

OCR A Level Critical Thinking

H050 and H450:

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

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

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

Current specification – mapping the changes

Outline specification for first teaching September 2008

page 2

page 3

QCA Have stipulated that:

- A total of four units is required to achieve GCE A Level Critical Thinking
- There is no coursework in Critical Thinking
- Stretch and Challenge style questions to be introduced into A2 assessment.



Existing specification					
Current unit title	Unit code	What remains the same?	What is changing?	Why is it changing?	Guidance
AS Credibility of Evidence	F491 Mandatory 50%/25% 1 hr 30 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Credibility is still examined Based around material in resource book. The style of questions on the question paper remains the same (short-medium and long answer questions). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The content is split between Introduction to Critical Thinking and Credibility. Credibility content is reduced. Reading material is more accessible and amount of reading material is reduced. The question paper now comprises of two passages, the first passage on introduction to critical thinking and the second on credibility. Examination time is reduced. There is more opportunity for discursive and creative writing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customers' feedback. To make mark scheme more transparent. A more discursive style of answering will appeal to learners. To reduce the length of reading material. To make the AS qualification more accessible to learners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further guidance will be available in Specimen Assessment Material.
AS Assessing and Developing Argument	F492 Mandatory 60%/30% 1 hr 45 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The content largely remains the same. The style of questions on the question paper remains the same (multiple-choice and questions in response to passage). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examination time is increased. The length of reading material has been reduced. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customers' feedback. To make the AS qualification more accessible to learners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The previous F492 question papers can be used as examples of classroom exercises. Further guidance will be available in Specimen Assessment Material.
A2 Resolution of Dilemmas	F493 Mandatory 20% 1 hr 15 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The content largely remains the same. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examination time is increased. Content has been made clearer. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customers' feedback. To provide more time for resource material to be considered in depth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further guidance will be available in Specimen Assessment Material.
A2 Critical Reasoning	F494 Mandatory 30% 1 hr 45 mins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full range of Critical Thinking skills. Material based on magazines, articles, current issues. The style of questions on the question paper remains the same (open-ended and discursive questions in response to stimulus booklet). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examination time is reduced. The multiple choice section has been removed. Reduced length of reading material. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customers' feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further guidance will be available in Specimen Assessment Material.

Candidates must complete all four units.



	New unit title	New unit code	Benefits to me and my learners	Support
AS	Introduction to Critical Thinking	F501 Mandatory 50%/25% 1 hr 30 mins exam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The language of reasoning Credibility <p>Benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater clarity of unit content for teachers Supports teachers to devise a coherent scheme of work. Credibility element is beneficial to students who wish to pursue further studies or a career in Law. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OCR is currently developing teachers' support, programmes of INSET and is working closely with the publisher Heinemann to deliver support to accompany the new specification. Published resources should be available by April 2008. In service training meetings will be organised prior to the commencement of the specification. Lesson plans. Schemes of Work. Students' responses to Sample assessment material.
AS	Assessing and Developing Argument	F502 Mandatory 50%/25% 1 hr 30 mins exam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wider range of argument components, building on the skills developed in Unit 1 Analysing and evaluating argument including assessing strengths and weaknesses. Writing of original arguments in response to stimulus material <p>Benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater clarity of unit content for teachers Supports teachers to devise a coherent scheme of work. 	
A2	Ethical Reasoning and Decision-Making	F503 Mandatory 25% 1 hr 30 mins written exam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application of skills developed at AS level in the context of ethical reasoning and decision-making. Analysis and evaluation of conflicting ideas and arguments from a range of source material. Synoptic assessment is included wholly in the A2 units. <p>Benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supports enrichment programmes. 	
A2	Critical Reasoning	F504 Mandatory 25% 1 hr 30 mins written exam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Includes similar concepts and ideas to previous units but presents a different level of challenge. Analysis and evaluation of material based on typical arguments found in newspapers, journals, books and magazines. Synoptic assessment is included wholly in the A2 units. Stretch and challenge is incorporated in this unit. <p>Benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excellent preparation for study at Higher Education level (analysis and evaluation). 	

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