Joint Council for Qualifications CIC

FORMATS FOR THE EXCHANGE OF EXAMINATION RELATED DATA

VERSION 14
REVISED May 2016

To be effective from
1 SEPTEMBER 2011

Produced on behalf of:

AQA Realising potential

CEA Rewarding Learning

City & Guilds

OCR Oxford Cambridge and RSA

Pearson

WJEC CBAC

Revision History

This table records the status and revision history of this document.

Revision Date	Status	Revision History
March 2011	Final	Inclusion of Partial Absence indicators to Results file for all Results Types. Removal of Exam Type: Qualification and Level lists from format booklet. Removal of Gradesets list from format booklet.
May 2016	Final	Page 16, note 2 updated for value E.

Updates relating to examination qualifications, levels, types or gradesets will not be identified in the format booklet. MIS providers will be advised as the JCQ exam qualification codes and gradeset spreadsheet is updated. This spreadsheet is available on the JCQ website, www.jcq.org.uk, and awarding body websites.

Contents

Part I

Introduction

This booklet has been prepared by the staff of the awarding bodies and approved by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) to enable data to be transferred between awarding bodies and centres. During the course of its preparation, consultations have taken place with suppliers of software and communication systems on the file structures to be used. This booklet is effective for all electronic data transfers from 1 September ***2011***.

All changes are shown in ***bold italic type*** where there has been an amendment to what was printed in the September ***2010*** edition ***(Version 13)***.

The contents of the booklet are arranged as in the previous version published in September ***2010***. A list of contents is provided for ease of reference.

The basedata which is described in Part IV can be accessed by downloading the files from each awarding body's website; the basedata will not normally be made available on disk. None of the awarding bodies accept computer printouts as the sole means of submitting entries.

The information can be transferred from centres to awarding bodies and vice versa by EDI (Electronic Data Interchange) using one of the approved carriers or by writing the data to disk in the approved format. In some cases it may not be appropriate to transfer data on disk and, in every case, prior arrangements must be made with regard to the modes of transfer which are satisfactory to the awarding body and centre involved.

This information booklet provides all the necessary detail for software to be written which will enable the data to be extracted from the centre's database or data files and presented in an acceptable common format for more than one awarding body. It should obviate, or at least reduce, the need to key information separately for each awarding body for which a centre has candidates. It facilitates the production of commercial software by giving a unique format of output file, whatever the awarding body involved.

Although all awarding bodies have agreed in principle to the acceptance of data using the common formats described in this booklet, it should be noted that the individual awarding bodies retain the right to specify the form in which they are prepared to receive data for the examinations of any particular year. Before a centre embarks on any course of action leading to the presentation of data which does not comply with one of the recognised methods, it should contact the awarding body for whose examinations candidates are being prepared, to ensure that the arrangements which are being made are satisfactory. It is particularly important to check well in advance of the final dates for the receipt of various types of data so that, if approval cannot be given, there is sufficient time to make alternative arrangements. The awarding bodies will not accept data on disk or via EDI which do not conform to the common file structure and for which prior approval has not been given.

In order to provide further information or to clarify any of the details in Parts I to VI of this booklet, a number of contact points have been established. The person named or Help Desk will be able to advise on the requirements of the awarding bodies referred to.

Contact Points

AQA – Assessment and Qualifications Alliance	ICT External Support AQA Devas Street Manchester, M15 6EX Tel: 0161 953 1180 email: formats@aqa.org.uk Website: www.aqa.org.uk
CCEA – Northern Ireland Council for the Curriculum Examinations and Assessment	ICT Helpdesk CCEA, 29 Clarendon Road Clarendon Dock Belfast, BT1 3BG Tel: 02890 261200 ext 2128 email: phamilton@ccea.org.uk Website: ccea.org.uk
OCR – Oxford, Cambridge and RSA Examinations	Customer Contact Centre OCR 1 Hills Road Cambridge, CB1 2EU Tel: 01223 553998 email: general.qualifications@ocr.org.uk Website: www.ocr.org.uk
Pearson	Customer Services Pearson One90 High Holborn London, WC1V 7BH UK Tel: 0844 463 2535 email: eprocessing@pearson.com Website: qualifications.pearson.com/basedata
WJEC/CBAC	I.T. Help Desk WJEC 245 Western Avenue Cardiff, CF5 2YX Tel: 029 2026 5168 email: helpdesk@wjec.co.uk Website: www.wjec.co.uk
CIE – University of Cambridge International Examinations	Customer Services University of Cambridge International Examinations 1 Hills Road Cambridge, CB1 2EU UK Tel: 01223 553554 Fax: 01223 553558 email: international@cie.org.uk

Awarding Body (AB) Identifiers

AQA – Assessment and Qualifications Alliance

70	AQA

CCEA – Council for the Curriculum Examinations and Assessment

61	CCEA

CIE – University of Cambridge International Examinations

02	CIE

Pearson – BTEC and Edexcel

10	PEARSON	ELC (A), GCSE and IGCSE
11	PEARSON	GCE and AEA
13	PEARSON	Registrations
14	PEARSON	DiDA, Functional Skills, Principal Learning and Projects
15	PEARSON	BTEC, Key Skills and Essential Skills (Wales) Assessments

OCR – Oxford, Cambridge and RSA Examinations

01	OCR	
72	OCR	Key Skills, Functional Skills and Nationals (Coventry office)

WJEC/CBAC

40	WJEC	GCSE, Entry Level, Entry Pathways and Functional Skills
41	WJEC	GCE (Advanced, AS), Principal Learning and Project, WBQ, Key Skills and Essential Skills (Wales)

Universities and Colleges Admissions Service

90	UCAS

International Centre for Higher Education Management (ICHEM)

92	LEAP/SERAP

Notes:

1. '00' and '99' will not be used as an AB identifier and will therefore be available for centres'/software suppliers' purposes.

2. '90' and '92' are reserved for data transfer purposes.

Part II

The naming of files used to transfer examination-related data

The file name should take the form:

dcccccbb.Xnn

d	=	data type
ccccc	=	centre number in the case of files being sent by a centre or an indication of the series and year in the case of broadcast or multiple files being sent by an awarding body
bb	=	AB identifier
X	=	literal 'X' identifies file as a common format file from an awarding body
nn	=	last two digits of the sequence number (see Note 7 page 9)

The sequence number specifies the order in which files have been produced so that awarding bodies receiving a number of files will know the order in which to process them. The last two digits of this number are included in the file name to enable multiple versions of a particular file type to be stored in one directory area. For example, a centre may produce more than one amendments file for a particular awarding body.

The file name is designed so that it contains the information needed at both ends of its journey from centre to awarding body or vice-versa. It is not necessary, therefore, for EDI suppliers to rename files in transit and it is important that they do not do so. An exception to this general rule is the case where an awarding body supplies a single file containing data for a number of centres which an EDI supplier has previously agreed to split and to send the relevant parts to individual centres. **Note that filenames are not case sensitive.**

The following data types are defined in this document.

A	Amendments	**M**	Coursework Marks
C	Components file	**O**	Options file
D	Disallowed combinations file	**R**	Results
E	Entries	**S**	Syllabus file
F	Forecast or estimated grades	**U**	Certification/Unit Link file
L	Link file	**X**	General communication
		Z	Zipped executable basedata file

Examples

E1234570.X01 would be entries file 01 from centre 12345 for AB 70, i.e. AQA

A1234501.X05 would be amendments file 05 from centre 12345 for AB 01, i.e. OCR

Basedata files

Basedata files will follow a similar naming convention, but instead of a centre number in bytes 2 - 6 of the file name they will contain the examination series code in bytes 2 - 3, followed by the year of the examination to which they refer in bytes 4 - 5 and either an underscore character or a character indicating the language of the basedata in byte 6. This letter may be 'C' (Welsh) or 'B' (Bi-lingual). If an underscore is used the language is understood to be English.

A set of basedata files (Syllabus, Option, Component and Link files together with a disallowed combinations file) may be zipped as an executable file. Such files will be named according to the convention Zssyy_bb.EXE, where Z indicates a zipped set of files, ss is the examination series, yy is the year, _ is a literal underscore character (or is replaced by a letter to indicate the language) and bb is the AB identifier code.

It is also permissible for an additional text file to be included within a set of basedata. This file may be used to include any additional information. There are no naming requirements. However, the file will only contain unformatted text and must be given a .txt suffix.

Examples

S6A12_11.X01 – would be a syllabus file from Edexcel, AB Identifier 11 for series 6 (June GCE) in year 2012.

OBG11_61.X02 – would be an options file from CCEA, AB Identifier 61 for series B (November) in year 2011. X02 indicates that this is the second release of this basedata file. (See note on the re-release of basedata below).

C6G12C40.X01 – would be a component file in Welsh from WJEC, AB Identifier 40 for series 6 (June GCSE) in year 2012.

Z3A12_70.zip – would be a set of zipped basedata files from AQA, AB Identifier 70 for series 3 (March) in year 2012.

ADNOTES.TXT – could contain any additional information as required.

Re-release of Basedata

If it is necessary to release another version of the basedata files it is required that the suffix of all files (excluding the .txt files) within a zipped or executable file is changed to indicate the release number (e.g. from .X01 to .X02 if the files are released for a second time and from .X02 to .X03 if another release is necessary).

General Communication File (Type X)

Some EDI systems provide no method of automatically responding to EDI messages. For example, an awarding body, having received a centre's entries by EDI, may wish to send a confirmation of how many entries the centre has made for each subject. Currently, this requires the use of electronic mail and is a labour-intensive operation. In order to automate the process a general communication file type has been defined. The file name would be

Xcccccbb.Xnn

The data inside the file should be free-format text, intelligible to the recipients when read, not intended to be loaded into a computer.

The type X file is for awarding body to centre communications only; it is not intended for use by a centre to send an unstructured message to an awarding body.

General layout of common format files

Each file will normally be made up of the following record types.

Record Type	Record Description
1	File Header
3 5 7	Centre Header Detail Centre Trailer
9	File Trailer

} Sequence repeats for each centre in the file

Generally files will start with a file header record followed by a centre header record, a number of detail records, a centre trailer record and then a file trailer record. This will be the case where the file contains data to or from one centre.

There may be some cases where an awarding body produces a composite file containing data for a number of centres. If more than one centre is included in the file, the centre header record, detail records and centre trailer record would be repeated the requisite number of times. In all cases the first record will be the file header and the last record will be the file trailer.

File Header Record

Position	Description	Size	Comments
1	Data Type	1A	Same as first letter of file name
2	Record Type	1N	'1' for file header
3 – 7	Centre Number	5N	(See Note 1, page 8)
8 – 9	AB	2N	AB identifier
10 – 11	Examination Series	2A	(See Note 2, page 8)
12 – 13	Year	2N	'00, '01' etc.
14	Distribution Type	1A	'S', 'B', or 'M' (See Note 3, page 8)
15 – 21	Software Package	7A	(See Note 4, page 9)
22 – 24	Software Package Version	3A	(See Note 4, page 9)
25 – 26	***Formats Version***	***2N***	***(See Note 5, page 9)***
27 -	Pad with spaces		Record length will depend on data type
- end	End of Line Marker	2A	ASCII 13, ASCII 10 (See Note 6, page 9)

Centre Header Record

(Note: there is only one Centre Header Record for all file types)

Position	Description	Size	Comments
1	Data Type	1A	Same as first letter of file name
2	Record Type	1N	'3' for centre header
3 – 7	Centre Number	5N	(See Note 1, page 8)
8 – 9	AB	2N	AB identifier
10 – 11	Examination Series	2A	(See Note 2, page 8)
12 – 13	Year	2N	'09, '10' etc.
14 – 16	Sequence Number	3N	Right justified with leading zeros (See Note 7, page 9)
17 – 24	Centre Postcode	8A	Left justified
25 -	Pad with spaces		Record length will depend on data type
- end	End of Line Marker	2A	ASCII 13, ASCII 10 (See Note 6, page 9)

Detail Record

Position	Description	Size	Comments
1	Data Type	1A	Same as first letter of file name
2	Record Type	1N	'5' for detail record
3 -	Record details		Record length will depend on data type
- end	End of Line Marker	2A	ASCII 13, ASCII 10 (See Note 6, page 9)

Centre Trailer Record

Position	Description	Size	Comments
1	Data Type	1A	Same as first letter of file name
2	Record Type	1N	'7' for centre trailer
3 – 7	Centre Number	5N	(See Note 1, page 8)
8 – 14	Number of Records	7N	Right justified with leading zeros (See Note 8, page 9)
15 – 20	Date file produced	6N	In form ddmmyy
21 -	Pad with spaces		Record length will depend on data type
- end	End of Line Marker	2A	ASCII 13, ASCII 10 (See Note 6, page 9)

File Trailer Record

Position	Description	Size	Comments
1	Data Type	1A	Same as first letter of file name
2	Record Type	1N	'9' for file trailer
3 – 7	Centre Number	5N	(See Note 1, page 8)
8 – 14	Number of Records	7N	Right justified with leading zeros (See Note 8, page 9)
15 – 21	Number of Centres	7N	Right justified with leading zeros
22 -	Pad with spaces		Record length will depend on data type
- end	End of Line Marker	2A	ASCII 13, ASCII 10 (See Note 6, page 9)

Notes:

1. Centre Number

Bytes 3 - 7 of file header, centre header, centre trailer and file trailer records.

This field should contain either:

- the national centre number of the centre involved in the data transfer when the file contains data to or from a centre, or;
- the examination series code and year (in the form YY) followed by an underscore '_' or letter to indicate the language when the file contains non-centre specific examination data, e.g. basedata. Also see Note 3.

2. Examination Series

Bytes 10 - 11 of file and centre header records.

A two character examination series is to be used.

First Character

'1' to 'C' will refer to the main month in which the examination is taken.

1	January	7	July
2	February	8	August
3	March	9	September
4	April	A	October
5	May	B	November
6	June	C	December

Second Character

The second character is a letter (A-Z), defined to represent a set of qualifications to be processed together for the examination series. The second character is decided by the awarding body concerned without reference to the values used by other awarding bodies.

Any subjects which awarding bodies include in a particular set of basedata files are intended to be collected in a single entry file. For example, when combined with the year, 1A02 would simply indicate a set of basedata related to examinations scheduled to be taken in January 2002. It would have no necessary correlation with the same awarding body's 1A01 or 1A03, nor with another awarding body's 1A02.

3. Distribution Type

Byte 14 of file header record.

May contain one of three values.

'S' indicates that the file contains data to or from a centre.

In 'S' type files there should be one file header, one centre header, one centre trailer and one file trailer each of which should contain the same national centre number in bytes 3 - 7. All files from centres should be of type 'S'.

'B' indicates that the file contains data from one awarding body, all of which are to be broadcast to the centres.

In 'B' type files there should be one file header, one centre header, one centre trailer and one file trailer each of which should contain the examination series code in bytes 3 - 4, the year (in the form YY) in bytes 5 - 6, and '_' or letter to indicate the language in byte 7.

'M' indicates EDI carriers/file splitters

In cases where an awarding body issues one file containing data for a number of centres and the file needs to be split by the EDI carrier so that each part is sent to the relevant centre, byte 14 will contain the value 'M'.

In 'M' type files the file header and trailer records should contain the examination series code in bytes 3 - 4, the year (in the form YY) in bytes 5 - 6, and '_' or letter to indicate the language in byte 7. The body of the file will then contain a repeating sequence of centre header, detail records and centre trailer. Each centre header/trailer pair should contain the national centre number of the centre concerned in bytes 3 - 7.

The resultant file that the carrier/splitter outputs to each of the constituent centres will be of type 'S' (as described above).

4. Software Package Name and Version Number

Bytes 15 - 21 and 22 - 24 of file header.

These fields should contain the name and version number of the software package being used to produce the file. It is up to the software suppliers to invent suitable labels for their products. It is suggested that a centre using software that has been prepared in-house indicates this fact by placing its national centre number in bytes 15 - 19.

5. Formats Version

Bytes 25 - 26 of File Header Record

Used to indicate the version of the Formats booklet used in the file. e.g. '14' would indicate that the 14th version of the Formats booklet was being followed.

6. End of Line Marker

The records take the form of fixed length lines of text, the exact length of which will depend on the data type in question. The end of line marker in all record types is ASCII code 13 followed by ASCII code 10.

7. Sequence Number

Bytes 14 - 16 of centre header. (Right justified with leading zeros)

The sequence number is intended to indicate the order in which files were produced and hence the order in which they should be processed. The sequence number of files received by an awarding body, however, need not be contiguous. The last two digits of the sequence number form part of the file name (see page 5). It is important, however, to look in the centre header to ascertain the full sequence number.

8. Number of Records

The number of records in the centre trailer record should be a count of all the records including the centre header, centre trailer and all the detail records between the two. The number of records in the file trailer should be a count of all the records in the file including the file header and trailer records.

E.g. an entries file containing the entries for one centre will contain one file header, one centre header, a number of detail records, one centre trailer and one file trailer. The record total in the centre trailer in this case should be the number of detail records plus two. The record total in the file trailer should be the number of detail records plus four.

Part III

Entries and Amendments File Formats

The file should be created according to the rules for common format data files outlined earlier, using the data type 'E' for entries or 'A' for amendments as the first character of the file name and of all the data records. The record length is 194 bytes including the end of line marker.

Entries and Amendments Detail Record

Position	Description	Size	Comments
1	Data Type	1A	'E' for Entries 'A' for Amendments
2	Record Type	1N	'5' for Details record
3	Candidate Status	1A	'C' or 'P' (See Note 1, page 10)
4 - 8	Centre Number	5N	
9 - 12	Candidate Number	4N	Right justified with leading zeros
13 - 52	Candidate Name	40A	(See Note 2, page 11)
53	Sex	1A	'M' or 'F'
54 - 59	Date of Birth	6N	In format DDMMYY ('000000' if not known)
60 - 72	Candidate Identifier	13A	Unique Candidate Identifier (UCI) (See Note 3, page 11)
73 - 85	Pupil Number	13A	Unique Pupil Number (UPN) (See Note 4, page 11)
86-95	Unique Learner Number	10N	Unique Learner Number (ULN) (See Note 5, page 11)
96	Qualifier Flag	1A	'G', 'P', or ' ' (See Note 6, page 11)
97 - 101	Optional Centre Number	5N	(See Note 6, page 11)
102 - 105	Optional Candidate Number	4N	(See Note 6, page 11)
106 - 108	Documentation Group	3A	For centre use
109 – 114 115 etc. 186 –191 192	1st Option Entry Code 1st Option Entry Flag 12th Option Entry Code 12th Option Entry Flag	6A 1A by 12	(See Notes 7 and 8, page 11)
193 - 194	End of Line Marker	2A	ASCII 13 ASCII 10

Notes:

1. Candidate Status (Byte 3)

   May take the value 'C' for a centre candidate (normal internal candidate) or 'P' for a private candidate. Some awarding bodies will not accept private candidates as part of a centre's entry file and will treat all candidates received in this way as centre candidates, irrespective of the value contained here.

2. Candidate Name (Bytes 13 - 52)

Must be in the format SURNAME:FORENAMES e.g. JONES:FREDERICK WILLIAM T

A colon separates the surname and forenames. If no colon is present the candidate has no forenames and all the names will be assumed to be part of the surname.

Acceptable characters are:

A-Z, a-z, hyphen, apostrophe, space, round brackets (open and close) and full stop.

All the acceptable characters are ASCII characters in the range 32 to 126.

Awarding bodies may convert names to upper case when they transfer on to their own computer systems. They may also remove or replace any characters which are not acceptable.

3. Candidate Identifier (Bytes 60 – 72)

This is the 13 character Unique Candidate Identifier (UCI) as required by all awarding bodies. The UCI is mandatory.

4. Pupil Number (Bytes 73 – 85)

This is the 13 character Unique Pupil Number (UPN) used by the DfES. The UPN is not mandatory but should be included in this field whenever possible. It is recognised that Independent schools and some FE colleges may not be able to supply UPNs.

5. Unique Learner Number (ULN) (Bytes 86 – 95)

The ULN is mandatory for all entries of learners undertaking Diploma programmes from September 2008 and is advisable for a qualification accredited on the QCF (Qualifications and Credit Framework).

6. Qualifier Flag, Optional Centre and Candidate Numbers (Bytes 96, 97 – 101 and 102 – 105)

If the qualifier flag contains 'G' then the candidate is a guest from another centre. The optional centre and candidate number fields specify the centre which holds the main entry and the number of the candidate at that centre.

If the qualifier flag contains 'P' then the candidate's previous centre and candidate number are supplied for the purpose of carrying forward marks. The fields for optional centre and candidate numbers should not be left blank if the qualifier flag contains 'P'.

Any other value in the qualifier flag byte renders the optional centre and candidate number undefined. Some awarding bodies do not require this information.

7. Number of Option Entry Codes

The maximum number of entry codes which can be accommodated in one record is 12. If a candidate is entering for more than 12 subjects, the additional information should be provided in a second record which should follow immediately, the first 108 bytes of which should be identical to the first record.

8. Option Entry Codes

The byte after each option entry code is a spare flag, any use of which will be indicated by an individual awarding body. It should be blank if not required.

Use of Entries and Amendments Files

A centre should submit only one entries file for a given examination series to each awarding body for which it has entries, and this file should contain the majority if not all of the centre's entries. Subjects which are to be collected in any single file are defined by their presence in the corresponding basedata files for that awarding body, year and series.

Any change to the entries or additional entries are amendments and should be submitted in an amendments file (if the awarding body is willing to accept amendments in this way) or on the awarding body's amendments form otherwise.

An amendments file should include complete replacement records for all candidates whose entries and/or personal details have changed since the entries file or last amendments file was submitted. The awarding body will determine the differences between the amended record submitted by the centre and the data held on the awarding body's database.

A candidate record with no subject entries will be interpreted as an instruction to withdraw the candidate from all subjects. Individual awarding bodies, however, may follow their own procedures on candidate withdrawal.

Results File Format

The file should be created according to the rules for common format data outlined earlier, using the data type 'R' as the first character of the file name. The record length is 64 bytes including the end of line marker.

Results Detail Record

Position	Description	Size	Comments
1	Data Type	1A	'R' for Results
2	Record Type	1N	'5' for Details record
3 – 7	Centre Number	5N	
8 – 11	Candidate Number	4N	Right justified with leading zeros
12 – 24	Unique Candidate Identifier	13A	UCI
25 - 34	Unique Learner Number	10N	ULN
35 – 40	Entry Code	6A	Code for which entry was made or blank (See Note 1)
41 – 46	Results Code	6A	Code for which result is being awarded (See Note 1)
47	Result Type	1A	(See Note 2)
48 – 62	As defined below	15A	(See Note 2)
63 – 64	End of Line Marker	2A	ASCII 13 ASCII 10

Notes:

1. Subject Entry Code and Subject Results Code (Bytes 35 – 40 and 41 – 46)

The subject entry code is the code for which the candidate is entered on an awarding body's database on the day that results are published, and will only be included, at the discretion of the awarding body supplying the data, if the candidate is being awarded a grade in a subject area that differs from that of the recorded entry. In most cases this field will contain spaces. The subject results code is the code for which the grade is being awarded. It should be 4, 5 or 6 characters in length, left justified with trailing spaces if necessary.

2. Result type and grades (Bytes 47, 48– 62)

Byte 47 should contain a flag which is to be used to interpret the grades or results contained in bytes 48 to 62.

To allow for GCSE grades to incorporate A* and possible future arrangements, three numeric values have been defined for byte 47 as follows.

1 Grades left justified to allow A*
2 Levels (numeric) right justified
3 Points score (numeric) right justified with leading zero

If byte 47 contains one of these numeric values, then the grade or result field will contain space for four grades or results each of which may be 1 or 2 characters in length as shown below and the corresponding partial absence symbol (#) if appropriate.

48 – 49	First Grade or Result
50 – 51	Second Grade or Result
52 – 53	Endorsement to first grade or result
54 – 55	Endorsement to second grade or result
56 – 57	Undefined
58	First grade partial absence
59	Second grade partial absence
60	Endorsement to first grade partial absence
61	Endorsement to second grade partial absence
62	Undefined

In many cases some or most of these fields will be blank. For example, a subject with just a single grade will use the first field only. Dual award subjects will normally have results in both the first and second result fields even if both grades are the same. The partial absence symbol will appear only if a candidate has been absent for one or more components of the examination and has been awarded a grade.

If byte 47, however, contains any alphabetic character, such as 'U' or 'M' below, (rather than a number) then bytes 48 – 62 cannot be assumed to contain ten fields. The interpretation to be placed on particular values in this position will be defined as necessary.

If byte 47 contains 'U' (Uniform Mark Scale) or 'M' (Mark) then bytes 48 – 50 will contain a numeric score, bytes 51 – 52 may contain a grade and bytes 53 – 62 will be blank, as shown below.

48 – 50	Numeric score
51 – 52	Grade (Optional)
53 – 62	Pad with spaces

If byte 47 contains 'B' or 'C' then bytes 48 – 51 will contain a numeric score, bytes 52 – 53 contain one grade as defined by the gradeset, bytes 54 – 57 will be blank, byte 58 will contain the partial absence symbol and bytes 59-62 will be blank as shown below. The partial absence symbol will appear only if a candidate has been absent for one or more units of the qualification and has been awarded a grade.

48 – 51	Numeric score
52 – 53	Grade
54 – 57	Undefined
58	***First grade partial absence***
59-62	***Undefined***

3. Where a grade/result or notional grade/result is issued, an 'X' or 'x' indicates no result and a 'Q' or 'q' indicates pending result.

Forecast Grades File Format

The file should be created according to the rules for common format data outlined earlier, using the data type 'F' as the first character of the file name. The record length is 28 bytes including the end of line marker.

It is envisaged that each file will be from a single centre to a single awarding body and should therefore not contain more than one centre header record and one centre trailer record.

Forecast Grades Detail Record

Position	Description	Size	Comments
1	Data Type	1A	'F' for Forecast Grades
2	Record Type	1N	'5' for Details record
3 – 7	Centre Number	5N	
8 – 11	Candidate Number	4N	Right justified with leading zeros
12 – 17	Entry Code	6A	Code for which entry was made
18 – 19	First Grade	2A	See Notes 1 and 2
20 – 21	Second Grade	2A	See Notes 1 and 2
22 – 26	Pad with spaces	5A	
27 – 28	End of Line Marker	2A	ASCII 13 ASCII 10

Notes:

First and Second Grades (Bytes 18-21)

1. These fields are two bytes in length to allow for the inclusion of A* grades. In the absence of a second character the forecast grade should be left aligned with a space to fill the second byte. Split grades to indicate borderlines are not permitted.

2. Where an awarding body requires a code to indicate that no forecast grade will be supplied for the entry code concerned, e.g. Z, O, this should be in byte 18. In the interests of harmonisation, all awarding bodies will accept 'Z' in EDI files irrespective of any code used on paper forms.

Coursework Marks File Format

The file should be created according to the rules for common format data outlined previously, using the data type 'M' as the first character of the file name. The record length is 44 bytes including the end of line marker.

Coursework Mark Detail Record

Position	Description	Size	Comments
1	Data Type	1A	'M' for Marks
2	Record Type	1N	'5' for Details record
3 - 7	Centre Number	5N	
8 - 11	Candidate Number	4N	Right justified with leading zeros
12 - 23	Component Code	12A	Key to Component file (see Note 1 below)
24 - 27		4A	Undefined
28	Mark/Grade Status	1A	See Note 2 below
29 - 31	Mark/Grade	3A	Right justified with leading zeros if mark. Left justified if grade (see Note 2 below)
32 - 36	Previous Centre Number	5N	See Note 3 below
37 - 40	Previous Candidate Number	4N	See Note 3 below
41 - 42	Previous Series	2A	See Note 3 below
43 - 44	End of Line Marker	2A	ASCII 13 ASCII 10

Notes:

1. Component Code (Bytes 12 - 23)

This field will determine to which component the mark or grade belongs.

2. Mark/Grade Status (Byte 28)

Allowed values are:

'V' Valid mark recorded

'Z' Zero mark recorded

'G' Grade recorded

'A' Absent for this component

'M' Missing mark or grade

'F' Mark is being carried forward

'N' No work available at present

'E' Educated Elsewhere or Parent Assessed

The mark field (bytes 29 - 31) will only contain a numerical mark greater than 0 if the mark status is 'V' or 'E'. If the mark is zero then the mark status must be 'Z'. It is not acceptable to have status 'V' or 'E' with the mark '000'.

If the mark status is 'G' then bytes 29 - 31 should contain a grade. If the grade consists of a single character then this should be in position 29.

If the mark status is 'F' this indicates that a mark has been carried forward, and so no mark follows.

If the mark status is 'E' then bytes 29 - 31 should contain a mark or grade if 'Parent Assessed', otherwise leave blank for 'Educated Elsewhere'.

3. Previous Centre Number, Candidate Number and Series (Bytes 32 - 36, 37 - 40 and 41 - 42)

These fields are to be completed when a candidate is carrying forward marks to show the centre and candidate number under which they were originally sent and to indicate the series from which they are to be carried forward.

Part IV

Basedata File Types

Basedata refer to information required by centres and others to enable them to be made aware of the various syllabuses, options and components that an awarding body offers. It includes information such as syllabus and option definitions, entry codes, the dates and times of examination papers and details of the internally assessed components for which centres need to supply marks.

Four basedata file types are defined in Part IV of this document. A fifth file may be included containing details of disallowed combinations of subjects.

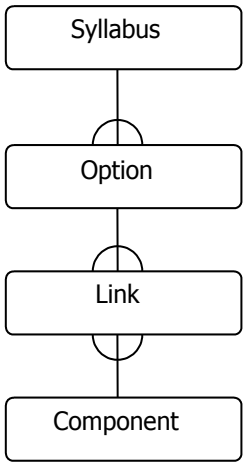
S **Syllabus Definitions**

O **Option Definitions**

C **Component Definitions**

L **Option/Component Link File**

The relationship between these files is shown in the diagram below.



A syllabus may have any number of options but each option is an option for one syllabus. Each option may include a number of components and each component may be used by a number of syllabuses; the link file is used to specify the components which need to be included for each option.

A further basedata file, Disallowed Combinations Definition, provides information about which syllabuses or options are forbidden with other syllabuses or options. It should be noted that only forbidden or prohibited combinations are shown; in some instances it may be possible for candidates to offer certain combinations although it may not be in their best interests to do so if a higher education course is their ultimate goal.

Syllabus Definition File

The file should be created according to the rules for common format data outlined previously, using the data type 'S' as the first byte of the file name. The record length is 47 bytes including the end of line marker.

Syllabus Definition Detail Record

Position	Description	Size	Comments
1	Data Type	1A	'S' for Syllabus
2	Record Type	1N	'5' for Details record
3 - 8	Syllabus Code	6A	
9		1A	Undefined
10 - 45	Syllabus Title	36A	
46 -47	End of Line Marker	2A	ASCII 13 ASCII 10

Option Definition File

The file should be created according to the rules for common format data outlined previously, using the data type 'O' as the first byte of the file name. The record length is 117 bytes including the end of line marker.

Option Definition Detail Record

Position	Description	Size	Comments
1	Data Type	1A	'O' for Option
2	Record Type	1N	'5' for Details record
3 - 8	Option Entry Code	6A	
9 - 14	Syllabus Code	6A	
15 - 18	Exam Type: Qualification (certification)	4A	See Note 1
19 - 21	Exam Type: Level (certification)	3A	See Note 2
22	Exam Type Item	1A	See Note 3
23 – 26	Exam Type: Qualification (unit)	4A	See Note 1
27 - 29	Exam Type: Level (unit)	3A	See Note 2
30	Exam Type: Process	1A	See Note 4
31 - 34	QCA Classification Code	4A	
35 – 42	QCA Accreditation Number	8A	
43 – 78	Option Title	36A	See Note 5
79	Fee Defined	1A	'Y' or 'N' (if 'N' then next field is not defined)
80 – 84	Examination Fee	5N	In pence right justified with leading zeros
85 - 88	First Forecast Grade Gradeset	4A	Left justified with trailing spaces. See Note 6
89 – 92	Second Forecast Grade Gradeset	4A	Left justified with trailing spaces. See Note 6
93	Result Type	1A	See Note 7
94 – 97	First Grade or Result Gradeset	4A	Left justified with trailing spaces. See Note 8
98 - 101	Second Grade or Result Gradeset	4A	Left justified with trailing spaces. See Note 8
102 - 105	Endorsement to first Grade or Result Gradeset	4A	See Note 8
106 – 109	Endorsement to second Grade or Result Gradeset	4A	See Note 8
110 – 113	Maximum Mark or UMS	4N	See Note 9
114 – 115	Number of Components	2N	The number of components associated with this option via the link file (a safeguard)
116 – 117	End of Line Marker	2A	ASCII 13, ASCII 10

Notes:

1. Exam Type: Qualification (certification) (Bytes 15 – 18) will be populated where the option entry code (bytes 3 -8) is certification.
Exam Type: Qualification (unit) (Bytes 23 – 26) will be populated where the option entry code (bytes 3 -8) is a unit or module.
Exam Type: Qualification (certification) (Bytes 15 – 18) and Exam Type: Qualification (unit) (Bytes 23 – 26) will be populated where the option entry code (bytes 3 -8) is both certification and a unit or module.

2. Exam Type: Level (certification) (Bytes 19 – 21) will be populated where the option entry code (bytes 3 -8) is certification.
Exam Type: Level (unit) (Bytes 27 – 29) will be populated where the option entry code (bytes 3 -8) is a unit or module.
Exam Type: Level (certification) (Bytes 19– 21) and Exam Type: Level (unit) (Bytes 27 – 29) will be populated where the option entry code (bytes 3 -8) is both certification and a unit or module.

Lists of all Exam Type: Qualification and Level codes are available on the JCQ website, www.jcq.org.uk, and awarding body websites.

3. Item (Byte 22)

'U'	Unit or module
'C'	Certification
'B'	Certification and unit or module

4. Process (Byte 30)

'E'	Entry
'R'	Registration

5. Option Title (Bytes 43 – 78)

The option title should completely identify the option without needing to refer to the linked syllabus record to complete the title. For example, if there was a syllabus called French which had options A, B and C, the option title should be 'French Option A' rather than just 'Option A'.

6. Forecast Grade (Bytes 85 – 88 and 89 - 92)

If a forecast grade is required for the Option entry code, these fields reference the valid set of grades available for submission. See also pages 14 and 25.

7. Result Type (Byte 93)

May take the following values

'1 – 3'	Grades, levels or points score	'Results Gradeset' valid and 'Maximum Mark' invalid
'B'	A grade and Numeric value, normally Uniform Mark or points	'Results Gradeset' valid and 'Maximum Mark' valid
'C'	Combination - a grade and Numeric value, normally Uniform Mark or points	'Results Gradeset' valid to certificate and 'Maximum Mark' valid to unit'
'D'	Two numeric scores to 1 decimal place	'Results Gradeset' invalid and 'Maximum Mark' invalid

'F'	Two numeric values	Results Gradeset' invalid and 'Maximum Mark' invalid
'M'	Mark	'Results Gradeset' invalid and 'Maximum Mark' valid
'U'	Numeric value, normally Uniform Mark or points	'Results Gradeset' valid (if provided) and 'Maximum Mark' valid
' '	Blank	No result will be issued

8. Result Gradesets (Bytes 94 – 97, 98 – 101, 102 – 105 and 106 – 109)

If the Result Type in byte 93 is 1, 2 or 3 then these four fields reference the valid set of grades which may be presented in the corresponding fields of the Results file (bytes 48 – 55).

9. Maximum Mark or UMS (Bytes 110 - 113)

If the Result Type in byte 93 is 'B', 'C', 'M' or 'U' then 110 – 113 will contain a numeric score.

Component Definition File

The file should be created according to the rules for common format data files outlined previously, using the data type 'C' as the first byte of the file name. The record length is 77 bytes including the end of line marker.

Component Definition Detail Record

Position	Description	Size	Comments
1	Data Type	1A	'C' for Component
2	Record Type	1N	'5' for Details record
3 – 14	Component Code	12A	
15 – 50	Component Title	36A	See Note 1
51	Teacher Marks	1A	'Y', 'N', 'G' or 'E' (See Note 2)
52 – 54	Maximum Mark	3N	
55 – 58	Component Gradeset	4A	Left justified with trailing spaces. See Note 3.
59 – 64	Due Date	6N	DDMMYY
65	Timetabled	1A	'T', 'C' or 'N' (See Note 4)
66 – 71	Timetable Date	6N	DDMMYY
72	Timetable Session	1A	'A', 'P', 'E', 'D' or 'X' (See Note 5)
73 – 75	Time Allowed (minutes)	3N	See Note 6
76 – 77	End of Line Marker	2A	ASCII 13 ASCII 10

Notes:

1. Component Title (Bytes 15 - 50)

It would be desirable for the component titles to match those published elsewhere, for example on the printed timetables. However, it is possible that some awarding bodies may not be able to achieve this objective fully in the short term.

2. Teacher Marks (Byte 51)

May take the following values

'Y'	Teacher marks are required.	'Maximum Mark' and 'Due Date' both valid.
'N'	Teacher marks not required.	'Maximum Mark' and 'Due Date' inapplicable.
'G'	Teacher submits grade.	'Maximum Mark' is inapplicable. 'Due Date' is valid.
'E'	Teacher submits coursework	'Maximum Mark' is inapplicable. 'Due Date' is valid.

3. Component Gradeset (Bytes 55 – 58)

If Teacher Marks (byte 51) has the value 'G', this field references the valid set of grades available for submission, held within the Gradesets File.

4. Timetabled (Byte *65*)

May take the following values

'T'	Timetabled component. Awarding body supplies timetable information in the 'Timetable Date', 'Timetable Session' and 'Time Allowed' fields.
'C'	Centre-specified timetable. It is not possible for the awarding body to specify a particular date and time applicable to all centres. The 'Timetable Date' and 'Timetable Session' fields contain no information but can be edited by centres if required
'N'	Not timetabled. It is not meaningful to specify a date and time for this component. The 'Timetable Date', 'Timetable Session' and 'Time Allowed' fields contain no information and should be ignored.

5. Timetable Session (Byte 72)

Allowed values are

'A' for a.m. 'D' for all day
'P' for p.m. 'X' not defined
'E' for evening

6. Time Allowed (Bytes 73 - 75)

This field may contain

'000' The information is not available
'999' There is no time limit

Otherwise it contains the time allowed in minutes.

Option/Component Link File

The file should be created according to the rules for common format data files outlined previously, using the data type 'L' as the first byte of the file name. The record length is 28 bytes including the end of line marker.

Option/Component Link Detail Record

Position	Description	Size	Comments
1	Data Type	1A	'L' for Link
2	Record Type	1N	'5' for Details record
3 - 8	Option Entry Code	6A	Key to Option File (See Note below)
9 – 20	Component Code	12A	Key to Component File (See Note below)
21 - 26	Pad with spaces	6A	
27 - 28	End of Line Marker	2A	ASCII 13, ASCII 10

Note:

The option/component link records provide the means by which the components used by each option can be recorded. The field 'Option Entry Code' (bytes 3 - 8) provides a link to the detail record within the option file with the same value in the field 'Option Entry Code'. Similarly, the field 'Component Code' provides a link to the component file.

Disallowed Combinations Definition File

The file should be created according to the rules for common format data outlined previously, using the data type 'D' as the first byte of the file name. The record length is 28 bytes including the end of line marker.

The Disallowed Combinations Definition file may be included with a set of basedata files to which it will relate.

Disallowed Combinations Definition Detail Record

Position	Description	Size	Comments
1	Data Type	1A	'D' for Disallowed combination
2	Record Type	1N	'5' for Details record
3 - 8	First Option Code	6A	Key to Option file. May include wildcards (see Note 1)
9 - 14	Second Option Code	6A	Key to Option file. May include wildcards (see Note 2)
15 - 20	Exception Option Code	6A	See Note 3 May include wildcards
21 - 26	Pad with spaces	6A	
27 -28	End of Line Marker	2A	ASCII 13, ASCII 10

Notes:

1. Wildcards

Options identified in the fields 'First Option Code', 'Second Option Code' and 'Exception Option Code' may include DOS style wildcards '*' and '?'. For example, 1234* will include all option codes which begin 1234, 1234?0 will include all option codes which begin 1234 and have 0 in the sixth position, and 1* will include all option codes beginning with a 1.

2. Second Option Code (Bytes 9 - 14)

Combinations of codes identified by the First and Second Option Code fields are disallowed (but see Note 3 below). Codes may be identified in either order; the absence of a code from the First Option Code field does not necessarily mean that there are no disallowed combinations which include this code.

3. Exception Option Code (Bytes 15 - 20)

If an option is identified in the Exception Option Code field, then that option may be entered with any option identified in the First Option Code field. For example if the First and Second Option Code fields contain 1234* and the exception Option Code field contains 1234ZZ, then all combinations of options beginning 1234 are disallowed unless one of the options entered is 1234ZZ. If the First Option Code field contains 1234*, the Second Option Code field contains 9999* and the Exception Option Code field contains 9999A then the interpretation is that a candidate may not be entered for any option beginning 1234 with any option beginning 9999 unless that option is 9999A.

Part V

Gradesets File

The Option Definition File and Component Definition File contain fields to hold Gradeset codes. For each of these codes, the Gradesets File contains details of the valid grades available for each qualification. The valid gradesets include 'U' (unclassified) but do not include status codes, i.e. the Gradesets do not include 'X' or 'x' (no result), 'Q' or 'q' (pending) or 'Z', 'O' or 'X' (no Forecast grade will be supplied). 'X' or 'x' and 'Q' or 'q' are valid within results files. The file is ordered by qualification Gradeset Type Code, by Grade Short Code and corresponding Grade Full Title.

The Gradesets File will be posted on the Joint Council for Qualifications' website (www.jcq.org.uk) with each of the awarding bodies' websites having a link to it (see contact points on page 2). It will also be on awarding body websites. It will not be included in basedata or sent to centres. The Gradesets File will not follow the standard file naming convention but will take the form

GRADESET.Xnn

X = literal 'X' identifies file as a common format file from an awarding body
nn = last two digits of the sequence number indicating the order in which the file was produced.

Position	Description	Size	Comments
1 - 4	Gradeset Code	4A	Left justified with trailing spaces. See Note 1
5 - 6	Grade Short Code	2A	See Note 2
7 - 21	Grade Full Title	15A	See Note 3
22 - 23	Sequence number	2N	See Note 4
24 - 25	End of Line Marker	2A	ASCII 13 ASCII 10

Notes:

1. Gradeset code (Bytes 1 - 4)

A list of all gradesets is available on the JCQ website, www.jcq.org.uk, and awarding body websites.

2. Grade Short Code (Bytes *5 - 6*)

The Grade Short Code is the short form of the grade as used in EDI files.

3. Grade Full Title (Bytes *7 – 21*)

The Grade Full Title is the comprehensive title of the Grade Short Code, e.g. Grade Full Title 'Pass' for Grade Short Code 'P'.

4. Sequence number (Bytes *22 – 23*)

The Sequence Number gives the grades in descending order of merit.

Certification/Unit Link File

The Link File is issued to provide details of which Units may be used towards an overall certification award. The file does not give sufficient information to calculate the exact units required since the rules of dependency and combination governing the relationship between the number of units required and when they are sat are varied and complex.

The Link File will be issued before the start of each academic year in September on each of the awarding bodies' websites. The file may be issued with the basedata at the discretion of the awarding body and emailed to centres. The Link File will not follow the standard file naming convention but will take the form

ULINKSbb.Xyy

bb = AB code
X = Literal 'X' identifies file as a common format file from an awarding body
yy = Last two digits of the start of the academic year to which the file relates, e.g. 09 for academic year 2009-2010.

Position	Description	Size	Comments
1 - 6	Parent Option Entry Code	6A	See Note 1 below
7 - 12	Child Option Entry Code	6A	See Note 1 below
13 - 14	End of Line Marker	2A	ASCII 13, ASCII 10

Note:

Parent Option Entry Code (Bytes 1-6) and Child Option Entry Code (Bytes 7-12)

In general, Parent Option Entry Codes will be certification codes with the corresponding Child Option Entry Codes being Unit codes. However, there will be instances where some units contribute to other units and in these cases both the Parent and Child Entry Option Codes will relate to units.