support from relevant sources to help you meet targets.
- iii. Select and use different ways of learning to improve your performance, adapting approaches to meet new demands.

#### **Possible opportunities**

See LP3.3.

**LP3.3 *Review progress on two occasions and establish evidence of achievements, including how you have used learning from other tasks to meet new demands.***

**Evidence requirements**

- i. Provide information on the quality of your learning and performance, including factors that have affected the outcome.
- ii. Identify targets you have met, seeking information from relevant sources to establish evidence of your achievements.
- iii. Exchange views with appropriate people to agree ways to further improve your performance.

**Possible opportunities**

The modular framework is designed to encourage students to take responsibility for their own learning.

Opportunities exist throughout the process of delivering these specifications for developing Improving Own Learning and Performance subsections LP3.1, LP3.2 and LP3.3.

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## PS3 Problem Solving Level 3

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### You must:

Provide at least **one** substantial example of meeting the standard for PS3.1, PS3.2 and PS3.3.

There may be opportunities to combine all subsections of Problem Solving through one inter-linked project, perhaps involving candidates working in small groups. There may also be opportunities to link AS modules with A2 modules in order to examine specific 'problems' at a suitably complex level. For example, foundation work done in module 2882 on approaches to solving problems associated with market failure and externalities (eg on policies to discourage pollution using options such as regulation, fines or a green tax) could be built upon in module 2885 by looking at options to prevent road congestion (eg building more capacity, restrictions on usage and road pricing).

The following example works through the three subsections and is based around module 2883 (5.3.3) linking into module 2887 (5.7.3).

### **PS3.1 *Explore a complex problem, come up with three options for solving it and justify the option selected for taking forward.***

#### **Evidence requirements**

- i. Explore the problem, accurately analysing its features, and agree with others on how to show success in solving it.
- ii. Select and use a variety of methods to come up with different ways of tackling the problems.
- iii. Compare the main features of each possible option, including risk factors, and justify the option you select to take forward.

#### **Possible Opportunities**

##### ***Module 2883***

Section 5.3.3 allows candidates, working in groups, to plan a Budget strategy deciding on which key problem or issue to focus upon, eg keeping control of inflation or promoting economic growth.

##### ***Module 2887***

Section 5.7.3 allows candidates to participate in modelling the economy, perhaps through using **The Virtual Economy**. At this stage there is a need to focus on the overview of policy aims and potential trade-offs, perhaps using the budget proposals of appropriate stakeholders – CBI, TUC and other political parties or pressure groups – as starting points.



**PS3.2 *Plan and implement at least one option for solving the problem, review progress and revise your approach as necessary.***

**Evidence requirements**

- i. Plan how to carry out your chosen option and obtain agreement to go ahead from an appropriate person;
- ii. Implement your plan, effectively using support and feedback from others;
- iii. Review progress towards solving the problem and revise your approach as necessary.

**Possible Opportunities**

***Modules 2883 and 2887***

These allow candidates, at the appropriate assessment level, to plan how to implement the chosen option by using a particular mixture of macro-policy instruments.

**PS3.3 *Apply agreed methods to check if the problem has been solved, describe the results and review your approach to problem solving.***

**Evidence requirements**

- i. Agree, with an appropriate person, methods to check if the problem has been solved.
- ii. Apply these methods accurately, draw conclusions and fully describe the results.
- iii. Review your approach to problem solving, including whether alternative methods and options might have proved more effective.

**Possible Opportunities**

***Modules 2883 and 2887***

These allow candidates, at the appropriate level, to decide upon and apply success criteria, checking if the policy option has been achieved, investigating the conflict with other alternative options via trade-offs, and reviewing policy mixes to see if other approaches may have been more effective.