

AQA Level 3 Baccalaureate Specification

Guide to the AQA Bacc



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1 Introduction

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1.1 What is the AQA Bacc?

The AQA Baccalaureate, known as the AQA Bacc, celebrates the achievements of well-rounded post-16 students. The AQA Bacc comprises four elements which together demonstrate that students have achieved success in terms of A-levels and wider learning and enrichment activities.

Depth of study is represented by GCE A-levels.

Breadth of study is achieved through AS General Studies, Critical Thinking or Citizenship.

Independent learning is demonstrated through the completion of an Extended Project.

Students achieve **personal development** through enrichment activities.

The AQA Bacc comprises recognisable elements and it is anticipated that the qualification will acquire a recognised and valued status in its own right.

1.2 Why choose the AQA Bacc?

The AQA Bacc has many benefits for students and centres.

- It clearly demonstrates the skills and personal qualities which employers and universities are looking for.
- It recognises and celebrates the achievements of GCE students who have studied in depth in main study programmes.
- It develops more rounded individuals by extending students' education, experiences and personal growth beyond their academic study.
- It provides breadth of experience.
- It promotes independent learning, self-management and research skills through the completion of an extended project.
- It helps students see education in a wider context and encourages lifelong learning.
- It fosters active citizenship and community involvement.
- It meets centres' needs and provides a high quality and rigorous learning experience.

1.3 Why choose AQA?

It's a fact that AQA is the UK's favourite exam board and more students receive their academic qualifications from AQA than from any other board. But why does AQA continue to be so popular?

• Specifications

Ours are designed to the highest standards, so teachers, students and their parents can be confident that an AQA award provides an accurate measure of a student's achievements.

• Support

AQA runs the most extensive programme of support meetings; free of charge in the first years of a new specification and at a very reasonable cost thereafter. These support meetings explain the specification and suggest practical teaching strategies and approaches that really work.

• Service

We are committed to providing an efficient and effective service and we are at the end of the phone when you need to speak to a person about an important issue. We will always try to resolve issues the first time you contact us but, should that not be possible, we will always come back to you (by telephone, email or letter) and keep working with you to find the solution.

• Ethics

AQA is a registered charity. We have no shareholders to pay. We exist solely for the good of education in the UK. Any surplus income is ploughed back into educational research and our service to you, our customers. We don't profit from education, you do.

If you are an existing customer then we thank you for your support. If you are thinking of moving to AQA then we look forward to welcoming you.

1.4 How can I find out more?

AQA website

The latest information for the AQA Bacc can be found on our website at

<http://www.aqa.org.uk/qual/bacc.php>

Ask AQA

You have 24-hour access to useful information and answers to the most commonly-asked questions at

<http://www.aqa.org.uk/rn/askaqa.php>.

If the answer to your question is not available, you can submit a query for our team. Our target response time is one day.

Teacher Support

Details of the full range of current Teacher Support meetings and an on-line booking facility are available on our website at

<http://www.aqa.org.uk/support/teachers/html>.

If you need to contact the Teacher Support team, you can call us on 01483 477860 or email us at

teachersupport@aqa.org.uk.

1.5 How do I start using this specification?

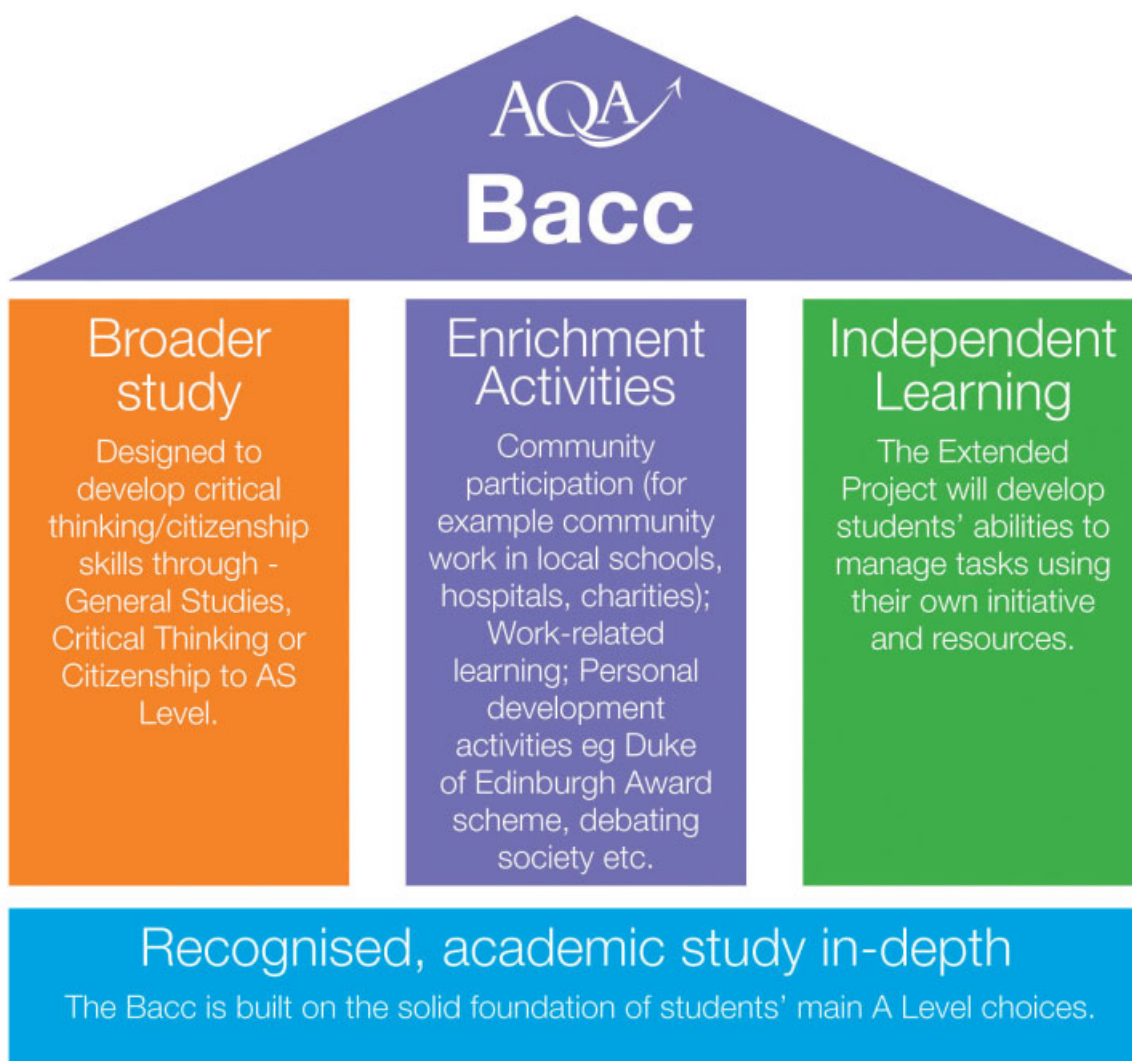
- Email AQA at **bacc@aqa.org.uk** to register your centre.
- You will be provided with supporting materials and details of how to submit your centre's enrichment scheme for approval.
- Tell us that you intend to enter candidates. Then we can make sure that you receive all relevant material. You can let us know by completing the appropriate Intention to Enter and Estimated Entry forms. We will send copies to your Exams Officer and they are also available on our website (**http://www.aqa.org.uk/admin/p_entries.html**)

Not using any AQA specification currently?

Almost all centres in England and Wales use AQA or have used AQA in the past and are approved AQA centres. A small minority are not. If your centre is new to AQA, please contact our centre approval team at **centreapproval@aqa.org.uk**.

2 Specification at a Glance

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3 What are the four key elements of the AQA Bacc?

The Bacc has four key elements:

- Depth of study
- Breadth of study
- Extended Project
- Enrichment activities

3.1 Depth of study through students' main GCE choices

Students must study at least three GCE Advanced level subjects and achieve Grade E or above in each. The GCE subjects may be entered with any Awarding Body.

These are the students' main subject choices. The grades achieved in three subjects contribute to the level of Bacc awarded: Pass, Merit or Distinction. Where students take more than three subjects in addition to fulfilling the other elements of the Bacc, the best three outcomes contribute to the overall award.

There is complete flexibility of choice of GCE subject except GCE General Studies, Critical Thinking or Citizenship which are breadth subjects. The only case where one of these can count as a depth subject is where there is a second to count as a breadth subject.

3

3.2 Breadth through AS in General Studies, Critical Thinking or Citizenship

Students must study GCE General Studies, Critical Thinking or Citizenship to at least GCE Advanced Subsidiary (AS) level and achieve Grade E or above.

Achievement at Grade E or above is a requirement but the grade does not influence the level of AQA Bacc awarded.

3.3 Extended Project Qualification (2010 awards)

For awards in 2010, students must complete an Extended Project. The Extended Project Qualification is a new GCE AS qualification, which will be available nationally from September 2008. It will be graded on an A*– E scale and the Extended Project grade will contribute to the level of Bacc awarded, Pass, Merit or Distinction.

Students at AQA pilot Bacc registered centres (2007–2009) are not required to complete an Extended Project. Awards in 2008 and 2009 will be based on the three other elements of the Bacc. Where students have participated in AQA's separate pilot of the Extended Project and achieved a Grade E or higher in 2008 or 2009, a reference to this achievement will be included on the reverse of the Bacc certificate.

3.4 Enrichment activities

Students cover a variety of activities involving at least 100 hours over a one or two year programme. At least two of the following three core areas must be included, with a minimum of 30 hours spent on any one area.

- Work-related learning
- Community participation
- Personal development activities

A wide variety of activities fulfil the requirements of AQA's scheme and examples are outlined in Section 4.3.

Centres' schemes for enrichment are quality-assured by AQA. Centres are required to submit details of how their enrichment provision meets AQA's requirements through the submission of a form. Students keep a record of their activities and teachers confirm that the enrichment element is complete and has met the published requirements. AQA then samples records to verify that enrichment has been satisfactorily completed. Completion of enrichment activities is a prerequisite for the award of an AQA Bacc. More details appear in Section 4.

4 Enrichment

4.1 Introduction

Enrichment plays a key role in the composition of the AQA Bacc. The enrichment activities enhance the skills and personal qualities that employers and universities are looking for and also develop a more rounded student.

AQA's scheme covers three core areas:

- Work-related learning
- Community participation
- Personal development activities

Students cover a variety of activities involving at least 100 hours over a two year programme. At least two of the three core areas must be included, with a minimum of 30 hours spent on any one. Enrichment activities are intended to be over and above those which have contributed to any of the student's GCE studies. Centres will be expected to ensure that this is the case.

4.2 Quality assurance

Centres' schemes for enrichment are quality-assured by AQA. Centres are required to submit details of how their enrichment provision meets AQA's requirements through the submission of a *Centre scheme approval form* in advance of the course. A copy of the form is included as Appendix A. The form requires:

- a statement of commitment from senior managers. This is expected to demonstrate that the senior managers at the centre are committed to providing a diversity of enrichment provision to their students which meets AQA's requirements as a minimum.
- an assurance that there is equal access to all students and that there is no barrier to participation for students with a disability.

- an outline of the centre's enrichment programme and how it provides opportunities for students in at least two of the three core areas. It is appropriate and acceptable for centres to attach details of their enrichment programmes to the form from their own documentation, provided it is clear in the documentation how AQA can be confident that students satisfy AQA's enrichment scheme requirements. An example of the way a centre may choose to map how their scheme meets the requirements via an enrichment matrix is provided in Section 4.5.

4.3 Enrichment core areas

Examples are provided below of the types of activity which will fulfil the enrichment scheme requirements. These are drawn from knowledge of the types of activities currently made available by centres which fulfil the requirements and the lists of examples will be extended through experience of working with pilot centres in 2007–2009.

• Work related learning

- Work experience
- Work shadowing
- Paid employment
- Young Enterprise
- Engineering Education Scheme

• Community participation

Voluntary Service/Community Support

Eg In local schools, hospitals, residential homes, hospices, sports centres, charity shops, Scouts, Guides, St. John's Ambulance, museums, heritage centres, environmental organisations, literacy schemes, Disaster Relief, animal welfare, health education, disability organisations, homeless and housing organisations, International Aid, World Challenge, community radio, mentoring / coaching programmes, Millennium Volunteer Award.

• Personal Development

Sport	Information Technology skills
Music	Skills & recreation eg photography, knitting, chess, drawing, sign language, creative writing
Drama	University of Liverpool Curriculum Enrichment Programme
Film	Field trips
Theatre	Driving safety/road awareness
Dance	World Challenge
Debating/Public Speaking	Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme (5 areas covered: a skill, physical recreation, residential, community service, expedition)
First Aid	
Health & Safety	
Foreign Language skills eg Beginners Japanese	

4.4 Possible combinations in hours

100 hours is the minimum required. At least two of the three core areas must be included. A minimum of 30 hours is required for any chosen core area.

Ways in which students might meet the core requirements are shown below.

$50 + 50 = 100$	$30 + 35 + 35 = 100$
$30 + 70 = 100$	$30 + 30 + 40 = 100$
$40 + 60 = 100$	$30 + 33 + 37 = 100$

4.5 Enrichment matrix

An example of how a centre or a student could map how their scheme provides opportunities for the requirements to be met is provided below.

	Work-related learning	Community Participation	Personal Development
Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme		✓	✓
Photography			✓
Work Experience	✓		
Driving Safety			✓
Paid Employment	✓		
Animal Welfare		✓	
Dance			✓

Students will vary in how much time is spent on each area. Examples are provided below of different profiles, each of which meets the requirements.

	Activity	Core area	Number of hours
Student A	Improvers Spanish	Personal development	35
	Work experience placement	Work-related learning	35
	Voluntary service in local hospice	Community participation	50
Student B	Engineering Education Scheme	Work-related learning	100
	First Aid course	Personal development	7
	Sport (Football team)	Personal development	25
Student C	Literacy scheme (in local primary school)	Community participation	70
	Young Enterprise	Work-related learning	40

4.6 Centre approval timeline

Stage 1

The centre completes the on-line Approval Form by 31 October at the latest for courses starting September of the same year. The form may be supplemented by appropriate centre documentation.

Stage 2

The centre receives notification of approval within one month. The notification is received electronically. If a centre is not approved at this stage, AQA offers a visit by a Bacc Advisor to provide further guidance and advice.

Stage 3

AQA Bacc courses are in progress. Centres have access to a Bacc Advisor / support from the AQA Bacc team throughout the year. Centres monitor and record the activities and hours of their candidates. AQA encourages student management of the recording of their own activities by the provision of an on-line Enrichment Diary recording tool, which will be available (from January 2009) for courses starting in September 2008.

4.7 Verification procedures outline

Stage 4

By 15 May in the year of the award, centre staff check that students have met all the requirements and submit the evidence to AQA. AQA will be making an electronic Enrichment Diary tool available for use in centres for students as an optional tool by January 2009.

Stage 5

AQA Bacc verifiers access the evidence provided for their allocated centres and review an agreed sample.

Verifiers give approval that the enrichment requirements have been met for the cohort of candidates in any series, which is an essential prerequisite to the Bacc being awarded. AQA provides written feed-back to centres. AQA Bacc verifiers must have recourse to the individual records of candidates' enrichment activities and to visit a centre if there is any doubt about whether the condition is being met of enrichment being 'over and above' the activities which students complete as part of their GCE studies.

5 How will the AQA Bacc be graded?

5.1 Prerequisite – prior attainment at GCSE

AQA Bacc candidates must have achieved five GCSEs at Grade C or above, including English and Mathematics. As part of their sixth-form entry requirements, centres gather information about their prospective students' achievements at GCSE. When a centre enters a candidate for the AQA Bacc it must provide a statement with a declaration confirming that

GCSE certificates have been checked to verify achievement.

AQA may ask a centre for the evidence of this attainment at GCSE for a candidate at any point prior to the issue of the AQA Bacc award.

5.2 Prerequisite – enrichment

AQA Bacc candidates must have fulfilled all the requirements of the enrichment scheme. By 15 May in the year of the award, evidence to this effect must

be available for inspection by AQA Bacc verifiers. Details of the arrangements for the submission of evidence will be made available to centres.

5.3 Entry for the AQA Bacc award

Centres make an entry for the Bacc award at the same time as GCE entries (by 21 March in the year of the award). Two entry codes are provided in the normal way to Examinations Officers, one for the Enrichment element and one for the Bacc award.

5.4 The AQA Bacc award

The award of the Bacc depends on the prerequisites having been met (see (5.1) and (5.2)).

In addition the breadth subject (General Studies, Critical Thinking or Citizenship) must be achieved to at least Grade E at AS. Where a candidate is entered for the full GCE A-level in the breadth subject, achievement at A-level at Grade E or higher will be deemed to satisfy the requirement.

The level of the AQA Bacc is then dependent on the grades achieved in three GCE subjects at Advanced level and the grade in the Extended Project.

Three A levels and Extended Project
– each at Grade E or above = AQA Bacc

Three A levels and Extended Project
– each at Grade C or above = AQA Bacc with **Merit**

Three A levels and Extended Project
– each at Grade A or above = AQA Bacc with **Distinction.**

6 What support is available for AQA Bacc centres?

6.1 Guide to the AQA Bacc

This guide will be supplemented with enrichment case studies, developed in conjunction with pilot centres during 2007–2008.

6.2 Support meetings for curriculum leaders and teachers

AQA will offer teacher support meetings and briefing sessions through its Teacher Support Programme. Provision will be made for:

- centres embarking on the AQA Bacc – preparation in advance of a two year course

- opportunities to attend enrichment networking workshops for registered centres.

AQA will facilitate local/area Network Group Meetings for Bacc centres interested in discussion about their Bacc provision.

6.3 Advice

Advice is available through a number of channels.

- The AQA Bacc support team is available to answer queries and provide advice.
- A Bacc Enrichment Advisor is available to answer any queries you have about your proposed scheme.
- You can e-mail *Ask AQA* (www.aqa.org.uk/rn/askaqa.php) with any question at any time and receive a speedy response.

7 Registration, Entries, Results and Fees

7.1 Registration

Centres interested in submitting candidates for the AQA Bacc for the first time should e-mail AQA at **bacc@aqa.org.uk**. This is so that the centre can be provided with relevant information about support meetings and be kept informed about the latest developments affecting the AQA Bacc. Centres are normally expected to submit their enrichment scheme for approval in advance of their post-16 students embarking on their studies.

Normal entry procedures apply. Examinations Officers provide data about 'Intention to enter' by July in the year ahead of the award. This is followed by estimated entries in October and final entries by 21 March in the year of the award.

7.2 Entries and aggregation

Examinations Officers make entries for the AQA Bacc in the normal way. In addition to entering candidates for the AQA Bacc, entries must be made for the Enrichment element. Details of the codes are provided in entry documentation.

For questions relating to entries please contact Exams Office Support on 0870 410 1036 or email eos@aqa.org.uk

7.3 Results

The Enrichment requirements must be completed as a prerequisite for the achievement of the AQA Bacc. The outcome for enrichment (Pass or Fail) will be communicated on GCE results day.

Centres provide details of candidate achievements in their GCEs to AQA in a pre-defined format following GCE results day.

AQA then aggregates the elements and notifies centres of the results. The timing of issue of AQA Bacc results is within one week of GCE results publication.

AQA Baccalaureate certificates are issued to candidates with their GCE certificates.

7.4 Fees

Details will be published in AQA's fees schedule.

Appendices

A AQA Bacc: Enrichment

For office use only

Approved	
Not approved	

Centre scheme approval form September 2008 – August 2010

Centre Name: _____

Centre Number:

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Address: _____

Telephone number: _____

Email: _____

Enrichment co-ordinator: _____

Contact telephone/email (If different from above):

Enrichment Requirements: Each candidate must undertake activities involving 100 hours from at least two of the three core areas. The minimum is 30 hours for any one core area.

Centre Scheme

Please complete the following, providing all relevant information.

Statement of Commitment from Senior Managers:

Statement about equality of access

A

Centre Enrichment Programme details

Describe the activities which are offered through your centre's enrichment programme and how they provide opportunities in the core areas, with examples where applicable. Please attach any relevant centre material.

Core Area: Work-related Learning**Core Area: Community Participation****Core Area: Personal Development****Record keeping**

Do you intend to use the AQA on-line diary recording tool?

Yes/No

If no, describe how your centre's recording and monitoring system will operate.

B Key Skills – Teaching, Developing and Providing opportunities for generating evidence

Students achieving the AQA Bacc will have demonstrated prior attainment of five GCSEs at Grade C or higher, including English and Mathematics. Hence the AQA Bacc supports achieving key skills in Application of number and Communication.

The elements associated with the extended project and enrichment activity provide significant

opportunities to develop and generate evidence for the skills of

Working with others

Improving own learning and performance

Problem solving

Communication

C Spiritual, Moral, Ethical, Social, Cultural and other issues

The elements of the AQA Bacc each support the development of an understanding of moral, ethical, social, cultural and other issues.

Where appropriate this will be identified as part of each GCE specification followed by the student. The breadth AS subject enables the student to view

issues from a wide range of perspectives and develop as an informed citizen. The enrichment element fosters community involvement and work-related learning so that AQA Bacc students are particularly likely to appreciate life from a wide variety of perspectives and become well-rounded citizens.



AQA Level 3 Baccalaureate Specification 2010 onwards Qualification Accreditation Number: 500/3777/8

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