

AS and A level Ancient Languages

Consultation on Conditions and Guidance

covering:

Classical Greek
Latin



February 2015

Ofqual/15/5599

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About this consultation

We are seeking views on the regulatory requirements we propose to put in place for new A levels and AS qualifications in classical Greek and Latin. These new qualifications are due to be taught in England from September 2016.

We do not repeat the policy proposals for these qualifications on which we consulted during 2014, or the options we considered when we did so. You can find the outcome of that consultation on our website,¹ along with a summary of the responses to the consultations and our equality and regulatory impact assessments.

Further information about the reform of GCSE/A level/AS can be found at:
www.gov.uk/government/publications/get-the-facts-gcse-and-a-level-reform.

Summary of our proposals – AS and A level classical Greek and Latin

- New A levels and AS qualifications in classical Greek and Latin must comply with the Department for Education's subject content requirements, and with our assessment objectives.
- In line with our previous decisions, new A levels and AS qualifications in classical Greek and Latin will be assessed solely by examination.
- Awarding organisations may choose to publish vocabulary, accidence and syntax lists for A levels and AS qualifications in classical Greek and Latin – but assessments may not be restricted to those lists in a way which makes them predictable.

¹<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20141110161323/http://comment.ofqual.gov.uk/developing-new-qualifications-for-2016/>

How to respond to this consultation

The closing date for responses to this consultation is **6th March 2015**.

You can respond to this consultation in one of three ways:

- Complete the online response at: <http://surveys.ofqual.gov.uk/s3/as-and-a-level-ancient-languages-conditions-and-guidance>.
- Email your response to consultations@ofqual.gov.uk – please include the consultation title (GCE Ancient Languages Technical Consultation) in the subject line of the email and make clear who you are and in what capacity you are responding.
- Post your response to: GCE Ancient Languages Technical Consultation 2015, Ofqual, Spring Place, Herald Avenue, Coventry, CV5 6UB.

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 the 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 6th March 2015.

Conditions of Recognition

Awarding organisations 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 awarding organisation that breaches or is likely to breach a Condition.

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

- (i) the published *General Conditions of Recognition*² that apply to all regulated qualifications;
- (i) the published *GCE Qualification Level Conditions and Requirements*³ that apply to all new A level and AS qualifications;
- (ii) GCE Subject Level Conditions that apply to all new A level and AS qualifications in a specific subject.

The way the Conditions of Recognition work alongside our other regulatory tools is set out in Appendix A.

² www.gov.uk/government/publications/general-conditions-of-recognition

³ www.gov.uk/government/publications/gce-qualification-level-conditions-and-requirements

1. Draft GCE Subject Level Conditions and Guidance for ancient languages (Classical Greek and Latin)

Content requirements in ancient languages (Classical Greek and Latin)

1.1 The Department for Education has published a document that sets out the new content for A level and AS ancient languages. A levels and AS qualifications in ancient languages must comply with the requirements of that document,⁴ as well as with our assessment objectives.

1.2 To bring this about, we propose to introduce the following Condition:

Condition GCE(Ancient Languages (Classical Greek, Latin))1

Compliance with content requirements

GCE(Ancient Languages (Classical Greek, Latin))1.1

In respect of each GCE Qualification in Classical Greek or Latin which it makes available, or proposes to make available, an awarding organisation must –

- (a) comply with the requirements relating to that qualification set out in the document published by the Secretary of State entitled 'GCE AS and A level subject content for ancient languages',⁵ document reference DFE-00691-2014,**
- (b) have regard to any recommendations or guidelines relating to that qualification set out in that document, and**
- (c) interpret that document in accordance with any requirements, and having regard to any guidance, which may be published by Ofqual and revised from time to time.**

GCE(Ancient Languages

In respect of each GCE Qualification in Classical Greek or Latin which it makes available, or

⁴ www.gov.uk/government/publications/gce-as-and-a-level-ancient-languages

⁵ www.gov.uk/government/publications/gce-as-and-a-level-ancient-languages

(Classical Greek, Latin)1.2 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

Guidance on subject content in ancient languages

- 1.3 The content published by the Department for Education requires awarding organisations to offer students the option to translate from English into the language of study. We propose to introduce guidance on the amount of translation that should be offered to students as part of this option within both the AS and A level assessments.
- 1.4 There is likely to be a relationship between the amount of English to language of study translation required and the level of demand of this component of the assessment. Guidance will help to secure comparability of demand between specifications.
- 1.5 We set out below our draft guidance on this component of the subject content requirements. In line with the obligations set out in Condition GCE(Ancient Languages)1.2, we would expect awarding organisations to be able to demonstrate how they have had regard to this guidance.

Guidance in relation to subject content for GCE Qualifications in Ancient Languages (Classical Greek, Latin)

The subject content for GCE Qualifications in ancient languages is set out in the Department for Education's *GCE AS and A level subject content for ancient languages*, document reference DFE-00691-2014 (the 'Content Document').

Condition GCE(Ancient Languages (Classical Greek, Latin))1.2 requires awarding organisations to interpret the Content Document in line with any requirements, and having regard to any guidance, published by Ofqual.

We set out our guidance for the purposes of GCE(Ancient Languages (Classical Greek, Latin))1.2 below.

Balance of content elements

The Content Document requires awarding organisations to offer Learners the option to translate from English into the ancient language. Our expectation is that:

- at AS this option should include the translation of at least four sentences from English into the ancient language.
- at A level this option should include the translation of a passage of at least 100 words from English into the ancient language.

Assessment requirements in ancient languages

- 1.6 All A levels and AS qualifications in ancient languages will be assessed by examination only. This is covered by Condition GCE4 (see *GCE Qualification Level Conditions and Requirements*).
- 1.7 We propose to publish additional requirements and guidance (see below) on the assessment of ancient languages. To give effect to these, we propose to introduce the following Condition:

Condition GCE(Ancient Languages (Classical Greek, Latin))2

Assessment

GCE(Ancient Languages (Classical Greek, Latin))2.1

An awarding organisation must ensure that in respect of each assessment for a GCE Qualification in Classical Greek or Latin 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.

- 1.8 Awarding organisations have indicated that they are likely to produce vocabulary, accidence and syntax lists in relation to new A level and AS qualifications in ancient languages. If vocabulary lists or other information on words or forms of words are provided by awarding organisations as a guide to teachers, assessment tasks must not be restricted to the vocabulary lists or other information provided, as this could make assessments predictable.

Assessment requirements – GCE Qualifications in Ancient Languages (Classical Greek, Latin)

Condition GCE(Ancient Languages (Classical Greek, Latin))2.1 allows us to specify requirements and guidance in relation to assessments for GCE Qualifications in Classical Greek or Latin.

We set out our requirements for the purposes of Condition GCE(Ancient Languages (Classical Greek, Latin))2.1 below.

Vocabulary, accidence and syntax lists

Where an awarding organisation publishes any information about the words and/or forms of words which Learners will be expected to use and understand for a GCE Qualification in Classical Greek or Latin which it makes available, or proposes to make available, it must ensure that no assessment for that qualification is restricted to that information in such a way as to render that assessment predictable.

Assessment objectives

- 1.9 We have previously consulted on and announced our decisions on assessment objectives in AS and A level ancient languages. These final assessment objectives are repeated below for completeness.

	Objective	Weighting (AS)	Weighting (A level)
AO1	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the language.	50%	50%
AO2	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of literature.	25–30%	20-25%
AO3	Critically analyse, evaluate and respond to literature.	20–25%	25–30%

Guidance on assessment objectives

1.10 The draft guidance on assessment objectives explains how we expect awarding organisations to interpret the assessment objectives in terms of:

- the discrete ‘elements’ within each assessment objective that questions and tasks could target and/or seek to credit;
- 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.

1.11 In line with the obligations set out in draft Condition GCE(Ancient Languages(Classical Greek, Latin))1.2, awarding organisations must have regard to any guidance we publish on the assessment objectives. 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/or
- monitors the qualification to make sure it addresses all elements appropriately.

1.12 The draft guidance on assessment objectives is set out below.

AO1: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the language			50% (A level) 50% (AS)
Strands	Elements	Coverage	Interpretations and definitions
n/a	This AO is a single element.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Full coverage in each set of assessments (but not in every assessment). ■ For both AS and A level, the option to translate from English into the ancient language should comprise between 25–35% of the marks for AO1. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Any translation of an unseen passage or sentence(s) should be credited under AO1. ■ The majority of marks within this assessment objective should be tested through a combination of translation of passage(s) from the ancient language into English, and through comprehension exercises based on passage(s) in the ancient language. The option to translate from English into the ancient language (as required by the Content Document) also forms part of this assessment objective.

AO2: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of literature			20%–25% (A level) 25%–30% (AS)
Strands	Elements	Coverage	Interpretations and definitions
n/a	This AO is a single element.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full coverage in each set of assessments (but not in every assessment). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any translation from a set text should be credited under AO2. Tasks set under this assessment objective may require Learners to show an understanding of the wider social, cultural and historical context from a range of sources as specified in the subject content.

AO3: Critically analyse, evaluate and respond to literature			25%–30% (A level) 20%–25% (AS)
Strands	Elements	Coverage	Interpretations and definitions
n/a	This AO is a single element.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Full coverage in each set of assessments (but not every assessment). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ In the context of analysis, evaluation and response to ancient literature, critically means the Learner should develop independent thought and judgement, for example by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ offering informed comment on the depiction of character, the construction of an argument, the appreciation of literary meaning and the use of literary techniques; □ giving a personal response to the text; □ effectively selecting relevant examples from a text to support their view; □ constructing a sustained argument. ■ In the context of literature, analyse may include (but is not limited to): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ identifying aspects of content, culture, social practices and values in the author’s writing; □ commenting on areas such as the portrayal of character, the construction of an argument and features of literary style. ■ Evaluate and respond to means the drawing out and expressing of conclusions based on analysis.

2. Equality analysis

Ofqual's role, objectives and duties

- 2.1 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 A levels and AS qualifications

- 2.2 We have considered the potential impact on students who share protected characteristics⁶ of the application of the principles and features that will apply to all new A levels and AS qualifications. Our equality impact analyses for our earlier consultation on A level and AS qualification⁷ reform is therefore of interest and we encourage you to read it.
- 2.3 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 raised by our proposed assessment arrangements for AS and A level classical Greek and Latin.
- 2.4 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.
- 2.5 Awarding organisations are required to consider the accessibility of their qualifications at the design stage and to remove any unjustifiable barriers.

Assessment arrangements

- 2.6 We have not identified any additional negative impacts on students who share protected characteristics which would result from our proposed assessment arrangements in AS and A level classical Greek and Latin.
- 2.7 We recognise that the continuing availability of an A level or AS qualification in Biblical Hebrew is a matter that will be of particular interest to members of the Jewish community. This consultation applies only to A levels and AS qualifications in classical Greek and Latin. AS and A level Biblical Hebrew is not being reformed for first teaching in 2016. However, the awarding organisations may choose to develop a new AS or A level qualification in Biblical Hebrew at a

⁶ 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.

⁷ www.gov.uk/government/publications/gce-as-and-a-levels-reformed-content

later date, in which case we will consult on appropriate Conditions and guidance, and consider any specific equality impacts at that time.

- 2.8 Any issues concerning the proposed content will be considered by the Department of Education, who have published their own Equalities Impact Analysis on their subject content proposals.⁸

⁸ www.gov.uk/government/publications/a-level-subject-content-equality-impact-assessment

3. 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

May we contact you for further information?

Yes No

Questions

Question 1

Do you have any comments on the draft Conditions for new GCE ancient languages (classical Greek and Latin)?

Yes

No

If yes, please provide them here:

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Question 2

Do you have any comments on the draft assessment requirements for new GCE ancient languages (classical Greek and Latin)?

Yes

No

If yes, please provide them here:

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Question 3

Do you have any comments on the draft Guidance on assessment objectives for new GCE ancient languages (classical Greek and Latin)?

Yes No

If yes, please provide them here:

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Question 4

We have not identified any ways in which the proposed requirements for reformed GCEs in ancient languages (classical Greek and Latin) would impact (positively or negatively) on persons who share a protected characteristic. Are there any potential impacts we have not identified? If so, what are they?

Yes No

If yes, please provide them here:

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Question 5

Are there any additional steps we could take to mitigate any negative impact resulting from these proposals on persons who share a protected characteristic? If so, please comment on the additional steps we could take to mitigate negative impacts.

() Yes () No

If yes, please provide them here:

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Question 6

Have you any other comments on the impacts of the proposals on persons who share a protected characteristic?

() Yes () No

If yes, please provide them here:

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Appendix A: Regulatory tools

Comparability and innovation

Awarding organisations 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. Awarding organisations must, however, make sure that the levels of attainment indicated by their qualifications are comparable to those of other awarding organisations' versions of the qualifications. The awarding organisations 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 A levels and AS qualifications before they can be made available, by applying an accreditation requirement to the qualifications, and we oversee the awarding of A levels and AS qualifications.

We do not wish to close down opportunities for awarding organisations 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 awarding organisations to distinguish their qualifications from others and stop choice for schools or colleges. On the other hand, if awarding organisations 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 awarding organisations that provide them. The main regulatory tools we use for the qualifications in this consultation are explained below.

Conditions of Recognition

Awarding organisations 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 awarding organisation that breaches or is likely to breach a Condition.

There are three sets of Conditions that will apply to new A levels and AS qualifications (together 'the Conditions'):

- (i) the published *General Conditions of Recognition*⁹ that apply to all regulated qualifications;

⁹ www.gov.uk/government/publications/general-conditions-of-recognition

- (ii) *GCE Qualification Level Conditions and Requirements*¹⁰ that apply to all new A levels and AS qualifications;
- (iii) GCE Subject Level Conditions that apply to all new A levels and AS qualifications in a specific subject – we are consulting now on draft GCE Subject Level Conditions for ancient languages (classical Greek and Latin).

Regulatory documents

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

We are proposing to introduce regulatory documents for A levels and AS qualifications in ancient languages covering the assessment requirements for the subject. The requirements will have effect as if they were part of a Condition. The requirements are in a stand-alone section of the Conditions document, simply because they are technical and detailed so they sit better as separate to, rather than within, the Condition itself.

Statutory guidance

We publish Guidance to help awarding organisations identify the types of behaviour or practices they could use to meet a Condition. Awarding organisations 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 awarding organisation that decides to take a different approach to that set out in 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 A levels and AS qualifications in ancient languages.

¹⁰ 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 of 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.¹¹ 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 GCSE, A level and AS 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.

¹¹ 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.

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