

**Analysis of Responses to our
Consultation on Conditions and
Guidance for AS and A Level
Ancient Languages**



June 2015

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Executive summary

Our consultation about the Conditions and guidance for AS and A level ancient languages took place between 5th February 2015 and 6th March 2015.

The consultation questions were available to either complete online or to download. A copy of the consultation is available at www.gov.uk/government/consultations/as-and-a-level-reform-regulations-for-ancient-languages.

There were six responses to the consultation – one from an individual and five from organisations. All responses were in a form that matched or broadly followed the layout of the online consultation.

Respondents broadly supported our proposed Conditions and guidance.

Some respondents also commented on issues outside the scope of the consultation.

1. Introduction

This report is a summary of the views expressed by those who responded to our consultation on the Conditions and guidance for AS and A level ancient languages which took place between 5th February 2015 and 6th March 2015.

Following earlier consultations, we have already taken decisions on:

- the general design of reformed AS and A level qualifications;
- our policy and technical arrangements relating to those subjects that are due to be introduced for first teaching in 2015;¹ and
- the design of the reformed AS and A level qualifications in ancient languages that are to be introduced for first teaching in 2016.²

This consultation focused on more technical matters – that is, on the regulatory arrangements that we must put in place to make sure that exam boards design, deliver and award reformed AS and A level qualifications in ancient languages in line with our policy decisions.

¹ Reformed AS and A level qualifications in art and design, biology, business, chemistry, computer science, economics, English language, English language and literature, English literature, history, physics, psychology and sociology will be taught from September 2015.

² www.gov.uk/government/consultations/gcses-as-and-a-levels-reform-of-subjects-for-september-2016

2. Who responded?

We received a total of six responses to our consultation.³ One response was from an individual and five were from organisations. All of the responses were from individuals or organisations based in England or Wales.

Table 1: Breakdown of consultation responses

Personal / Organisation response	Respondent type	Number
Personal response	Teacher	1
Organisation response	Union	2
Organisation response	Exam board	1
Organisation response	Learned society	1
Organisation response	University or higher education institution	1

³ Where responses were received in hard copy we entered them into the online platform.

3. Approach to analysis

We published the consultation on our website. Respondents could choose to respond using an online form, by email or by posting their answers to the consultation questions to us. The consultation included six questions.

This was a consultation on the views of those who wished to participate and while we made every effort to ensure that as many respondents as possible had the opportunity to reply, it cannot be considered as a representative sample of the general public or of any specific group.

Data presentation

We present the responses to the consultation questions in the order in which they were asked.

The consultation asked six questions and each had a different focus. Respondents could choose to answer all or just some of the questions.

During the analysis phase we reviewed every response to each question.

4. Views expressed – consultation response outcomes

In this section we report the views, in broad terms, of those who responded to the consultation document. We have structured this around the questions covered in the consultation document and provide analysis of the data broken down by stakeholder.

A consultation is not the same as a survey and 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.

A list of the organisations that responded to the consultation is included in Appendix A.

Question 1 – Do you have any comments on the draft Conditions for new GCE ancient languages (classical Greek and Latin)?

Our draft Conditions stated that exam boards must ensure that they comply with the Department for Education's subject content requirements for new AS and A levels in ancient languages,⁴ and with our published assessment objectives.

One respondent (an organisation) did not comment on our proposals.

Of the respondents who did comment, four (one individual, three organisations) commented directly on our draft Conditions. All those who expressed a view supported the Conditions as drafted.

The remaining response to this question focused on issues outside the scope of the consultation. This respondent commented on the potential impact of decoupling AS and A level on the take-up of ancient languages at AS and A level. We have already considered this issue following our earlier consultation on the design of the reformed AS and A level qualifications in ancient languages.⁵

One respondent also commented on the subject content for AS and A level ancient languages.

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

⁵ www.gov.uk/government/consultations/gcses-as-and-a-levels-reform-of-subjects-for-september-2016

Question 2 – Do you have any comments on the draft assessment requirements for new GCE ancient languages (classical Greek and Latin)?

This question referred to our draft assessment rules which set out the approach that exam boards should take to using vocabulary, accidence and syntax lists.

Two respondents (both organisations) did not comment on our proposals.

Of the respondents who did comment, two (one individual, one organisation) commented directly on our draft requirements. Two respondents supported the requirements as drafted, and one commented that the use of defined vocabulary lists was the best way to make the exam fair for all students.

The remaining comments focused on issues outside the scope of the consultation. Two respondents (both organisations) commented on the assessment arrangements, raising issues that we have already considered in response to earlier consultations. One respondent (an organisation) commented on changes to the subject content at GCSE.

Question 3 – Do you have any comments on the draft guidance on assessment objectives for new GCE ancient languages (classical Greek and Latin)?

This question referred to the draft guidance on assessment objectives which outlines how we expect exam boards to interpret the assessment objectives in terms of discrete 'elements' within each assessment objective, coverage expectations and key areas of emphasis in each assessment objective.

Two respondents (both organisations) did not comment on our proposals.

Of the remaining respondents, three (one individual, two organisations) supported our guidance as drafted, and one (an organisation) commented on our proposed assessment requirements. We have analysed this response under question 2 above.

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?

Five respondents (one individual, four organisations) did not comment on our proposals.

The respondent who did comment (an organisation) welcomed our statement on the future availability of qualifications in biblical Hebrew.

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.

Five respondents (one individual, four organisations) did not comment on our proposals.

The respondent who did comment (an organisation) noted that assessment in ancient languages raised fewer issues than in other subjects.

Question 6 – Have you any other comments on the impacts of the proposals on persons who share a protected characteristic?

No respondents commented on our proposals.

Appendix A: List of organisational consultation respondents

When completing the questionnaire, respondents were asked to indicate whether they were responding as an individual or on behalf of an organisation.

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.

ASCL

Classical Association

Council of University Classical Departments

OCR

Voice

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