

# **AS and A Level Music Technology**

Consultation on Conditions and guidance



December 2015

Ofqual/15/5818

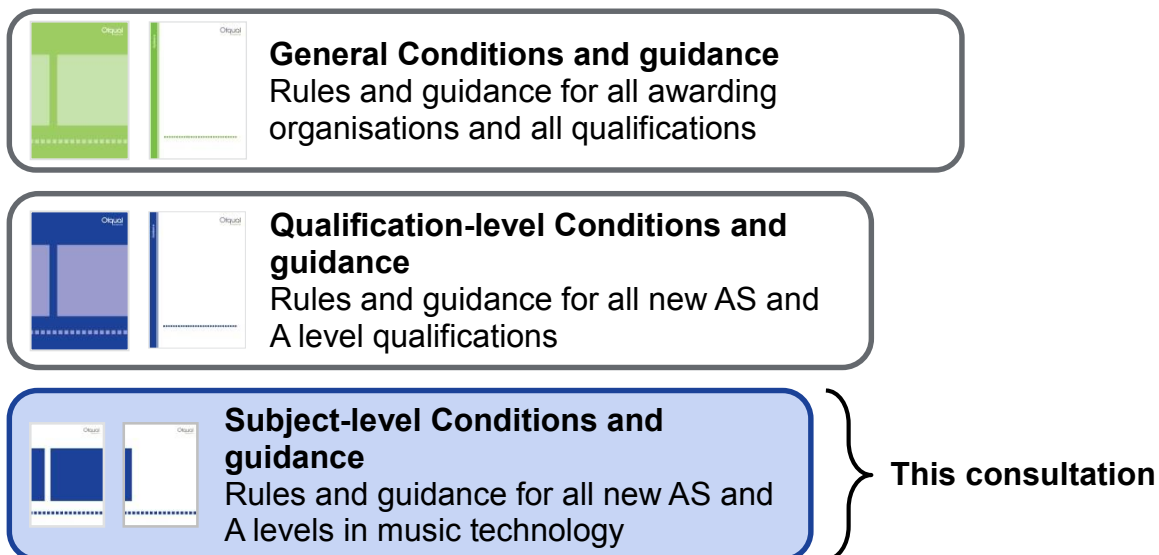
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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 As most readers will know, changes are being made to GCSEs, AS and A levels taken by students in England. New AS and A level qualifications in music technology will be taught in schools from September 2017.
- 1.2 The Department for Education (DfE) published the subject content<sup>1</sup> for AS and A level music technology in December 2015.
- 1.3 Following our own consultation on assessment arrangements for these subjects, we confirmed<sup>2</sup> in December that new AS and A levels in music technology will be assessed through 40 per cent non-exam assessment and 60 per cent assessment by examination.
- 1.4 We also confirmed the assessment objectives for AS and A level music technology.

### Scope of this consultation



- 1.5 This consultation builds on our – and DfE’s – earlier decisions. It seeks views on the subject-specific rules and guidance we should put in place for AS and A level music technology.
- 1.6 As explained in Appendix A, these new rules and guidance will sit alongside our existing rules and guidance for:

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<sup>1</sup> [www.gov.uk/government/publications/gce-as-and-a-level-music-technology](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/gce-as-and-a-level-music-technology)

<sup>2</sup> [www.gov.uk/government/consultations/development-of-new-gcses-and-a-levels-for-teaching-from-2017](http://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/development-of-new-gcses-and-a-levels-for-teaching-from-2017)

- all qualifications,<sup>3</sup> and
- all new AS and A level qualifications.<sup>4</sup>

1.7 This document sets out, and seeks views on:

- our proposed approach to regulating new AS and A levels in music technology; and
- the subject-specific Conditions, requirements and guidance we propose to introduce to implement that approach.

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<sup>3</sup> [www.gov.uk/guidance/awarding-organisations-understanding-our-regulatory-requirements#requirements-for-all-awarding-organisations-and-all-regulated-qualifications](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/awarding-organisations-understanding-our-regulatory-requirements#requirements-for-all-awarding-organisations-and-all-regulated-qualifications)

<sup>4</sup> [www.gov.uk/government/collections/new-a-level-and-as-level-qualifications-requirements-and-guidance](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/new-a-level-and-as-level-qualifications-requirements-and-guidance)

## How to respond to this consultation

The closing date for responses is **20 January 2016**.

Please respond to this consultation in one of three ways:

- Complete the online response at <https://www.surveymzmo.com/s3/2496362/AS-and-A-level-reform-regulations-for-music-technology>;
- Complete the consultation questions at the end of this document and email your response to [consultations@ofqual.gov.uk](mailto:consultations@ofqual.gov.uk). Please include the consultation title (AS and A Level Music Technology Consultation 2015) in the subject line of the email and make clear who you are and in what capacity you are responding; or
- Post your response to: AS and A Level Music Technology Consultation 2015, Ofqual, Spring Place, Coventry Business Park, Herald Avenue, Coventry, CV5 6UB, making clear who you are and in what capacity you are responding.

### Evaluating the responses

To evaluate responses properly, we need to know who is responding to the consultation and in what capacity. We will therefore only consider your response if you complete the information page.

Any personal data (such as your name, address and any other identifying information) will be processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and our standard terms and conditions.

We will publish our evaluation of responses. Please note that we may publish all or part of your response unless you tell us (in your answer to the confidentiality question) that you want us to treat your response as confidential. If you tell us you wish your response to be treated as confidential, we will not include your details in any published list of respondents, although we may quote from your response anonymously.

Please respond by **20 January 2016**.

## **2. Regulating AS and A level music technology**

### **Compliance with subject content and assessment objectives**

- 2.1 As we explained in paragraph 1.2, DfE has published the subject content for new AS and A levels in music technology.<sup>5</sup>
- 2.2 One of the ways we ensure new GCSEs, AS and A levels are comparable across exam boards is by requiring them to be in line with the relevant subject content and our assessment objectives.
- 2.3 The approach we have taken in every other new GCSE, AS and A level qualification is to introduce subject-specific Conditions which:
- require exam boards to comply with the requirements of the subject content (and have regard to any guidance that we publish in relation to the subject content); and
  - require exam boards to comply with our assessment objectives (and have regard to our guidance on those assessment objectives).
- 2.4 In all other subjects this Condition includes a provision which requires exam boards to interpret the subject content in line with any rules we set and to have regard to any guidance we publish. Although we do not always specify how the subject content should be interpreted, we think it is important for us to be able to do so when there is a good reason for that (for example, if a different interpretation could compromise qualification standards or comparability).
- 2.5 We see no reason to take a different approach for music technology. We are therefore proposing that we should introduce a Condition which requires exam boards to:
- comply with the requirements (and have regard to any guidance) set out in the subject content – this includes requirements and guidance in the proposed new appendices;
  - comply with any requirements (and have regard to any guidance) we publish on interpreting the subject content; and
  - comply with our assessment objectives (and have regard to our guidance on those assessment objectives).

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<sup>5</sup> [www.gov.uk/government/publications/gce-as-and-a-level-music-technology](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/gce-as-and-a-level-music-technology)

**Question 1: To what extent do you agree or disagree that we should introduce a Condition which requires exam boards to comply with the relevant subject content and assessment objectives?**

### **Guidance on assessment objectives**

- 2.6 For all other new GCSE, AS and A level qualifications, we have published guidance which explains how exam boards should interpret our assessment objectives. This is designed to ensure exam boards have a common understanding of – and take a consistent approach to targeting – the different assessment objectives.
- 2.7 We are proposing we should introduce similar guidance for AS and A level music technology.

**Question 2: To what extent do you agree or disagree that we should introduce guidance which clarifies how exam boards should interpret our assessment objectives?**

### **Non-exam assessment**

- 2.8 As we have explained in previous consultations,<sup>6</sup> it is generally more difficult to ensure reliability in non-exam assessments. As a result, we have only permitted non-exam assessment in subjects where the part of the subject content cannot be validly assessed through an exam.
- 2.9 Because it is difficult to ensure reliability in non-exam assessments, we aim to ensure that exam boards take as consistent an approach as possible to non-exam assessment. This includes – where appropriate – specifying:
- what should be assessed (for example, the relevant parts of the subject content and/or assessment objectives); and
  - how that should be assessed (for example, the tasks students should carry out, and how those tasks should be set and marked).
- 2.10 In AS and A level music technology, we have identified significant elements of the subject content which cannot be validly assessed by an exam. That is why

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<sup>6</sup> See, for example, <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20141031163546/http://comment.ofqual.gov.uk/gcse-reform-june-2013/>

we have previously decided that AS and A level music technology should have 40 per cent non-exam assessment.

- 2.11 To implement these decisions, we are proposing to introduce a subject-specific Condition for AS and A level music technology. This Condition will permit non-exam assessment, specify the appropriate proportion of exam- and non-exam assessment, and allow us to set more detailed rules and guidance on non-exam assessment.

**Question 3: To what extent do you agree or disagree that we should introduce a Condition which permits non-exam assessment, specifies the proportion of exam- and non-exam assessment, and allows us to set more detailed rules and guidance on non-exam assessment?**

- 2.12 In line with our overall approach to non-exam assessment, we are also proposing to set more detailed rules for non-exam assessment in each subject; we discuss these separately below.

### **Non-exam assessment tasks**

- 2.13 The subject content identifies a range of practical skills which students will need to demonstrate as part of AS and A levels in music technology. These skills divide into two categories:

- skills related to production of recordings; and
- skills related to creating technology-based compositions.

- 2.14 As a result, we propose that – for both AS and A level music technology – the non-exam assessment should be divided into two tasks, both weighted at 20 per cent of total marks:

- one requiring students to capture, edit and produce recordings; and
- one requiring students to create a technology-based composition.

- 2.15 We think it is important for the two tasks to be equally weighted. If they are not, then exam boards could produce specifications which focus too heavily on either composition or recording, and different students receive the same qualification without demonstrating the same balance of skills.

- 2.16 Two of our assessment objectives intentionally link to the skills that students will need to demonstrate in the non-exam assessment tasks. AO1 relates to recording, and AO2 to composition. To ensure the non-exam assessment tasks focus consistently on the appropriate skills, we are therefore proposing that the



recording task should assess only AO1, and the composition should assess only AO2.

- 2.17 The minimum weighting for AO1 at both AS and A level is 20 per cent, and AO2 can also have a weighting which is greater than 20 per cent. This means that some of AO1, and potentially some of AO2, will also need to be covered in an assessment taken under exam conditions (but not necessarily in a written exam).

**Question 4: To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal that there should be two non-exam assessment tasks in AS and A level music technology, both weighted at 20 per cent of total marks – a recording task which assesses only AO1, and a composition task which assesses only AO2?**

- 2.18 Because both non-exam assessment tasks require students to follow a set brief, it is important that all students work from briefs that are comparably challenging (including in terms of the amount of time they would typically take to complete), and offer students comparable opportunities to demonstrate the required knowledge, skills and understanding.
- 2.19 We think that the best way to achieve this is through briefs which are set by the exam board, as this offers a greater degree of control over (and therefore consistency between) the tasks students undertake compared with the alternative approach of briefs set by teachers within schools.
- 2.20 There are two further aspects of the non-exam assessment tasks which we think we need to define more clearly:
- for both the recording and the composition task, the minimum length of the piece students must produce or compose; and
  - for the recording task, the number of instrumental parts that students should record.
- 2.21 We think it is important to set requirements around the minimum length of pieces because exam boards need to assess students on the basis of sufficient evidence. We are proposing that:
- for the recording task, students' recordings must be at least two minutes at AS, and at least three minutes at A level – this will allow for recordings of many widely available pieces;
  - for the composition task, students' compositions must be at least three minutes at AS, and four minutes at A level – this will ensure pieces are of

sufficient complexity and length to allow exam boards to assess the required skills.

- 2.22 For the recording task, the number of instrumental parts and/or sounds recorded is an important factor in the overall level of demand of the task, and is therefore an area where we should provide further guidance.
- 2.23 We propose to introduce guidance about the number of instrumental parts that should be recorded for the recording task, which sets an expectation of at least four instruments and/or sounds requiring different recording techniques at AS level, and at least six at A level.

**Question 5: To what extent do you agree or disagree with our minimum restrictions on the length and complexity of non-exam assessment tasks in AS and A level music technology?**

- 2.24 Because there are a large number of different sounds that a student could record, and different ways that they could compose, we think it is important for us to ensure a level playing field between students.
- 2.25 For music technology, we think this is best achieved by requiring exam boards to set the non-exam assessment tasks, and to ensure they are comparable (both within and between years). We also think it is important to ensure the tasks students undertake are not predictable, as this could give an unfair advantage to some students.
- 2.26 We are therefore proposing that – for AS and A level music technology – both the recording and composition tasks must be:
- set by the exam board; and
  - designed in a way which facilitates comparability of non-exam assessments (including over time), and which minimises predictability.

**Question 6: To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposed approach to setting non-exam assessment tasks in AS and A level music technology?**

- 2.27 Finally, we think we need to specify a release date for the non-exam assessment tasks. If the tasks are available throughout a two-year course of study, then this could encourage an undue focus on for the specific non-exam assessment tasks, which would not be in line with the curriculum intention. It might also mean that students do not have sufficient time to study techniques before they are expected to demonstrate them in the non-exam assessment.

- 2.28 At the same time, schools need to have sufficient time to plan non-exam assessment tasks, and students need sufficient time to complete them.
- 2.29 We are therefore proposing that brief(s) should be released no earlier than the 1 September in the academic year when exams will be taken – we think this addresses the concerns about an undue focus on the non-exam assessment task, while still giving students and schools sufficient time to prepare for (and complete) the non-exam assessment.

**Question 7: To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal that the brief(s) for non-exam assessment in AS and A level music technology should be released no earlier than 1 September in the academic year exams are taken?**

### **Authentication and marking of non-exam assessment tasks**

- 2.30 Whenever non-exam assessment is used, it creates particular challenges for exam boards around authentication and marking of students' work.
- 2.31 The challenges around authentication arise because non-exam assessment takes place over an extended period of time, which makes it harder for teachers to be sure that students have not received help with their work.
- 2.32 It is exam boards' responsibility to ensure they put in place appropriate arrangements which enable them to authenticate students' work. This is required by our *General Conditions of Recognition*, but we have also put in place specific rules in a number of other subjects which require non-exam assessment to take place under conditions set by the exam board which ensure that students' work can be authenticated.
- 2.33 We are proposing to put in place similar rules for both the recording and the composition tasks in AS and A level music technology.

**Question 8: To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposed approach to authenticating non-exam assessment in AS and A level music technology?**

- 2.34 There are two main challenges which can arise when marking non-exam assessment.
- 2.35 The first challenge is the need to ensure that there is sufficient evidence to judge whether (and how well) students have demonstrated the required skills.

- 2.36 While some skills specified in the subject content can be assessed directly (or at least inferred) from the finished pieces produced in the recording and composition tasks, for other skills this is more difficult.
- 2.37 We are therefore proposing to set rules which ensure that both non-exam assessment tasks require students to produce or compose:
- a final piece (in line with the requirements detailed above); and
  - whatever additional evidence is needed to assess how well the student has met the assessment criteria for the task.
- 2.38 We have deliberately chosen not to specify the form which this additional evidence must take. This is because we want to give exam boards freedom to innovate, and develop approaches which suit their approach to assessment and meet the needs of schools. We are particularly keen to encourage exam boards to consider alternatives to the traditional portfolio-based approach to assessment, which both schools and exam boards have told us has become increasingly burdensome over time.
- 2.39 The second challenge is one of manageability – it can be difficult for exam boards to recruit sufficient markers, and (in some subjects) marking requires appraising large objects produced by the student.
- 2.40 In AS and A level music technology, however, the nature of the pieces produced and the number of student taking the qualification mean that it is manageable for exam boards to mark the non-exam assessment. And exam board marking should help to ensure that non-exam assessments are marked consistently, and to the same standard.
- 2.41 We therefore propose to require exam boards to mark the non-exam assessment tasks.

**Question 9: To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposed approach to marking of non-exam assessment in AS and A level music technology?**

### 3. Our proposed Conditions and guidance

3.1 As set out above, we are proposing to introduce subject-specific Conditions, requirements and guidance to implement the proposals in this consultation. We set out our proposed Conditions, requirements and guidance below.

#### Proposed Conditions and requirements for AS and A level music technology

3.2 We are proposing to introduce the following Conditions and requirements which will apply to all new AS and A level qualifications in music technology:

- a Condition covering compliance with subject content and assessment objectives;
- a further Condition which permits non-exam assessment, specifies the percentage of exam- and non-exam assessment, and allows us to set more detailed rules and guidance for non-exam assessment
- our assessment objectives; and
- requirements for non-exam assessments.

<b>Condition GCE(Music Technology)1</b>	<b>Compliance with content requirements</b>
GCE(Music Technology)1.1	<p>In respect of each GCE Qualification in Music Technology which it makes available, or proposes to make available, an awarding organisation must –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(a) comply with the requirements relating to that qualification set out in the document published by the Secretary of State entitled ‘Music technology GCE AS and A level subject content’<sup>7</sup>, document reference DFE-00214-2015,</li><li>(b) have regard to any recommendations or guidelines relating to that qualification set out in that document, and</li><li>(c) interpret that document in accordance with any requirements, and having regard to any guidance,</li></ul>

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<sup>7</sup> [www.gov.uk/government/publications/gce-as-and-a-level-music-technology](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/gce-as-and-a-level-music-technology)

	which may be published by Ofqual and revised from time to time.
GCE(Music Technology)1.2	In respect of each GCE Qualification in Music Technology which it makes available, or proposes to make available, an awarding organisation must comply with any requirements, and have regard to any guidance, relating to the objectives to be met by any assessment for that qualification which may be published by Ofqual and revised from time to time.
<b>GCE (Music Technology)2</b>	<b>Assessment</b>
GCE (Music Technology)2.1	Condition GCE4.1 does not apply to any GCE Qualification in Music Technology which an awarding organisation makes available or proposes to make available.
GCE (Music Technology)2.2	In respect of the total marks available for a GCE Qualification in Music Technology which it makes available, an awarding organisation must ensure that –  (a) 60 per cent of those marks are made available through Assessments by Examination, and  (b) 40 per cent of those marks are made available through assessments set by the awarding organisation that are not Assessments by Examination.
GCE(Music Technology)2.3	An awarding organisation must ensure that in respect of each assessment for a GCE Qualification in Music Technology which it makes available it complies with any requirements, and has regard to any guidance, which may be published by Ofqual and revised from time to time.
<b>Assessment objectives – GCE Qualifications in Music Technology</b>	
Condition GCE (Music Technology)1.2 allows us to specify requirements relating to the objectives to be met by any assessment for GCE Qualifications in Music Technology.	

The assessment objectives set out below constitute requirements for the purposes of Condition GCE(Music Technology)1.2. Awarding organisations must comply with these requirements in relation to all GCE AS and A level Qualifications in Music Technology they make available.

	Objective	Weighting (A level)	Weighting (AS)
AO1	Demonstrate use of music technology to capture, edit and produce recordings	30-40%	30-40%
AO2	Demonstrate use of music technology to create, edit and structure sounds to develop a technology based-composition	20-30%	20-30%
AO3	Demonstrate and apply knowledge and understanding of music technology	20-30%	25-35%
AO4	Use analytical and appraising skills to make evaluative and critical judgements about the use of music technology	10-20%	10-20%

### Assessment requirements – GCE Qualifications in Music Technology

Condition GCE(Music Technology)2.3 allows us to specify requirements in relation to assessments for GCE Qualifications in Music Technology.

We set out below our requirements for the purposes of Condition GCE(Music Technology)2.3. Awarding organisations must comply with these requirements in relation to all GCE Qualifications in Music Technology they make available.

#### Forms of non-examination assessment

Condition GCE(Music Technology)2.2(b) states that an awarding organisation must ensure that, of the total marks available for a GCE Qualification in Music Technology, 40 per cent of those marks shall be made available through assessments set by the awarding organisation which are not Assessments by Examination.

In respect of that 40 per cent, an awarding organisation must ensure that –

- (a) 20 per cent of the total marks available for the qualification are made available through a task which assesses a Learner's knowledge, skills and understanding in relation to the capture, editing and production of recordings (the 'Recording Assessment'), and
- (b) 20 per cent of the total marks available for the qualification are made available through a task which assesses a Learner's knowledge, skills and

understanding in relation to the development of a technology-based composition (the 'Composition Assessment').

### **The Recording Assessment**

An awarding organisation must ensure that each Recording Assessment is designed and set to –

- (a) assess only assessment objective AO1,
- (b) require each Learner to capture, edit and produce an audio recording, with a duration of –
  - (i) for a GCE AS qualification, at least two minutes, and
  - (ii) for a GCE A level qualification, at least three minutes,
- (c) require each Learner to provide such additional evidence as is necessary to enable the consideration of that Learner's level of attainment in respect of all of the relevant criteria against which Learners' performance in that assessment will be differentiated,
- (d) be taken under conditions specified by the awarding organisation, including, in particular, conditions which ensure that the evidence generated by each Learner can be Authenticated,
- (e) minimise the predictability of those assessments, and
- (f) facilitate comparability of those assessments, both within a set of assessments<sup>8</sup>, and over time.

In respect of the task(s) which it sets for each Recording Assessment, an awarding organisation –

- (a) must not communicate the task(s) that it has set to Centres before 1 September in the academic year in which the assessment is to be taken,
- (b) must ensure that each task details the evidence which must be submitted to the awarding organisation.

### **The Composition Assessment**

An awarding organisation must ensure that each Composition Assessment is designed and set to –

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<sup>8</sup> For the purposes of these requirements, a 'set of assessments' means the assessments to be taken by a particular Learner for a GCE Qualification in Music Technology. For clarity, the assessments taken by Learners may vary, depending on any possible routes through the qualification.



- (a) assess only assessment objective AO2,
- (b) require each Learner to develop a technology-based composition with a duration of –
  - (i) for a GCE AS qualification, at least three minutes, and
  - (ii) for a GCE A level qualification, at least four minutes,
- (c) require each Learner to provide such additional evidence as is necessary to enable the consideration of that Learner's level of attainment in respect of all of the relevant criteria against which Learners' performance in that assessment will be differentiated,
- (d) to be taken under conditions specified by the awarding organisation, including, in particular, conditions which ensure that the evidence generated by each Learner can be Authenticated,
- (e) minimise the predictability of those assessments, and
- (f) facilitate comparability of those assessments, both within a set of assessments, and over time.

In respect of the task(s) which it sets for each Composition Assessment, an awarding organisation –

- (a) must not communicate the task(s) that it has set to Centres before 1 September in the academic year in which the assessment is to be taken,
- (b) must ensure that each task details the evidence which must be submitted to the awarding organisation.

### **Marking of assessments**

The requirements in this section apply to all GCE Qualifications in Music Technology which an awarding organisation makes available or proposes to make available.

An awarding organisation must ensure that the evidence generated by each Learner in each assessment for a GCE Qualification in Music Technology which it makes available is marked by that awarding organisation or a person connected to that awarding organisation.

An awarding organisation must demonstrate to Ofqual's satisfaction in its assessment strategy that –

- (a) it has taken all reasonable steps to identify the risk of any Adverse Effect which may result from its approach to marking of assessments, and
- (b) where such a risk is identified, it has taken all reasonable steps to prevent that Adverse Effect or, where it cannot be prevented, to mitigate that Adverse Effect.

### **Proposed guidance for AS and A level music technology**

3.3 We are proposing to introduce the following guidance which will apply to all new AS and A level qualifications in music technology:

- guidance on assessment; and
- guidance on assessment objectives.

#### **Guidance in relation to assessments for GCE Qualifications in Music Technology**

Condition GCE(Music Technology)2.3 allows us to specify requirements and guidance in relation to assessments for GCE Qualifications in Music Technology.

We set out our guidance for the purposes of Condition GCE(Music Technology)2.3 below.

#### **Recording Assessments**

The subject content for GCE Qualifications in Music Technology is set out in the document published by the Secretary of State entitled 'Music technology GCE AS and A level subject content', DFE-00214-2015 (the 'Content Document')

Paragraph 13 of the Content Document, sets out that GCE Qualifications in Music technology must require Learners to:

use music production tools and techniques to capture sounds including musical instruments with accuracy and control.

We expect each Recording Assessment to include enough instrumental parts to adequately demonstrate the practical application of the recording techniques outlined in the Content Document.

In respect of GCE A level qualifications, a minimum of six instruments and/or sounds requiring different recording techniques should be recorded.

In respect of GCE AS qualifications a minimum of four instruments and/or sounds requiring different recording techniques should be recorded.

### **Guidance on assessment objectives for GCE Qualifications in Music Technology**

Condition GCE(Music Technology)1.2 allows us to specify requirements and guidance relating to assessment objectives for GCE Qualifications in Music Technology.

We published our requirements in relation to assessment objectives in *GCE Subject Level Conditions and Requirements for Music Technology*, and reproduce them in the table below.

	<b>Objective</b>	<b>Weighting (A level)</b>	<b>Weighting (AS)</b>
<b>AO1</b>	Demonstrate use of music technology to capture, edit and produce recordings	30-40%	30-40%
<b>AO2</b>	Demonstrate use of music technology to create, edit and structure sounds to develop a technology based-composition	20-30%	20-30%
<b>AO3</b>	Demonstrate and apply knowledge and understanding of music technology	20-30%	25-35%
<b>AO4</b>	Use analytical and appraising skills to make evaluative and critical judgements about the use of music technology	10-20%	10-20%

We set out below our guidance for the purposes of Condition GCE(Music Technology)1.2. This guidance explains how we expect awarding organisations to interpret these assessment objectives in terms of:

- the discrete ‘elements’ within each assessment objective which questions and tasks could target and/or seek to credit – our expectation is that each and every question/task should target or seek to credit at least one of these elements, and may target or seek to credit multiple elements across one or more assessment objectives;
- the coverage expectations, such as in relation to the different elements within each assessment objective and how those elements should be sampled over time; and
- the key areas of emphasis in each assessment objective and the particular meaning for the subject of any key terms and phrases used; defined terms are shown in bold text, followed by their definitions.

In line with the obligations set out in Condition GCE(Music Technology)1.2, we expect awarding organisations to be able to demonstrate how they have had regard to this guidance. For example, an awarding organisation could map how it has regard to the guidance as it:

- develops its sample assessment materials;
- delivers the qualification;
- develops and applies its approach to sampling the elements into which the assessment objectives are divided; and
- monitors the qualification to make sure it addresses all elements appropriately.

AO1: Demonstrate use of music technology to capture, edit, and produce recordings			A level: 30-40% AS: 30-40%
Strands	Elements	Coverage	Interpretations and definitions
n/a	1a - Demonstrate use of music technology to capture recordings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Full coverage in each set of assessments<sup>9</sup> (but not in every assessment).</li> <li>■ A reasonable balance between the elements.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>Capture</b> refers to the way in which sound is recorded as defined in paragraph 8 of the subject content.</li> <li>■ <b>Edit</b> refers to the editing techniques used as defined in paragraph 8 of the subject content.</li> <li>■ <b>Produce</b> refers to the techniques used to achieve the final recording as defined in paragraph 8 of the subject content.</li> </ul>
	1b – Demonstrate use of music technology to edit recordings		
	1c – Demonstrate use of music technology to produce recordings		

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<sup>9</sup> For the purposes of this guidance, a 'set of assessments' means the assessments to be taken by a particular Learner for a GCE Qualification in Music Technology. For clarity, the assessments taken by Learners may vary, depending on any possible routes through the qualification.

AO2: Demonstrate use of music technology to create, edit and structure sounds to develop a technology-based composition.			A level: 20-30% AS: 20-30%
Strands	Elements	Coverage	Interpretations and definitions
n/a	1a - Demonstrate use of music technology to create sounds to develop a technology-based composition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Full coverage in each set of assessments (but not in every assessment).</li> <li>■ A reasonable balance between the elements.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>Create</b> sounds – means constructing sounds with (acoustic) or without (synthesised) a unique starting point.</li> <li>■ <b>Edit</b> sounds – refers to the creative techniques used as defined in paragraph 8 of the subject content.</li> <li>■ <b>Structure</b> sounds – refers to using and combining sounds fluently so they make sense as a whole.</li> </ul>
	1b – Demonstrate use of music technology to edit sounds to develop a technology-based composition		
	1c – Demonstrate use of music technology to structure sounds to develop a technology-based composition		

AO3: Demonstrate and apply knowledge and understanding of music technology			A level: 20-30% AS: 25-35%
Strands	Elements	Coverage	Interpretations and definitions
n/a	1a - Demonstrate knowledge of music technology 1b – Demonstrate understanding of music technology 1c – Apply knowledge and understanding of music technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Full coverage in each set of assessments (but not every assessment).</li> <li>■ A reasonable balance between the elements. No more than 10% of the total marks for the qualification should reward demonstrating knowledge in isolation<sup>10</sup>.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ In the context of this assessment objective:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ <b>Apply</b> means to apply knowledge and understanding to a stimulus, for example a piece of music, sound, computer file, audio or visual stimulus.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

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<sup>10</sup> Marks that “reward demonstrating knowledge in isolation” include any mark awarded solely for recalling facts or other knowledge that is part of the specification. It does not include marks awarded for selecting appropriate knowledge (for example, to evidence an argument), or for applying knowledge to a particular context.

AO4: Use analytical and appraising skills to make evaluative and critical judgements about the use of music technology			A level: 10-20% AS: 10-20%
Strands	Elements	Coverage	Interpretations and definitions
n/a	1a – Use analytical and appraising skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Full coverage in each set of assessments (but not every assessment).</li> <li>■ A reasonable balance between the elements.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ In the context of this assessment objective:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>Use analytical and appraising skills</b> means deconstructing recording and production techniques and/or principles of music technology and/or development of recording and production technology as defined in paragraphs 8 – 12 of the subject content to find connections between them and to provide logical chains of reasoning.</li> <li>■ <b>Make evaluative and critical judgements</b> refers to reaching conclusions, justifying opinions or making comparisons</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	1b – Make evaluative and critical judgements about the use of music technology.		



**Questions on proposed Conditions, requirements and guidance**

**Question 10: Do you have any comments on our proposed Conditions and requirements for AS and A level music technology?**

**Question 11: Do you have any comments on our proposed guidance for AS and A level music technology?**

## 4. Equality impact analysis

### Ofqual's role, objectives and duties

- 4.1 We are subject to the public sector equality duty. We have set out in Appendix B how this duty interacts with our statutory objectives and other duties.

### Equality impact analysis relating to proposed changes to AS and A level music technology

- 4.2 We have considered the potential impact on students who share protected characteristics<sup>11</sup> of the application of the principles and features that will apply to all new GCSE, AS and A level qualifications. Our equality impact analysis for our earlier consultation on AS and A level reform<sup>12</sup> is therefore of interest and we encourage you to read it.
- 4.3 Issues concerning the proposed subject content have been considered by the DfE, which has published its own Equalities Impact Analysis on its subject content proposals.<sup>13</sup>
- 4.4 We have also previously considered the potential impact on students who share protected characteristics of our decisions on assessment arrangements for this subject.<sup>14</sup>
- 4.5 We do not repeat here all of the evidence we have considered, as this can be found in our earlier reports. We focus instead on the specific issues that arise from the new proposals in this consultation, and from the way in which we are implementing our previous policy decisions.
- 4.6 We have not identified any additional negative impacts on students who share protected characteristics which would result from the proposals in this consultation (beyond those that we and DfE have already identified in our earlier reports).

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<sup>11</sup> For the purposes of the public sector equality duty, the protected characteristics are disability, racial group, age, religion or belief, pregnancy or maternity, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment.

<sup>12</sup> <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20141031163546/http://www.ofqual.gov.uk/files/2012-06-18-equality-analysis-of-the-a-level-reform-consultation.pdf>

<sup>13</sup> [www.gov.uk/government/consultations/gcse-and-a-level-reform-content-for-teaching-from-september-2017](http://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/gcse-and-a-level-reform-content-for-teaching-from-september-2017)

<sup>14</sup> [www.gov.uk/government/consultations/development-of-new-gcses-and-a-levels-for-teaching-from-2017](http://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/development-of-new-gcses-and-a-levels-for-teaching-from-2017)

- 4.7 During this consultation, we will continue to seek and consider evidence and feedback to our proposals that might help us identify any potential subject-specific impacts on students who share a protected characteristic.
- 4.8 Exam boards are required to consider the accessibility of their qualifications at the design stage and to remove any unjustifiable barriers.

**Question 12: We have not identified any ways in which the proposals for GCE AS and A level music technology would impact (positively or negatively) on persons who share a protected characteristic.<sup>15</sup> Are there any potential impacts we have not identified?**

**Question 13: Are there any additional steps we could take to mitigate any negative impact resulting from these proposals on persons who share a protected characteristic?**

**Question 14: Have you any other comments on the impacts of the proposals on students who share a protected characteristic?**

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<sup>15</sup> 'Protected characteristic' is defined in the Equality Act 2010. Here, it means disability, racial group, age, religion or belief, pregnancy or maternity, sex, sexual orientation and gender reassignment.

## Appendix A: Regulatory tools

### Comparability and innovation

Exam boards operate in a market. They can design and deliver their qualifications in different ways, within the parameters we set. This provides some choice to schools or colleges, which is one of the benefits of a qualifications market. Exam boards must, however, make sure that the levels of attainment indicated by their qualifications are comparable to those of other exam boards' versions of the qualifications. The exam boards cooperate in a range of ways to make sure that the standards of their respective qualifications are comparable. To make sure standards are maintained and comparability is secured, we review AS and A level qualifications before they can be made available, by applying an accreditation requirement to the qualifications, and we oversee the awarding of AS and A level qualifications.

We do not wish to close down opportunities for exam boards to design and deliver their qualifications in different ways. Indeed, we have a statutory duty to have regard to the desirability of facilitating innovation in connection with the provision of regulated qualifications and a statutory objective with regard to the efficiency with which the qualifications market works. If we adopt a regulatory approach in which all aspects of a qualification are very tightly defined, we could effectively remove scope for exam boards to distinguish their qualifications from others and stop choice for schools or colleges. On the other hand, if exam boards have too much scope to vary their approach their qualifications might not be comparable.

In striking a balance, we use a range of tools to regulate qualifications and the exam boards that provide them. The main regulatory tools we use for the qualifications in this consultation are explained below.

### Conditions of Recognition

Exam boards must comply at all times with our Conditions of Recognition. These are the main regulatory rules that we use. We can take regulatory action against an exam board that breaches or is likely to breach a Condition.

There are three sets of Conditions that will apply to new AS and A level qualifications:

- (i) the published *General Conditions of Recognition*<sup>16</sup> that apply to all regulated qualifications;

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<sup>16</sup> [www.gov.uk/government/publications/general-conditions-of-recognition](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/general-conditions-of-recognition)

- (ii) *GCE Qualification Level Conditions and Requirements*<sup>17</sup> that apply to all new AS and A level qualifications;
- (iii) GCE Subject Level Conditions that apply to new AS and A level qualifications in a specific subject. We are consulting now on draft GCE Subject Level Conditions for music technology.

## **Regulatory documents**

In some Conditions we refer to published regulatory requirements. We publish these in regulatory documents. The Conditions require exam boards to comply with such documents.

We are proposing to introduce one regulatory document for AS and A level music technology, which covers our requirements in relation to non-exam assessments.

The requirements will have effect as if they were part of a Condition. The requirements will be set out in a stand-alone section of the Conditions document, simply because they are technical and detailed so they sit better as separate from, rather than within, the Condition itself.

## **Statutory guidance**

We publish guidance to help exam boards identify the types of behaviour or practices they could use to meet a Condition. Exam boards must have regard to such guidance, but they do not have to follow this guidance in the same way that they must comply with the Conditions; they are free to meet the outcomes of the Conditions in their own ways. An exam board that decides to take a different approach to that set out in our guidance must still be able to show that it is meeting the Condition or Conditions to which the guidance relates.

We are consulting now on draft guidance for new AS and A levels in music technology.

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<sup>17</sup> [www.gov.uk/government/publications/gce-qualification-level-conditions-and-requirements](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/gce-qualification-level-conditions-and-requirements)

## **Appendix B: Ofqual's role, objectives and duties**

Our statutory objectives include the qualifications standards objective, which is to secure that the qualifications we regulate:

- (a) give a reliable indication of knowledge, skills and understanding; and
- (b) indicate:
  - (i) a consistent level of attainment (including over time) between comparable regulated qualifications; and
  - (ii) a consistent level of attainment (but not over time) between qualifications we regulate and comparable qualifications (including those awarded outside the UK) that we do not regulate.

We must therefore regulate so that qualifications properly differentiate between students who have demonstrated that they have the knowledge, skills and understanding required to attain the qualification and those who have not.

We also have a duty under the Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 to have regard to the reasonable requirements of relevant students, including those with special educational needs and disabilities, of employers and of the higher education sector, and to aspects of government policy when so directed by the Secretary of State.

As a public body, we are subject to the public sector equality duty.<sup>18</sup> This duty requires us to have due regard to the need to:

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited under the Equality Act 2010;
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The exam boards that design, deliver and award AS and A level qualifications are required by the Equality Act, among other things, to make reasonable adjustments for disabled people taking their qualifications, except where we have specified that such adjustments should not be made.

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<sup>18</sup> Equality Act 2010, section 149.

When we decide whether such adjustments should not be made, we must have regard to:

- (a) the need to minimise the extent to which disabled persons are disadvantaged in attaining the qualification because of their disabilities;
- (b) the need to secure that the qualification gives a reliable indication of the knowledge, skills and understanding of a person upon whom it is conferred;
- (c) the need to maintain public confidence in the qualification.

Legislation therefore sets out a framework within which we must operate. We are subject to a number of duties and we must aim to achieve a number of objectives. These different duties and objectives can, from time to time, conflict with each other. For example, if we regulate to secure that a qualification gives a reliable indication of a student's knowledge, skills and understanding, a student who has not been able to demonstrate the required knowledge, skills and/or understanding will not be awarded the qualification. A person may find it more difficult, or impossible, to demonstrate the required knowledge, skills and/or understanding because they have a protected characteristic. This could put them at a disadvantage relative to others who have been awarded the qualification. It is not always possible for us to regulate so that we can both secure that qualifications give a reliable indication of knowledge, skills and understanding and advance equality between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. We must review all the available evidence and actively consider all the available options before coming to a final, rational decision.

Qualifications cannot be used to mitigate inequalities or unfairness in the education system or in society more widely than might affect, for example, students' preparedness to take the qualification and the assessments within it. While a wide range of factors can have an impact on a student's ability to achieve a particular mark in an assessment, our influence is limited to the way the qualification is designed and assessed.

We require the exam boards to design qualifications to give a reliable indication of the knowledge, skills and understanding of those on whom they are conferred. We also require the exam boards to avoid, where possible, features of a qualification that could, without justification, make a qualification more difficult for a student to achieve because they have a particular protected characteristic. We require exam boards to monitor whether any features of their qualifications have this effect.

In setting the overall framework within which exam boards will design, assess and award the reformed GCSE, A level and AS qualifications, we want to understand the possible impacts of the proposals on persons who share a protected characteristic.

The protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are:

- age;
- disability;
- gender reassignment;
- marriage and civil partnerships;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- race;
- religion or belief;
- sex;
- sexual orientation.

It should be noted that with respect to the public sector equality duty under section 149 of the 2010 Act, we are not required to have due regard to impacts on those who are married or in a civil partnership.



## **Responding to the consultation**

### **Your details**

To evaluate responses properly, we need to know who is responding to the consultation and in what capacity. We will therefore only consider your response if you complete the following information section.

We will publish our evaluation of responses. Please note that we may publish all or part of your response unless you tell us (in your answer to the confidentiality question) that you want us to treat your response as confidential. If you tell us you wish your response to be treated as confidential, we will not include your details in any published list of respondents, although we may quote from your response anonymously.

Please answer all questions marked with a star\*

Name\*

Position\*

Organisation name (if applicable)\*

Address

Email

Telephone

**Would you like us to treat your response as confidential?\***

If you answer yes, we will not include your details in any list of people or organisations that responded to the consultation.

Yes  No

**Is this a personal response or an official response on behalf of your organisation?\***

Personal response (please answer the question 'If you ticked "Personal response"...')

Official response (please answer the question 'If you ticked "Official response"...')

**If you ticked "Personal response", which of the following are you?**

Student

Parent or carer

Teacher (but responding in a personal capacity)

Other, including general public (please state below)

---

**If you ticked "Official response", please respond accordingly:**

**Type of responding organisation\***

Awarding organisation

Local authority

School or college (please answer the question below)

Academy chain

Private training provider

University or other higher education institution

Employer

Other representative or interest group (please answer the question below)

**School or college type**

- Comprehensive or non-selective academy
  - State selective or selective academy
  - Independent
  - Special school
  - Further education college
  - Sixth form college
  - Other (please state below)
- 

**Type of representative group or interest group**

- Group of awarding organisations
  - Union
  - Employer or business representative group
  - Subject association or learned society
  - Equality organisation or group
  - School, college or teacher representative group
  - Other (please state below)
- 

**Nation\***

- England
- Wales
- Northern Ireland
- Scotland
- Other EU country: \_\_\_\_\_
- Non-EU country: \_\_\_\_\_

**How did you find out about this consultation?**

Our newsletter or another one of our communications

Our website

Internet search

Other

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**May we contact you for further information?**

Yes  No

## Questions

**Question 1: To what extent do you agree or disagree that we should introduce a Condition which requires exam boards to comply with the relevant subject content and assessment objectives?**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Please explain your reasons:

.....

.....

.....

**Question 2: To what extent do you agree or disagree that we should introduce guidance which clarifies how exam boards should interpret our assessment objectives?**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Please explain your reasons:

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**Question 3: To what extent do you agree or disagree that we should introduce a Condition which permits non-exam assessment, specifies the proportion of exam- and non-exam assessment, and allows us to set more detailed rules and guidance on non-exam assessment?**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Please explain your reasons:

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**Question 4: To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal that there should be two non-exam assessment tasks in AS and A level music technology, both weighted at 20 per cent of total marks – a recording task which assesses only AO1, and a composition task which assesses only AO2?**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Please explain your reasons:

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.....

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**Question 5: To what extent do you agree or disagree with our minimum restrictions on the length and complexity of non-exam assessment tasks in AS and A level music technology?**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Please explain your reasons:

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.....

**Question 6: To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposed approach to setting non-exam assessment tasks in AS and A level music technology?**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Please explain your reasons:

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.....

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**Question 7: To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal that the brief(s) for non-exam assessment in AS and A level music technology should be released no earlier than 1 September in the academic year exams are taken?**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Please explain your reasons:

.....

.....

.....

**Question 8: To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposed approach to authenticating non-exam assessment in AS and A level music technology?**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Please explain your reasons:

.....

.....

.....



**Question 9: To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposed approach to marking of non-exam assessment in AS and A level music technology?**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Please explain your reasons:

.....

.....

.....

**Question 10: Do you have any comments on our proposed Conditions and requirements for AS and A level music technology?**

- Yes  No

.....

.....

.....

**Question 11: Do you have any comments on our proposed guidance for AS and A Level music technology?**

- Yes  No

.....

.....

.....

**Question 12: We have not identified any ways in which the proposals for AS and A Level music technology would impact (positively or negatively) on persons who share a protected characteristic.<sup>19</sup> Are there any potential impacts we have not identified?**

Yes  No

.....

.....

.....

**Question 13: Are there any additional steps we could take to mitigate any negative impact resulting from these proposals on persons who share a protected characteristic?**

Yes  No

.....

.....

.....

**Question 14: Do you have any other comments on the impacts of the proposals on students who share a protected characteristic?**

Yes  No

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.....

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<sup>19</sup> 'Protected characteristic' is defined in the Equality Act 2010. Here, it means disability, racial group, age, religion or belief, pregnancy or maternity, sex, sexual orientation and gender reassignment.

## Accessibility of our consultations

We are looking at how we provide accessible versions of our consultations and would appreciate it if you could spare a few moments to answer the following questions. Your answers to these questions will not be considered as part of the consultation and will not be released to any third parties.

**We want to write clearly, directly and put the reader first. Overall, do you think we have got this right in this consultation?**

Yes  No

**Do you have any comments or suggestions about the style of writing?**

Yes  No

.....  
.....  
.....

**Do you have any special requirements to enable you to read our consultations? (for example, screen reader, large text, and so on)**

Yes  No

**Which of the following do you currently use to access our consultation documents? (select all that apply)**

- Screen reader / text-to-speech software
- Braille reader
- Screen magnifier
- Speech-to-text software
- Motor assistance (blow-suck tube, mouth stick, and so on)
- Other .....

**Which of the following document formats would meet your needs for accessing our consultations? (select all that apply)**

- A standard PDF
- Accessible web pages
- Large-type PDF (16 point text)
- Large-type Word document (16 point text)
- eBook (Kindle, iBooks, or similar format)
- Braille document
- Spoken document
- Other .....

**How many of our consultations have you read in the last 12 months?**

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- More than 5

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