

GCSE AQA L2 Certificate Further Mathematics

Spec code: 8365 · Command Word Guide & Grade Boundary Tracker

Grade Boundaries

Session	Max	9	8	7	6	5	4
Jun 2025	160	141	127	113	95	78	69
Jun 2024	160	136	119	103	86	69	60
Jun 2023	160	137	120	103	85	68	59

AQA Level 2 Certificate in Further Mathematics (8365) uses the 9–1 grading scale but is graded 9–4 only — grades 3, 2, 1 are not available. Two papers (8365/1 and 8365/2), each 80 marks; total 160. Both papers allow calculators. This qualification is an addition to GCSE Mathematics, not a replacement. It is designed for students expected to achieve grade 7+ in GCSE Mathematics who are likely to progress to A-Level Mathematics. Source: AQA published grade boundaries, official separate L2 Certificate PDF. Always verify 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.

Command Word	What It Demands	Common Student Error	Workshop Fix
Prove	Construct a complete, formal mathematical argument — every step must follow from the previous by a named or evident rule. No steps may be skipped.	Showing specific numerical cases and calling it a proof. Specific examples establish pattern but not generality.	Workshop teaches three standard proof structures: algebraic (LHS to RHS), contradiction, and induction. Students label which structure they are using before starting.
Hence	Use the immediately preceding result as a direct input into the next step. Restarting independently does not earn the link mark.	Re-deriving from first principles when the instruction is "hence." The link mark requires the previous result to be cited explicitly.	After completing each part, students annotate their result: "Result from (a): ...". The "hence" answer must quote this annotation.
Simplify fully	"Fully" means apply all applicable simplifications — not just one. A partial simplification loses the final accuracy mark.	Factorising $6x(x+2)$ as $2(3x)(x+2)$ rather than $6x(x+2)$. Or cancelling a fraction partially and leaving it.	Checklist: after simplifying, students check (i) can any factor be taken out? (ii) can any cancellation be made? (iii) is the result in simplest form?
Find all solutions	For equations with multiple solutions (quadratic, trigonometric, modulus), every valid solution must be stated — in the given domain if one is specified.	Finding one solution and stopping. For trig equations, the second solution in the domain is the most commonly dropped mark.	Two-solution verification: students substitute each answer back and confirm; for trig, they sketch the curve to count roots before claiming they are done.

How EMI uses this: AQA 8365 is an additional qualification — students sit it alongside GCSE Mathematics, not instead of it. It bridges GCSE and A-Level content: matrices, calculus, and further trigonometry appear here before most students encounter them formally. EMI workshops treat 8365 as preparation for A-Level rather than another GCSE exam — the pace and depth reflect that.

