

**Analysis of responses to our
consultation on reforming GCSE, AS
and A level qualifications in biblical
Hebrew**



March 2017

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Executive summary

We consulted on changes to our rules and guidance to allow for development of reformed GCSE, AS and A level qualifications in biblical Hebrew between 3 and 23 March 2017. A copy of the consultation is available on our website.¹

There were 5 responses to the consultation – 4 from individuals and 1 from an organisation.

Respondents commented on both our proposed guidance on length of set texts at GCSE, and our proposed guidance on translation from English into biblical Hebrew at GCSE.

¹ www.gov.uk/government/consultations/reforming-gcses-as-and-a-levels-in-biblical-hebrew

Introduction

Background

Reformed GCSE, AS and A level qualifications are being introduced in England. We previously consulted, and announced our decisions, on:

- the general design of reformed qualifications;²
- the design of the reformed GCSE³, AS and A level⁴ qualifications in Latin and classical Greek that were introduced for first teaching in 2016; and
- regulatory arrangements for the design, delivery and awarding of reformed GCSE, AS and A level qualifications in Latin and classical Greek.⁵

The Department for Education's subject content

On 9 February 2017, the Department for Education (DfE) published new versions of the subject content for:

- GCSE ancient languages;⁶ and
- AS and A level ancient languages.⁷

These revised subject content documents included new requirements designed to support the development of reformed GCSE, AS and A level qualifications in biblical Hebrew.

² <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20141110161323/http://comment.ofqual.gov.uk/a-level-reform/> and www.gov.uk/government/consultations/gcse-reform-consultation-june-2013

³ <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20141110161323/http://comment.ofqual.gov.uk/modern-foreign-and-ancient-languages/>

⁴ www.gov.uk/government/consultations/gcse-as-and-a-level-reform-regulations-for-ancient-languages and

⁵ www.gov.uk/government/consultations/gcse-reform-regulations-for-ancient-languages and www.gov.uk/government/consultations/as-and-a-level-reform-regulations-for-ancient-languages

⁶ www.gov.uk/government/publications/gcse-ancient-foreign-languages

⁷ www.gov.uk/government/publications/gce-as-and-a-level-ancient-languages

About our consultation

Our consultation ran from 3 to 23 March 2017. It was on the changes we needed to make to our rules and guidance for GCSE, AS and A level qualifications in ancient languages to support the development of reformed GCSE, AS and A level qualifications in biblical Hebrew.

Who responded?

We received 5 responses to our consultation – 4 from individuals and 1 from an organisation. All responses were from individuals or organisations based in England or Wales.

Table 1: Breakdown of consultation responses

Personal / organisation response	Respondent type	Number
Personal	Teacher	4
Organisation	Awarding organisation	1

Approach to analysis

We published the consultation on our website. Respondents could choose to respond by email or by posting their response to us.

The consultation did not include any specific questions; rather we sought views from respondents on:

- the way we proposed to change our rules and guidance to reflect the new subject content for biblical Hebrew;
- the detailed drafting of those changes; and
- the likely impact of our proposals.

During the analysis phase we reviewed every response.

Views expressed – consultation response outcomes

In this section we report the views, in broad terms, of those who responded to the consultation document.

A consultation is not the same as a survey; the responses only reflect the views of those who chose to respond. Typically these will be those with strong views and/or particular experience or interest in a topic. What follows is a fair reflection of the views expressed by respondents to the consultation.

Three respondents commented directly on our consultation proposals:

- one individual commented that our proposed guidance on length of set texts at GCSE could restrict awarding bodies' choice of set texts. We explain why this is not the case in our decisions, which we are publishing alongside this document;
- two individuals commented that our guidance on translation from English into biblical Hebrew at GCSE was too restrictive, as many of the most common verbs encountered in biblical Hebrew are weak or irregular. They suggested an alternative way to secure comparability of demand with Latin and classical Greek would be to adopt similar translation requirements, as the greater complexity of verb conjugation in biblical Hebrew would offset the simpler treatment of nouns. We made changes to our proposed guidance in the light of these comments.

The remaining respondents raised general points not related to our consultation proposals:

- One organisation noted there would be no qualification available at AS level in biblical Hebrew.
- One individual provided information on current qualifications available in biblical Hebrew.

Appendix A: List of organisational consultation respondents

We asked respondents to indicate the capacity in which they were responding as part of their response.

Below we list those organisations that submitted a response to the consultation. We have not included a list of those responding as an individual; however all responses were given equal status in the analysis.

- AQA

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