

IGCSE OxfordAQA IGCSE Physics

Spec code: 9203 · Command Word Guide & Grade Boundary Tracker

Grade Thresholds

Session	Max	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Jun 2025	180	140	127	114	101	88	76	60	44	29
Nov 2024	180	137	125	113	101	89	78	62	46	31
Jun 2024	180	137	125	113	101	89	78	62	46	31

OxfordAQA 9203 Physics uses the 9–1 grading scale. Two papers (9203/1 and 9203/2), each 90 marks, total 180. Nov 2024 and Jun 2024 share identical boundaries — this is genuine, not a data error. Source: OxfordAQA published subject grade boundaries. Always verify at [oxfordaqa.com](https://www.oxfordaqa.com).

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
Calculate	Use the given data to produce a numerical answer. Show the formula first, then substitution, then the result with correct units.	Entering numbers into a calculator without writing the substitution. If the answer is wrong, no method marks are visible.	Formula → substitution → answer: three mandatory lines. Students check units before writing the final answer.
Describe	State what happens in observable terms. For graphs: state direction, rate of change, and any turning points. For experiments: state the procedure and measurement taken.	Using vague language ("it changes", "it goes up") without specifying the quantities, direction, or magnitude.	Anatomy phase: students compare a 0-mark and 2-mark answer to the same "describe" question and identify the missing specifics.
Explain	Give a reason for the observation — state the cause, the mechanism, and the effect in sequence.	Restating what happened instead of why. "The current increased because the resistance went down" with no mechanism earns partial marks only.	Students use the PEE structure (Point, Evidence, Explanation) as a checklist before finalising any "explain" answer.
Evaluate	Consider both the supporting evidence and the limitations of a method, claim, or data set — then form a justified conclusion.	Only listing positives without acknowledging limitations, or only listing negatives without a conclusion.	Peer review: one partner argues for; the other argues against. Together they write the balanced conclusion.

How EMI uses this: OxfordAQA 9203 Physics shares much of its content structure with the UK AQA GCSE — which means EMI's AQA-experienced facilitators bring directly applicable examiner intelligence. A key difference: OxfordAQA places greater explicit emphasis on evaluation questions and required practicals. Workshops address both.

