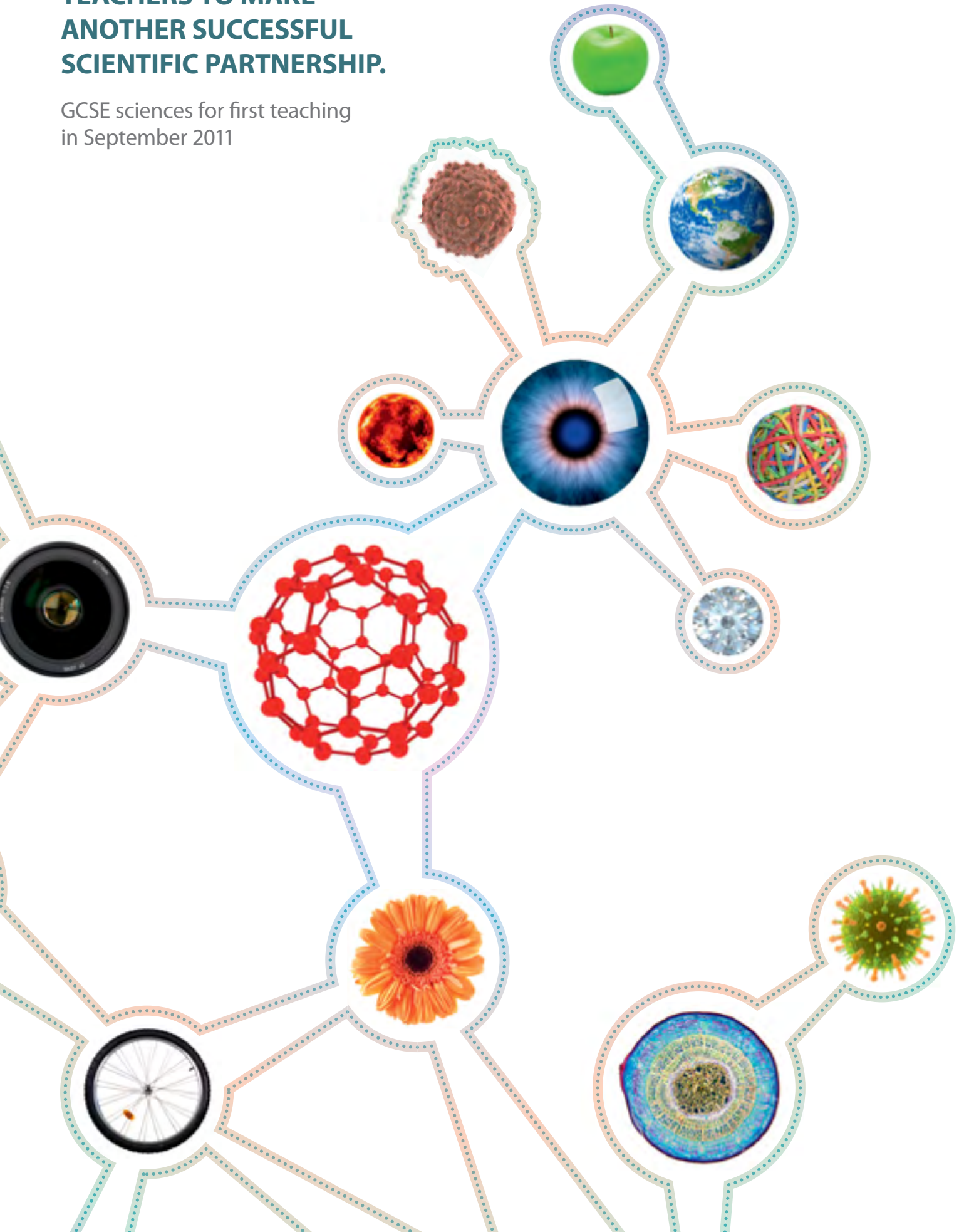


**OCR. WORKING WITH  
TEACHERS TO MAKE  
ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL  
SCIENTIFIC PARTNERSHIP.**

GCSE sciences for first teaching  
in September 2011





(Herschel)<sup>2</sup>  
= Uranus

(Bragg)<sup>2</sup> =  
x-ray diffraction

(Franklin x Wilkins)  
(Watson x Crick) + = DNA structure

Singer  
Nicholson = cell membrane  
structure

Schrodinger  
Cat = quantum  
mechanics

Horvitz =  
Human Genome

(Vine) + (Matthews)  
= plate tectonics

(Curie)<sup>2</sup> + Becquerel = radiation

**N**ew GCSE science specifications are being introduced by all awarding bodies for first teaching in 2011. Work is under way to develop revised GCSE science specifications.

**THERE ARE FOUR MAIN CHANGES TO THE SCIENCE GCSEs AS FOLLOWS:**

- Learners must take at least 40% of the assessment of each specification in the final examination series when they certificate. This 40% terminal requirement means that there may be less flexibility in the way that learners can progress through the course than with current GCSE sciences
- Learners may only re-sit a unit assessment once. The better result for the two attempts at a unit counts. If a re-sit is part of the 40% terminal requirement, that mark must count, even if the mark is lower than that achieved at a previous sitting
- Each specification will have a maximum of four units, and each unit must carry a minimum weighting of 20%
- Controlled assessment replaces coursework (see page 5).

**WORKING IN COLLABORATION FOR BEST RESULTS:**

Like many famous achievements, the best results often come through collaboration partnerships. We have been consulting widely on what the changes mean for you in order to ensure that our new GCSE science qualifications meet your needs and those of your learners.

We have been listening to your feedback on what is liked and what could be improved in our current provision, so that we can maintain those best-loved features and make appropriate changes.

We are already working hard with our publisher partners and key stakeholders to make sure that our new qualifications are well supported. Our publisher partners will produce teacher and student-friendly resources for the new specifications, which will support you with the changes and help you get the best from your learners.

**KS4 SCIENCE EVENTS:**

We'll be running KS4 Science events this summer, featuring GCSE sciences for 2011 and OCR Nationals in Science. We'll keep you notified of the event dates once we have these confirmed. Register for updates at [www.ocr.org.uk/updates](http://www.ocr.org.uk/updates)

**T**hroughout the consultations we have had with teachers, there have been a number of frequently asked questions:

#### WHAT GCSE SCIENCE QUALIFICATIONS ARE BEING REDEVELOPED?

The following science qualifications are being redeveloped:

- Twenty First Century Science suite, comprising GCSEs in Science, Additional Science, Biology, Chemistry and Physics
- Gateway Science suite, comprising GCSEs in Science, Additional Science, Biology, Chemistry and Physics
- GCSE Additional Applied Science (which will sit independently of the Twenty First Century Science suite)
- GCSE Environmental and Land-Based Science.

The following qualification will not be redeveloped and the last accreditation date for all awarding bodies is August 2012:

- GCSE Applied Science (Double Award).

CANDIDATE  
STYLE  
ANSWERS

INSET  
TRAINING

SCHEMES  
OF WORK

TEACHER'S GUIDE

A LOT  
MORE SUPPORT  
IS BEING  
DEVELOPED –  
WATCH THIS  
SPACE

PUBLISHER  
MATERIALS

LESSON  
PLANS

SAMPLE  
ASSESSMENT  
MATERIALS  
(INCLUDING  
CONTROLLED  
ASSESSMENT)

SUPPORT

#### WHAT CHANGES WILL BE SEEN?

We are only making changes where they are needed. We appreciate that you may have invested heavily in resources for the current GCSE sciences.

We pride ourselves on understanding the needs of all science teachers, technicians and learners and have already embarked on one of the largest market research campaigns ever seen in OCR. You may well have been a participant in our largest-ever telephone survey in June 2009. If that is the case, we do thank you for your most valuable time in helping us to revise the specifications to meet your needs.

GCSE Additional Applied Science will no longer be part of the Twenty First Century Science suite. We will continue to offer this specification but it will sit as a stand-alone and will appeal to those offering any GCSE science qualifications.

If you have anything you would like to share with us regarding development of the new GCSEs, we would be delighted to hear from you. Email us at [sciencefeedback@ocr.org.uk](mailto:sciencefeedback@ocr.org.uk)

#### WHAT IF WE WANT TO TAKE GCSE SCIENCES OVER THREE YEARS?

Starting a three-year course in 2010 will need some thought.

GCSE qualifications are intended to be taken over two years. At your centre you may adopt a more flexible approach to delivery, for example by teaching GCSE qualifications over three years, but you need to be aware of the implications of the accreditation end date to ensure that learners are entered for the appropriate GCSE specifications.

You should check details of assessment arrangements during the transition from the current specifications to the new specifications with the relevant awarding bodies and ensure that all assessments are completed in line with awarding bodies' published timelines. Awarding bodies will not be able to transfer credit from current GCSE specifications to new GCSE specifications and it will not be possible for learners to combine units from current and new specifications to make up a GCSE qualification.

The accreditation end date for current science GCSEs is August 2012. If, at your centre, you are planning to offer GCSE courses in science subjects over three years (starting from September 2010 and completing in summer 2013) you should use the Key Stage 4 Programme of Study as preparation, remembering that final specifications from OCR will be available for you to refer to in September 2010. Assessments will not be available until January 2012 at the earliest.

#### WHAT IS CONTROLLED ASSESSMENT?

Controlled assessment is coursework in a supervised environment, classroom or laboratory and will be replacing traditional coursework in science GCSEs from September 2011 under different levels of control. Controlled assessment has been introduced by Ofqual to address some of the issues raised in coursework reviews, such as plagiarism.

Controlled assessment will be 25% of the course for all specifications with the exceptions of Additional Applied Science and Environmental and Land-Based Science where it will be 60%.

#### HOW DID OFQUAL ARRIVE AT THE NEW SUBJECT CRITERIA?

New draft subject criteria were published for comment by QCDA in summer 2009. Further feedback was incorporated, with final subject criteria being published in December 2009.

Awarding bodies must meet the requirements of the subject criteria which set out knowledge, understanding, skills and assessment objectives for the specifications.

During this process, we will continue to work with teachers to produce our draft GCSE science specifications in April 2010, with final accredited specifications appearing in September 2010. These will be ready for first teaching from September 2011.

The final subject criteria are available on the Ofqual website: [www.ofqual.gov.uk/2627.aspx](http://www.ofqual.gov.uk/2627.aspx)

#### WHAT DOES ALL THIS MEAN FOR YOU?

It means that from September 2011 all learners beginning a new course of study will be working towards the new specifications. You'll need to consider which science GCSEs you wish to offer your learners.

#### WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT FROM OCR?

We aim to make the changes as easy for you to manage as possible. We will do this by offering:

- Latest news and information on the developments and support – register for updates at [www.ocr.org.uk/updates](http://www.ocr.org.uk/updates)
- Guidance on which qualification is most suitable for you and your learners, and different ways of making the new qualifications work for your learners
- A package of comprehensive support.



# GCSE SCIENCES TIMELINE

AWARDING BODIES SUBMIT  
DRAFT SPECIFICATIONS AND SAMS  
TO OFQUAL FOR ACCREDITATION  
DETAILS OF OCR DRAFT  
SPECIFICATIONS AVAILABLE  
FOR CENTRES  
APR 2010

DRAFT SPECIFICATIONS  
AND SAMPLE ASSESSMENT  
MATERIALS (SAMS)  
DEVELOPMENT  
DEC 2009 TO  
APR 2010

FURTHER  
SUPPORT  
MATERIALS AVAILABLE  
PRE-EASTER 2011

FINAL  
ACCREDITATION  
FROM OFQUAL  
AUG 2010

FIRST UNIT  
ASSESSMENT  
OPPORTUNITY FOR  
THE NEW GCSEs  
JAN 2012

FIRST  
TEACHING OF  
THE NEW GCSEs  
SEPT 2011

YOUR CHANCE TO  
TELL US WHAT YOU  
THINK ABOUT THE  
DRAFT SPECIFICATIONS  
APR TO AUG  
2010

FINAL SUBJECT  
CRITERIA AND  
CONTROLLED ASSESSMENT  
CRITERIA PUBLISHED  
BY OFQUAL  
DEC 2009

FINAL  
SPECIFICATIONS  
AND SAMS  
AVAILABLE  
SEPT 2010

ACCREDITATION  
END DATE FOR  
CURRENT GCSE  
SCIENCES  
AUG 2012

AUGUST 2012

JANUARY 2012

SEPTEMBER 2011

PRE-EASTER 2011

SEPTEMBER 2010

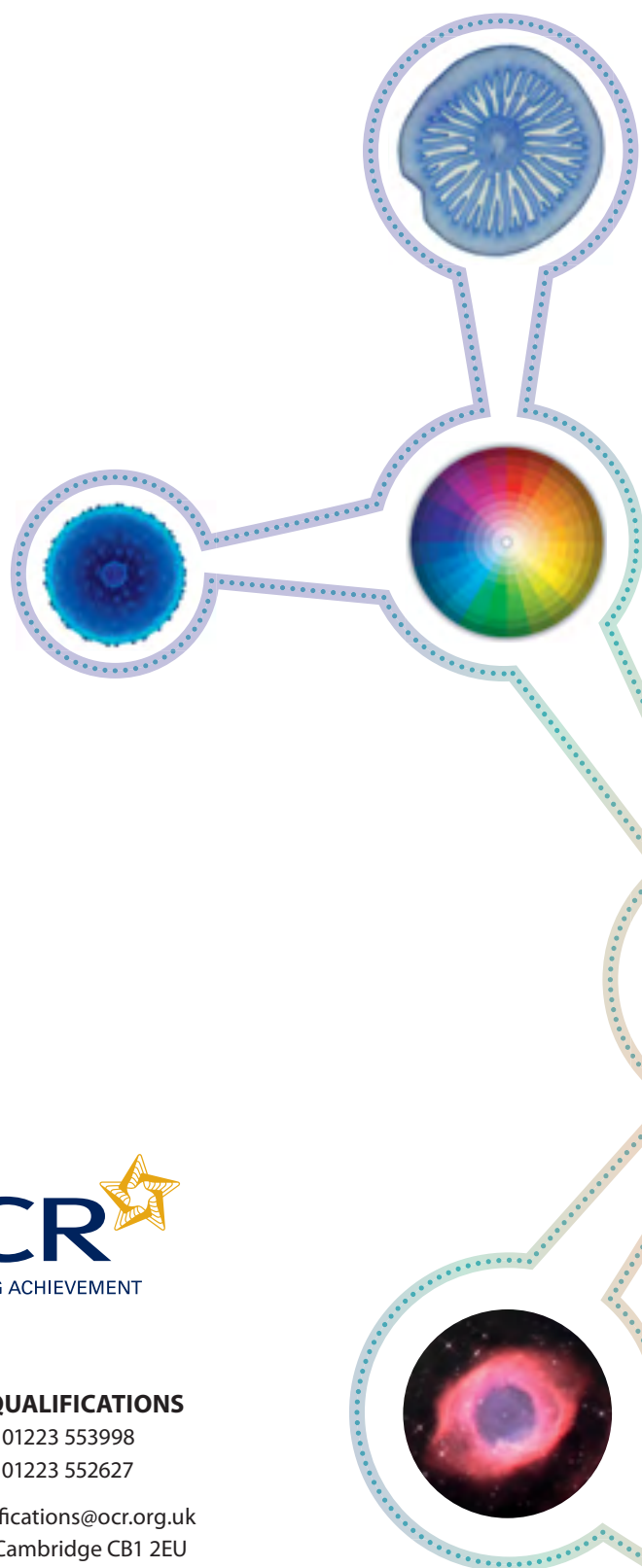
AUGUST 2010

APRIL TO AUGUST 2010

APRIL 2010

DECEMBER 2009 TO APRIL 2010

DECEMBER 2009



### GENERAL QUALIFICATIONS

Telephone 01223 553998

Facsimile 01223 552627

[general.qualifications@ocr.org.uk](mailto:general.qualifications@ocr.org.uk)

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