



Pearson Edexcel GCSE 9-1 Sciences

FAQs - Practical Science statement - Head Teacher Declaration Form

Assessment of practical work is now included as part of the final examinations and a requirement of a minimum of 15% of the total marks must be allocated to questions related to practical. In our exams, we will have questions based on the core practicals as well as other questions related to practical skills that are outlined in specifications.

The 18 core practicals for Combined Science and eight for each separate Science cover the full range of apparatus and techniques, listed by DfE; we have listed these core practicals in our specifications. Heads of Centres will be required to sign the [Practical Science Statement - Head Teacher Declaration](#) confirming that, at centre level, candidates have completed the core practicals.

1. What should teachers be recording to ensure the requirement is met?

There is no formal requirement from Ofqual for centres to log/record completion of core practicals. However for best practice, we advise centres to maintain a record to track teaching and learning of core practicals within the department. This practice will provide evidence for your Head of Centre, to give them confidence in signing the declaration form.

2. Do I need to submit evidence of internal practical records and student work to Pearson Edexcel along with the form?

No submission of evidence is required with the form.

3. How should the core practicals be carried out in our centre?

During the period of GCSE teaching, teachers will have many opportunities to allow students to participate in core practicals. They can be attempted individually, or in pairs, or where appropriate, some could be demonstrated by the teacher with suitable participation from students to ensure understanding and skill requirements when; designing and planning,

collecting and recording results, and when analysing and evaluating experimental results. The new GCSE Science assessments will test the skills, knowledge and understanding of working scientifically, delivered through subject content and the core practicals.

4. Do I need to do all the suggested practicals in addition to the mandatory core practicals?

Our assessments will test knowledge and understanding of the core practicals, but also a broad range of practical and working scientifically skills. Whilst we do not require you to complete all the suggested practicals, we do advocate provision of a broad range of practical work in order to help students become practically literate and to prepare for the challenge of the assessments.

5. I have a candidate that has missed a core practical lesson due to absence. Should I make them do the practical outside of lesson time?

The onus of the centre declaration is on the centre, not on the individual. At a centre level, you should offer the opportunity for all candidates to complete the core practicals, and should take reasonable steps to ensure they do so. If a candidate has missed a core practical opportunity through absence, this does not preclude the centre declaration form from being signed. However, given the focus on practical work in the examination, the centre should decide on the best course of action to ensure the candidate is fully prepared for the examination.

6. What should I do if a candidate has missed core practical lessons due to prolonged absence from school, e.g. through illness or hospitalisation?

In some instances, candidates may have missed a large proportion of the mandatory practical work, and may not be sufficiently prepared for the practical questions within the assessment. In this scenario the centre can apply for [special consideration](#). Centres should complete [JCQ form 10](#) and send it to us at uk.special.requirements@pearson.com, outlining why the candidate(s) has been unable to complete the practicals along with supporting evidence.

7. A candidate has missed core practical lessons due to prolonged absence from school, e.g. through illness or hospitalisation. Can my Head still sign the authentication form?

The onus of the centre declaration is on the centre, not on the individual. We understand that there will be certain circumstances where certain candidates are unable, for whatever reason, to complete the core practicals, but this should not preclude the centre from signing the authentication form. For further guidance, please email teachingscience@pearson.com.

8. What are the arrangements for private external candidates?

If a centre accepts a private candidate, then the centre should take reasonable steps to ensure that the candidate has access to the core practicals within the centre. If the candidate has

completed core practicals from a different exam board for their first year of study then the centre must be satisfied that the apparatus and techniques list has been covered sufficiently through any core practical completed from their previous exam board and any gaps in apparatus and techniques will need to be addressed through Pearson Edexcel core practicals as a minimum (8 for each separate Science and 18 for Combined Science). Please see **question 14** for further details and support with this.

9. What is the submission deadline for the core practical declaration form?

The deadline to submit the Practical Science Statement form is **Monday 15th April**.

10. How do I submit the Practical Science Statement – Head teacher declaration form ?

Completed and signed forms should be uploaded via our [website](#).

Any failure by centres to provide this Practical Science Statement will be treated as malpractice and/or maladministration on the part of the centre (see page 8 of the GCSE Biology and Chemistry specifications, page 9 of the GCSE Physics, page 11 of the GCSE Combined Science).

11. Will Pearson Edexcel accept any declaration forms sent via email?

No, submission of forms must be completed via our [website](#) by **Monday 15 April**. If you do have any difficulty in submitting via our website please contact our Exams officer customer service team examsofficers@pearson.com for further support.

12. Will I receive confirmation of the submission of the head teacher declaration form?

No, you will need to keep a record of your submission, please liaise with your exams officer to manage this.

13. My students are resitting their GCSE 9-1 Science exams. Do they need to complete the core practicals again?

There is no requirement for candidates to complete the core practicals again. However, your students may have completed the core practicals some time ago, therefore you will need to make a judgment and decide the best course of intervention depending on whether your students have retained the practical knowledge and skills they learnt previously, in order to give them the best chance of success with questions in the papers linked to practical skills. As you may be aware, the practical skills are an integral part of the assessments pertaining to 15% of marks within the papers.

14. We have switched to Pearson Edexcel this year from AQA/OCR, do we need to redo the practicals with students and submit the form?

The use and coverage of the apparatus and techniques as prescribed by DfE and found in appendix 4 of our specifications, are mandatory. The core practicals for all Exam boards should cover all aspects of the listed apparatus and techniques. You must be satisfied that these apparatus and techniques have been covered sufficiently through any core practical completed from your previous exam board and any gaps in apparatus and techniques can be covered

through Pearson Edexcel core practicals as a minimum (8 for each separate Science and 18 for Combined Science).

We have developed a mapping document comparing the coverage of the apparatus and techniques in the core/mandatory practicals across the different exam boards to our core practicals to help you identify any gaps with apparatus and techniques, these can be found through the links below. You will still need to submit the headteacher declaration for students entered this year.

[Switched from AQA](#)

[Switched from OCR 21st Century](#)

[Switched from OCR Gateway](#)