

AS-Level AQA Physics

Spec code: 7407 · Command Word Guide & Grade Boundary Tracker

Grade Boundaries

Combination	Max	A	B	C	D	E
Papers 1 + 2	140	81	70	59	48	38

AS Physics is a standalone, linear qualification at AQA — graded A to E only (no A*), and entirely separate from the A-Level 7408 code. Source: AQA published subject grade boundaries, June 2025 series. Always verify current boundaries at [aqa.org.uk](https://www.aqa.org.uk).

Command Word Mastery

Mark schemes attach specific meaning to each command word below. Misreading one of these costs marks that working had already earned. These conventions apply identically whether the paper is sat at AS or as part of the full A-Level.

Command Word	What It Demands	Common Student Error	Workshop Fix
Determine	Calculate a numerical answer, showing substitution into the formula, to appropriate significant figures with units	Skipping the substitution step — if the final answer is wrong, the method mark is lost too	Drill phase: every "Determine" answer drilled to show substitution before calculation
Explain	Link cause to effect using named physics principles — a description alone is not sufficient	Describing an observation accurately without naming the physics principle that explains it	Anatomy phase: "Explain" answers deconstructed against required physics terminology
Discuss / Evaluate	Build a leveled, structured argument considering multiple factors and reaching a justified conclusion	Writing an unstructured list of facts without weighing them or concluding	Close phase: peer comparison against AQA level-based marking criteria
Sketch	Show the correct general shape, with axes labelled and key features (intercepts, gradients, asymptotes) indicated	Drawing a numerically precise graph that omits labelled axes or key features	Open Forum: rapid sketch-graph drills covering frequently examined relationships

How EMI uses this: AQA AS Physics covers the full AS breadth across two papers with no optional topic choice at this stage (unlike the full A-Level's Paper 3). Workshops focus entirely on core mechanics, electricity, waves and particle physics command-word precision.