

Your guide to Unit Award Scheme

AQA

**Unit Award
Scheme**

**Their journey
towards success**



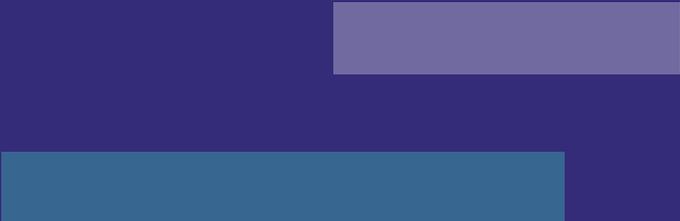
What is Unit Award Scheme

Unit Award Scheme (UAS) is about celebrating every success and has been inspiring students and building their confidence since 1984. An AQA developed and owned product, UAS was designed with progress in mind, to help students flourish and reengage with their learning journey.

Confidence, pride and joy are all within reach, by giving SEN students a clear path towards GCSE. No matter what achievement looks like to your students, the aim of the scheme is to enable that achievement and provide a worthwhile educational experience for all.

UAS rewards students with a certificate each time they successfully complete a unit. This allows them to have their achievements formally recognised and build a portfolio to evidence their skills, knowledge and experience.

We annually reward over 30,000 students of all ages and abilities through UAS.





How does UAS do this?

UAS gives clear learning outcomes, providing rapid reward through certification. It's used to:

- break down subject content into bitesize units to make it more accessible
- provides stepping stones towards GCSE English and Maths through mapped units
- accredit pre-entry, entry level, extra-curricular and enrichment study.

“There’s no stopping our students with UAS – they’re so proud of their portfolios after years of not thinking they’re capable of achieving. We’ve found that linking the Unit Awards to GCSE work really motivates students to try their very best with all areas of their work.”

Jennie Ordish, Chestnut Woodlands Forest School

Why choose UAS?

1

Flexible, versatile and adaptable

UAS is an effective tool to support your SEN students on their journey to GCSEs in English and maths by plugging skills and knowledge gaps. In addition to the units already available, you have the opportunity to write your own for bespoke, tailored learning, ensuring you get the best out of each of your students.

2

A powerful motivation tool

The scheme motivates, incentivises and engages through the tangible and rapid reward of success. Students can achieve an unlimited number of units each academic year.

The mapped units provide a core skills boost to encourage students and help to increase confidence and self-belief on their journey towards GCSE, whatever their individual needs.

3

Simple and straightforward to use

The curriculum-led approach of UAS means you don't need to make changes to your programmes of learning or teaching styles. Its flexibility ensures it can fit around your timetable and slot in with your current lesson plans.

There's no need for moderation or standardisation with UAS. As the teacher, you're responsible for using your professional judgement and subject expertise to decide when a student has achieved. You simply record and collect evidence of the achievement.

Any responsible adult with an appropriate level of subject knowledge, including SENCOs and teaching assistants, can deliver the units. Because you know your students best, you can choose the most appropriate method of delivery to help them build their own futures.

4

Affordable for all

With a one-off joining fee and free training, UAS is affordable and allows unlimited usage. Just pay per active student. More detail on fees can be found on page 7.

Helping your students carve their path towards GCSE

For many SEN students, GCSE English and Maths can feel challenging and sometimes unachievable. UAS is the perfect solution for both you and your students, and here's why.

Benefits to students:

- Instant reward with certificates generated within days of units being successfully completed.
- Increased engagement, motivation, performance and self-esteem.
- A 'can do' scheme suitable for all students, no matter their age, ability or needs.
- No requirement to sit tests or exams to pass the units.
- Can be used to help students on their journey towards GCSE.

"Often students say it's the first time they've ever received a certificate in their life, and we hear that time and time again."

Adrienne Nichols, Head of Unit Award Scheme

Benefits to teachers:

- Access to a library of units to pick and mix; use as is or amend to your students' needs.
- Access to a suite of units mapped to GCSE that can be used to support and motivate students, including:
 - GCSE English: 16 mapped units covering the Assessment Objectives, focusing on developing new and existing skills.
 - GCSE Maths: 20 mapped units aimed at Foundation Tier, focusing on the skills required on key topics.
- Option to write your own units, tailored to what you already teach.
- Can be used to give extra credit to learning that might otherwise go unrecognised.
- Admin-light with no need to change how you currently work.
- Support is always on hand from our friendly team.

Benefits to SLT:

- Ideal solution to support students working towards Level 2 qualifications, with mapped units.
- Curriculum-led approach which can fit in with existing timetabling and lesson plans.
- Great flexibility for tailored learning – units can be taught to groups or individuals.
- Easy to set up and run; it can be delivered by teachers, SENCOs and teaching assistants.
- Focuses on engagement, confidence-building, and motivation.
- Great value for money with a one-off joining fee, free training and no annual fees; pay per learner per academic year, with unlimited usage.

How does UAS work?



Registering your interest and joining

If you're interested in joining the scheme, use our enquiry form (bit.ly/uas-get-in-touch) to contact one of our friendly team. They'll be in touch to support you on your UAS journey.

When you're ready to take the next step, fill in our simple form (bit.ly/uas-register) to join the scheme.



Training

Your nominated coordinator administers the scheme and will need to attend a 3-hour online training session to equip them with the knowledge and understanding to run the scheme smoothly and successfully.

This training is now free of charge and multiple dates are available. Visit aqa.org.uk/programmes/unit-award-scheme/join for details.

More than one person can be a coordinator and it's up to your centre to decide who performs this role.

"UAS gave us the freedom to create bespoke, appropriate pathways of learning that are tailored to the needs of our students. All students will leave the school with real clarity about the direction of their onward journey."

**Mark Clayton,
Willow Dene School**



Certification

A certificate is issued each time a student completes a unit. It lists all the unit outcomes, providing a record of the knowledge, skills and experiences your students have accomplished.

As UAS is on-demand, certificates can be claimed by your coordinator throughout the academic year – we recommend a ‘little and often’ approach. Certificates are issued within 10 working days.



Teaching units

Your teachers select the units they want to teach. Each unit clearly sets the learning outcomes and how to evidence them, to make planning your teaching as easy and quick as possible. You're free to deliver this content in the most appropriate way for your SEN students – there are no set specifications, nor do you need to use specific schemes of work or resources.

Our wide range of English and maths units make achievement accessible to every student. Learning can be tailored for individuals or groups of students, by choosing any combination of our standalone units. You can even amend existing units to suit your needs or write your own.

The student record of achievement is then completed by the teacher and evidence is collected.

When the student's successfully completed the unit, the record of achievement and evidence are passed to your coordinator to claim the certificates.



Approval and fees

A one-off fee is payable once your registration is approved. Visit [aqa.org.uk/programmes/unit-award-scheme/join](https://www.aqa.org.uk/programmes/unit-award-scheme/join) for the current registration fee.

An annual charge is made for each student who's active in the scheme. The fee is per active student regardless of the number of units achieved or the number of certificates issued. This covers the cost of certification and includes printing and postage.

Visit [aqa.org.uk/programmes/unit-award-scheme/learner-participation-fees](https://www.aqa.org.uk/programmes/unit-award-scheme/learner-participation-fees) for the current fees.

“For a once yearly payment we have endless chances to get our young people feeling success – priceless! I love the fact that the more we use UAS the better value it becomes.”

Mandy Seymour, Brunel and Burton Academies



Success stories



Mandy Seymour, teacher and SENCO at Brunel and Burton Academies in Devon, explains how UAS continues to be a success with both students and teachers.

As a body, our students struggle with attendance and being in learning spaces. They've all travelled a tough road to get to us and feel disaffected with education and their self-esteem is low which has a big effect on how they perceive learning and themselves as learners. UAS has been fantastic for us; it enables us to teach groups or individuals on a wide variety of topics and to evidence to the students how well they can learn, providing them with a real sense of achievement.

Staff tell me they appreciate:

- the scope and flexibility of the awards
- that the units give a clear set of outcomes
- the clear differentiation in outcomes created through using the terms 'experienced ...', 'acquired an understanding of ...', 'demonstrated the ability to ...' and 'shown knowledge of ...'
- the wide subject coverage; although we have used hundreds of different units this year I have only had to write five myself
- that gathering evidence is as simple or complicated as they want to make it.

Staff also appreciate that UAS acknowledge and trust teachers' judgements in assessing by observation or discussion.

Nicola Reeson, SEND Manager at Haven High Academy in Boston, Lincolnshire, shares why UAS was introduced in her centre.

We found ourselves with a small group of students who were unable to access GCSE qualifications and, as SEND Manager, I was tasked to look into what else was out there to enable them to achieve at their level and show progress. We found UAS online and were amazed at the variety of subject areas covered.

The teachers involved absolutely love the range of units and the ability to tailor them to our students. The students are very quickly engaged on their topics and have found a great sense of achievement in being able to start and complete a unit.

The students love receiving their certificates and celebrating their success.

Meet the team



Adrienne Nichols Head of Unit Award Scheme

Adrienne has been Head of UAS since 2011 and leads a dedicated team of nine supporting and advising teachers on how to get the most out of the scheme for their students, whether that be teachers brand new to UAS or those with many years of experience.



Chloe Reynard Registrations and Training Manager

Chloe has been in her role for three years and is passionate about UAS. Along with Alexis Collins, Registrations and Training Coordinator, she helps centres joining the scheme to ensure they have all the tools, knowledge and experience to deliver it successfully. Chloe supports new centres from enquiry stage through to registration and is happy to speak to any new customers wanting to find out more information about joining UAS.



Kirsty Maidment Customer Success Manager

Kirsty supports centres with the Unit Award Scheme to ensure that they are using the scheme successfully with their students year after year. Kirsty's well versed in supporting centres having previously worked within our Relationship Management department.

The day to day support of existing UAS customers is headed up by Jessica Ramsey and her team of four administrators.

Their journey towards success

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Contact our team

Tel: 01423 534 235

9am – 5pm Monday to Friday

Find out more

For more information on joining visit

aqa.org.uk/uas

To find out more about UAS and our resources visit

aqa.org.uk/uas-journey-towards-success

aqa.org.uk

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