

New A Level General Studies

H079 and H479 replacing 3831 and 7831

Information for OCR centres transferring to **new specifications for first teaching in September 2008**

This document maps the current A Level General Studies specification to the new specification for first teaching in September 2008. It includes information on the changes, support available and an outline of the new specification. It is intended to help ease the transition for Heads of Department and Teachers involved in the teaching of General Studies.

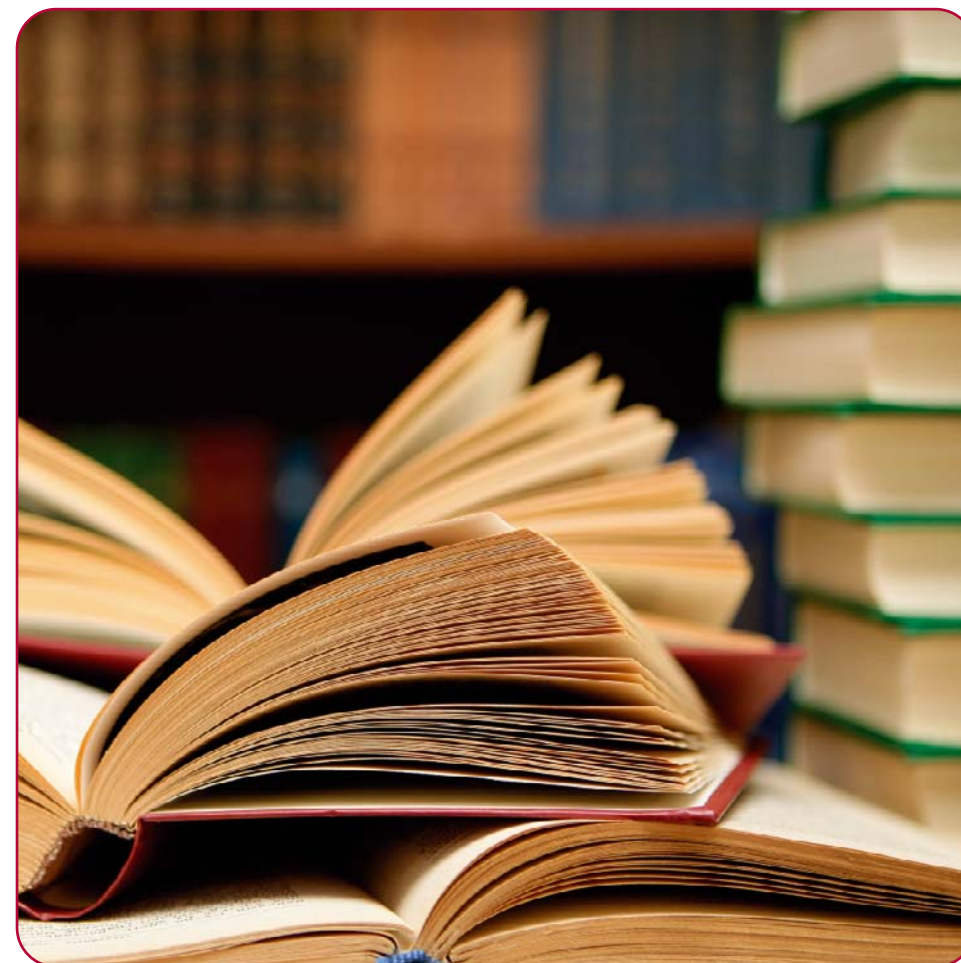
The full specification is available online along with a short questionnaire enabling you to share your comments on the specification and help shape the materials developed to support it. For more information including answers to frequently asked questions visit www.ocr.org.uk/14-19alevels.

Current specification – mapping the changes **pages 2-3**

Outline specification for first teaching September 2008 **page 4**

QCA have stipulated that:

- Number of units required to achieve GCE A Level General Studies is to be reduced from six to four
- All coursework to be removed from General Studies
- Stretch and Challenge style questions to be introduced into A2 assessment



Mapping the changes to the A Level General Studies specification for first teaching September 2008

H079 and H479 replacing 3831 and 7831



Existing specification						
Current unit title	Unit code	What remains the same?	What is changing?	Why is it changing?	Guidance	
AS	The Cultural Domain	2961 Mandatory 30% (AS) 15% (A Level) 1hr 15mins exam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Content remains broadly the same. The popular extended writing style of response is retained. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Content has been updated to reflect the 21st century. Unit 2961 is combined with unit 2964 so as to cover the necessary content in one unit. In section A the number of marks has been reduced from 50 to 30 marks. In section B the number of marks has also been reduced from 50 to 30 marks. In section C the number of marks has changed to 30 marks. In section D the number of marks has changed to 30 marks. Sections A and B cover the cultural domain. Sections C and D cover the social domain. Sections A and C are comprised of short, structured questions. Sections B and D require candidates to write at greater length. Units 2961 and 2964 are combined in a slightly slimmer form. New unit code F731. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction in units in line with QCA stipulation. Customer feedback. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some useful websites to look at before teaching the new specification: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> www.bbc.co.uk/religion comprehensive website on all aspects of beliefs and ethics. www.studentcentral.co.uk/General_Studies/ large numbers of essays to access on a full range of topics – £7.99 for six months.
	The Scientific domain (Written paper)	2962 Optional 30% (AS) 15% (A Level) 1hr 15mins exam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This unit remains a separate unit. Content remains broadly the same. The extended writing style of response is retained. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Content has been updated to reflect the 21st century. In section A the number of marks has been reduced from 50 to 30 marks. In section B the number of marks has also been reduced from 50 to 30 marks. New unit code F732. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction in units in line with QCA stipulation. Customer feedback. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> www.bbc.co.uk/asguru/generalstudies a popular site with a wide range of resources and activities.
	The Scientific domain (Coursework)	2963 Optional 30% (AS) 15% (A Level) 1hr 15mins exam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This option has been removed in line with QCA subject criteria. However, its knowledge base is still covered in the science domain. 			

Existing specification					
Current unit title	Unit code	What remains the same?	What is changing?	Why is it changing?	Guidance
A2 The Social Domain 1*	2964 Mandatory 40% (AS) 20% (A Level) 1hr 15mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Content remains broadly the same. The popular extended writing style of response is retained for all AS papers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Content has been updated to reflect the 21st century. New unit code F731. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction in units in line with QCA stipulation. Unit 2961 is combined with unit 2964 so as to cover the necessary content in one unit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> www.ngfl.gov.uk this website contains a variety of resources for subjects across the curriculum.
A2 The Scientific and Cultural Domains	2965 Mandatory 15% (A Level) 1hr 30mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The content of the unit remains the same. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Units 2965 and 2966 have amalgamated into one where candidates have the opportunity to explore the thinking and analytical skills within the three domains. A2 units need to be synoptic units and incorporate stretch and challenge according to QCA stipulation. New unit code F733. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction in units in line with QCA stipulation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collection of newspapers and periodicals prior to each lesson. Sample Assessment Material on examination questions.
A2 The Social Domain 2 (Written paper)	2966 Optional 15% (A Level) 1hr 30mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The content of the unit remains the same. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Units 2965 and 2966 have amalgamated into one where candidates have the opportunity to explore the thinking and analytical skills within the three domains. A2 units need to be synoptic units and incorporate stretch and challenge according to QCA stipulation. New unit code F733. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In line with QCA stipulation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A full resource list will be provided to customers alongside the new specification.
A2 The Social Domain 2 (Coursework)	2967 Optional 15% (A Level)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This option has been removed in line with QCA stipulation 		
A2 Culture, Science and Society: Making Connections	2968 Mandatory 20% (A Level) 1hr 30mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All content and method of assessment remains the same. Synoptic unit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stretch and challenge to be incorporated according to QCA stipulation. New unit code F734. 		

* This unit could be taken as part of either the AS or the A2 General Studies

New A Level General Studies specification for first teaching September 2008

H079 and H479 replacing 3831 and 7831

Candidates must complete four units



	New unit title	New unit code	Benefits to me and my learners	Support
AS	The Cultural and Social Domains	F731 Mandatory 70% (AS) 35% (A Level) 2hr exam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key content includes: Political systems, processes and goals, Social and economic trends and constraints, Explanation and evaluation of human behaviour, Beliefs, values, and moral reasoning, Media and communication, Creativity and innovation. Content is updated but many key topics are still there. There is continuity because existing programmes of study and session plans will need little change for most of the time. The popular extended writing style of response is retained for all papers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OCR is currently developing teachers' support, programmes of INSET and is working closely with the publisher Hodder to deliver support to accompany the new specification. Published resources should be available by April 2008. In service training meetings will be organised prior to the commencement of the specification. More information on support will appear after QCA accreditation. Resource lists. Essays and student activities for each unit. Lesson plans. Sample assessment material.
AS	The Scientific Domain	F732 Mandatory 30% (AS) 15% (A Level) 1hr exam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key content includes: Characteristics of the sciences (physical, life and earth), Understanding of scientific methods, principles, criteria and their application, Mathematical reasoning and its application. There is continuity, because existing programmes of study and session plans will need little change for most of the time. The popular extended writing style of response is retained for all papers. Content is updated but many key topics are still there. 	
A2	Domain Exploration: Applying Synoptic Skills	F733 Mandatory 25% (A Level) 1hr 30mins exam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This unit provides candidates with the opportunity to develop their thinking and analytical skills through the exploration of the Cultural, Scientific and Social Domains. Section A questions explore the three domains to enable students to develop thinking and analytical skills. Section B questions allow further development of analytical skills through the three domains. 	
A2	Culture, Science and Society: Making Comparisons	F734 Mandatory 25% (A Level) 1hr 30mins exam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This unit enables candidates to make connections between information, data, concepts and opinions drawn from the Cultural, Scientific and Social Domains. There is continuity because existing programmes of study and session plans will need little change for most of the time. 	