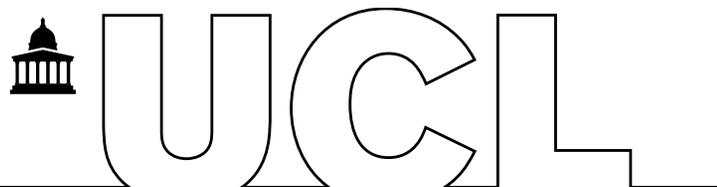


AQA GCSE Chinese and Edexcel GCSE Specification Review

The full specification for the [AQA GCSE](#) and the [Edexcel GCSE](#) can both be found online.

	AQA GCSE	Edexcel GCSE
Description:	<p>GCSE Chinese (Mandarin) helps students develop their Mandarin language skills in a variety of contexts and a broad understanding of the culture of countries and communities where Mandarin is spoken. It encourages enjoyment of language learning and the recognition that language skills enable students to take their place in a multi-lingual global society.</p> <p>GCSE Chinese (Spoken Mandarin) has a Foundation Tier (grades 1–5) and a Higher Tier (grades 4–9). Students must take all four question papers (listening, speaking, reading and writing) at the same tier. All question papers must be taken in the same series.</p> <p>Students study all of the following topics/themes on which the assessments are based.</p> <p>Theme 1: Identity and culture Topic 1: Me, my family and friends <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationships with family and friends • Marriage/partnership Topic 2: Technology in everyday life</p>	<p>Edexcel Level 1/Level 2 GCSE in Chinese enables the students to manipulate and use the target language effectively, independently and creatively, so that they have a solid basis from which to progress to A Level or employment.</p> <p>It allows students to develop their ability to communicate with Chinese native speakers in both speech and writing. Students will study across a variety of contexts relevant to their age and interests and will also develop a greater awareness of the culture of Chinese-speaking communities and countries.</p> <p>Questions across all four language skills are set in common contexts, addressing a range of relevant contemporary and cultural themes. They are organised into five themes, each broken down into topics and sub-topics. The five themes are:</p> <p>Theme 1: Identity and culture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who am I?



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social media • Mobile technology <p>Topic 3: Free-time activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Music • Cinema and TV • Food and eating out • Sport <p>Topic 4: Customs and festivals in Chinese-speaking countries/communities</p> <p>Theme 2: Local, national, international and global areas of interest</p> <p>Topic 1: Home, town, neighbourhood and region</p> <p>Topic 2: Social issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charity/ voluntary work • Healthy/ unhealthy living <p>Topic 3: Global issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The environment • Poverty/homelessness <p>Topic 4: Travel and tourism</p> <p>Theme 3: Current and future study and employment</p> <p>Topic 1: My studies</p> <p>Topic 2: Life at school/college</p> <p>Topic 3: Education post-16</p> <p>Topic 4: Jobs, career choices and ambition</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily life • Cultural life <p>Theme 2: Local area, holiday, travel</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holidays • Travel and tourist transactions • Town, region and country <p>Theme 3: School</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What school is like • School activities <p>Theme 4: Future aspirations, study and work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using languages beyond the classroom • Ambition • Work <p>Theme 5: International and global dimension.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bringing the world together • Environmental issues <p>All themes and topics must be studied in the context of both the students' home country and that of the countries and communities where Chinese is spoken.</p>
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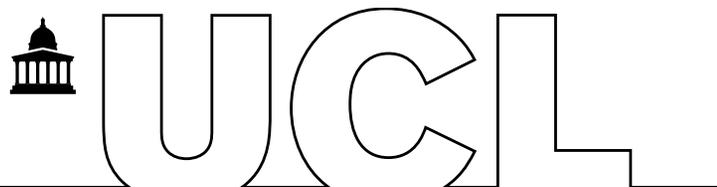
Vocabulary list:	<p>General vocabulary</p> <p>This vocabulary is not restricted to specific settings and can occur in any of the themes listed in the specification.</p> <p>Measure words: 11 Verbs: 39 Adjectives: 22 Comparison: 10 Conjunctions and connectives: 19 Negatives: 3 Money: 7 Asking questions: 20 Greetings and exclamations: 16 Opinions: 19 Expressions of time: 51 Location and distance: 19 Weight and measure: 17 Access: 7</p> <p>Theme based vocabulary</p> <p>Foundation tier: Identity and culture: 177 Local, national, international and global areas of interest: 164</p>	<p>High-frequency language</p> <p>Common verbs: 79 Common adjectives: 44 Common adverbs: 22 Colours: 8 Numbers: 0-10 thousands, measure words Quantities and measures: 16 Time expressions: 27, Days of the week, Months and seasons of the year Question words: 9 Other high-frequency words: 12 Countries, continents, nationalities, languages: 27 Social conventions: 10 Other useful expressions: 3 Prepositions: 11 Language used in dialogues and messages: 5</p> <p>Topic-specific vocabulary</p> <p>Foundation tier: Identity and culture - Daily life, food and drink, including eating out: 53 - What my friends and family are like: 49</p>

		- Bringing the world together, environmental issues: 9
Question papers:	<p>Paper 1: Listening</p> <p>What's assessed Understanding and responding to different types of spoken language</p> <p>How it's assessed Foundation tier: 35 minutes, 40 marks Higher Tier: 45 minutes, 50 marks</p> <p>25% of GCSE (Each exam includes 5 minutes' reading time of the question paper before the listening stimulus is played.)</p> <p>Paper 2: Speaking</p> <p>What's assessed Communicating and interacting effectively in speech for a variety of purposes</p> <p>How it's assessed Foundation tier: 7–9 minutes + preparation time Higher tier: 10–12 minutes + preparation time</p>	<p>Paper 1: Listening and understanding</p> <p>How it's assessed Foundation tier: 35 minutes, including 5 minutes' reading time; 50 marks Higher tier: 45 minutes, including 5 minutes' reading time; 50 marks</p> <p>25% of GCSE</p> <p>Paper 2: Speaking</p> <p>How it's assessed Foundation tier: 7–9 minutes plus 12 minutes' preparation time Higher tier: 10–12 minutes plus 12 minutes' preparation time</p>

	<p>60 marks (for each of Foundation tier and Higher tier) 25% of GCSE</p> <p>Paper 3: Reading</p> <p>What's assessed Understanding and responding to different types of written language</p> <p>How it's assessed Foundation tier: 45 minutes Higher tier: 1 hour</p> <p>60 marks (for each of Foundation tier and Higher tier) 25% of GCSE</p> <p>Paper 4: Writing</p> <p>What's assessed Communicating effectively in writing for a variety of purposes</p> <p>How it's assessed Foundation tier: 1 hour Higher tier: 1 hour 15 minutes</p> <p>50 marks at Foundation tier and 60 marks at Higher tier</p>	<p>70 marks (for each of Foundation Tier and Higher tier) 25% of GCSE</p> <p>Paper 3: Reading and understanding</p> <p>How it's assessed Foundation tier: 50 minutes Higher tier: 1 hour 5 minutes</p> <p>50 marks (for each of Foundation tier and Higher tier) 25% of GCSE</p> <p>Paper 4: Writing</p> <p>How it's assessed Foundation tier: 1 hour 15 minutes Higher tier: 1 hour 25 minutes</p> <p>60 marks (for each of Foundation tier and Higher tier) 25% of GCSE</p>
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25% of GCSE	
<p>Question types:</p>	<p>Paper 1: Listening Questions</p> <p>Foundation Tier and Higher Tier Section A – questions in English, to be answered in English or non-verbally Section B – questions in English, to be answered in English or non-verbally</p> <p>Paper 2: Speaking Questions Foundation Tier and Higher Tier The format is the same at Foundation Tier and Higher Tier, but with different stimulus questions for the Photo card and different stimulus materials for the Role-play. All speaking preparation cards will be in English. All rubrics are in English in the student cards for the role-play and the photo-card tasks.</p> <p>The timings are different too:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role-play – 15 marks (2 minutes at Foundation Tier; 2 minutes at Higher Tier)
	<p>Paper 1: Listening and understanding</p> <p>Students will respond to multiple-response and short-answer open-response questions based on a recording featuring male and female Chinese speakers. There is no requirement for students to produce written responses in Chinese.</p> <p>Foundation tier All questions are set in English. The instructions to students are in English.</p> <p>Higher tier All questions are set in English. The instructions to students are in English.</p> <p>Paper 2: Speaking There are three tasks which must be conducted in the following order:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task 1 – a role play based on one topic that is allocated by Pearson • Task 2 – questions based on a picture stimulus of one topic that is allocated by Pearson • Task 3 – conversation based on two themes. The first theme is based on the topic chosen by the student in advance of the assessment. The second theme is allocated by Pearson.

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Photo card – 15 marks (2 minutes at Foundation Tier; 3 minutes at Higher Tier)• General conversation – 30 marks (3–5 minutes at Foundation Tier; 5–7 minutes at Higher Tier) <p>Paper 3: Reading Questions Foundation Tier and Higher Tier</p> <p>Section A – questions in English, to be answered in English or non-verbally</p> <p>Section B – translation from Chinese (Mandarin) into English (a minimum of 35 characters for Foundation Tier and 50 characters for Higher Tier)</p> <p>Paper 4: Writing Questions Foundation Tier</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Question 1 – message (student produces four sentences in response to a photo) – 8 marks• Question 2 – short passage (student writes a piece of continuous text in response to four brief bullet points, approximately 30 characters in total) – 16 marks• Question 3 – translation from English into Chinese (Mandarin) (minimum 25 words) – 10 marks• Question 4 – structured writing task (student	<p>The assessment will be available in Mandarin and Cantonese.</p> <p>Paper 3: Reading and understanding Students are assessed on their understanding of written Chinese across a range of different types of texts, including advertisements, emails, letters, articles and literary texts.</p> <p>Section A is set in English. The instructions to students are in English.</p> <p>Section B includes a translation passage from Chinese into English with instructions in English.</p> <p>Paper 4: Writing Students are required to produce responses of varying lengths and types to express ideas and opinions in Chinese. The instructions to students are in English. Character counts are specified for each question. Students must answer all questions.</p> <p>Foundation tier There are three open-response questions and one translation into Chinese.</p>
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	<p>responds to four compulsory detailed bullet points, producing approximately 75 characters in total) – there is a choice from two questions – 16 marks</p> <p>Higher Tier</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question 1 – structured writing task (student responds to four compulsory detailed bullet points, producing approximately 60 characters in total) – there is a choice from two questions – 16 marks • Question 2 – open-ended writing task (student responds to two compulsory detailed bullet points, producing approximately 125 characters in total) – there is a choice from two questions – 32 marks • Question 3 – translation from English into Chinese (Mandarin) (minimum 40 words) – 12 marks 	<p>Higher tier There are two open-response questions and one translation into Chinese.</p>
<p>Level of difficulty</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The majority of GCSE Chinese questions just require the choice of ABCD or English answers. • Questions are direct and require the recognition of characters. • Most answers are explicitly recognizable and do not need to read between the lines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Edexcel GCSE has more diverse question types (multiple choice, short answers, True or False, matching etc.) • Questions are direct and require the recognition of characters. • Most answers are explicitly recognizable and do not need to read between the lines. • Theme oriented

Testing approach	<p>Question type:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focus on a more global Chinese context (Mainland China, Hong Kong and Singapore for example).• A small number of classical texts are used (e.g see appendix)• Functional writings (the writing of notes, letters for example) are tested. <p>Requirement for participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• AQA GCSE Chinese requires the choice of ABCD, and the writing of English and Chinese characters.	<p>Question type:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focused on themes• Only modern Chinese is tested• Translation is tested• (Modern) functional writing is tested: writing a short post, email, letter etc. <p>Requirement for participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Edexcel GCSE requires the participants to answer questions in different formats and in English and Chinese characters.
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Appendix

Example of classical Chinese in AQA Chinese paper (Foundation tier, paper 3 Reading - Specimen 2019)

7. Poem

Below is an extract from a famous Chinese poem by Li Bai 春日醉起言志.

Answer the questions below in English.

Line 1: 觉来盼庭前， _

Line 2: 一鸟花间鸣。 _

Line 3: 借问此何时， _

Line 4: 春风语流莺。 _

1. Which animal is mentioned in line two?
2. Which season is mentioned in line four?
3. Which type of weather is mentioned in line four?