

# **Responding to the *Developing New GCSEs, AS and A Levels for First Teaching in 2017 – Part 1* 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\*

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**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)

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**\*If you ticked “Official response from an organisation/group”, 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

Working directly with Ofqual on the drafting of the consultation content.

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

Yes    No

# Consultation questions

## GCSE astronomy

**Question 1: To what extent do you agree or disagree that GCSEs in astronomy should be assessed entirely by exams?**

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

Please give reasons for your answer:

AQA is not intending to develop a qualification in Astronomy. We are not therefore commenting on the consultation for this subject.

**Question 2: To what extent do you agree or disagree that GCSEs in astronomy should not be tiered?**

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

Please give reasons for your answer:

AQA is not intending to develop a qualification in Astronomy. We are not therefore commenting on the consultation for this subject.

**Question 3: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed assessment objectives are appropriate for GCSEs in astronomy?**

- Strongly agree
- Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Please give reasons for your answer:

AQA is not intending to develop a qualification in Astronomy. We are not therefore commenting on the consultation for this subject.

**Question 4: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed weightings of the assessment objectives are appropriate for GCSEs in astronomy?**

Strongly agree

Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Please give reasons for your answer:

AQA is not intending to develop a qualification in Astronomy. We are not therefore commenting on the consultation for this subject.

**Question 5: Do you have any further comments relating to the assessment of this subject?**

AQA is not intending to develop a qualification in Astronomy. We are not therefore commenting on the consultation content for this subject.

## **GCSE business**

**Question 6: To what extent do you agree or disagree that GCSEs in business should be assessed entirely by exams?**

Strongly agree

Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Please give reasons for your answer:

All the content and skills can be assessed through a written examination. Therefore, although there is an element of non-exam assessment (NEA) (25% of the assessment) for the current GCSE Business Studies, this is not required for the new specifications. Assessment by examination is also easier to administer for centres as they will no longer be required to manage the logistics of organising, moderating and standardising non-exam assessment.

**Question 7: To what extent do you agree or disagree that GCSEs in business should not be tiered?**

Strongly agree

Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Please give reasons for your answer:

The assessment of GCSE Business Studies is not currently tiered and the new content and assessment objectives do not suggest that tiered assessment would need to be introduced for GCSE Business. As now, assessment will be designed to allow accessibility across the whole ability range, allowing both the less able to achieve a GCSE in business at the lower end of the grading scales whilst also stretching the most able and allowing them to fully demonstrate their knowledge, understanding and skills. By not having tiered assessment, the risk of failing to fully recognise a student's full abilities recognised and rewarded is eliminated as all students have access to the full range of marks and grades. The new 9-1 grading of GCSEs will give more scope for differentiation within a single paper than is permitted by the current A\* to G grades. The increased overall weighting of the assessment objectives on the higher level skills of application, analysis and evaluation will also allow greater differentiation and are another argument against the need for tiered assessment.

**Question 8: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed assessment objectives are appropriate for GCSEs in business?**

Strongly agree

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

Please give reasons for your answer:

The assessment objectives (AOs) are wholly appropriate for GCSEs in business and describe effectively the principle abilities that should be displayed by a student who has studied a GCSE specification based on the proposed subject content. They are comparable to the AOs for other reformed GCSEs and allow natural progression to the study of the AS and A-level Business qualifications (reformed specifications). There is also an appropriate requirement for students to demonstrate quantitative skills and this is also comparable to other reformed GCSEs.

**Question 9: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed weightings of the assessment objectives are appropriate for GCSEs in business?**

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

Please give reasons for your answer:

The AO weightings would appear to be entirely appropriate for GCSEs in business. Students have to have acquired knowledge and understanding of the subject content to be in a position to then apply this knowledge and then demonstrate the higher level skills of analysis and evaluation in the context of business. There is enough emphasis on AO1 to allow accessibility to marks for knowledge and understanding for both the less able and the most able. There is also a good balance between AO2 and AO3, but with a slight emphasis on AO2 which would be expected at GCSE. This prepares students well for the shift in emphasis in the reformed AS and A-level assessments where they are required to demonstrate a higher proportion of analysis and evaluation skills.

**Question 10: Do you have any further comments relating to the assessment of this subject?**

Nothing further to add.

## **AS and A level design and technology**

**Question 11: To what extent do you agree or disagree that for AS qualifications in design and technology, 50 per cent of the available marks should be allocated to exams and 50 per cent to non-exam assessment?**

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

Please give reasons for your answer:

We currently have a 50/50 split between coursework and written exam and, as this is essentially a practical subject, we feel that it is important to be able to properly assess those practical skills you would expect to see students demonstrate. We believe the most valid method of achieving this is through non-examined assessment and, as such feel that the balance suggested is justified. Additionally, this reflects the approach undertaken at GCSE.

**Question 12: To what extent do you agree or disagree that for A levels in design and technology, 50 per cent of the available marks should be allocated to exams and 50 per cent to non-exam assessment?**

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

Please give reasons for your answer:

See response above in relation to question 11.

**Question 13: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed assessment objectives are appropriate for AS and A levels in design and technology?**

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

Please give reasons for your answer:

We are largely happy with the assessment objectives but have some suggestions for re-wording objectives AO2, AO3 and AO4. For AO2 we suggest replacing the word *create* with *design and make* which will better allow us to split the objective into the appropriate elements. For AO3 we would like *themselves and others* to be removed as the skills and knowledge required by the objective are essentially the same for each. Finally for AO4, we suggest re-wording to *knowledge and understanding of designing and making principles and technical principles* which would better reflect the subject content.

**Question 14: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed weightings of the assessment objectives are appropriate for AS qualifications in design and technology?**

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

Please give reasons for your answer:

We feel that the weightings are appropriate for the different objectives and also offer the awarding organisations some appropriate flexibility.

**Question 15: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed weightings of the assessment objectives are appropriate for A levels in design and technology?**

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

Please give reasons for your answer:

See response above in relation to AS.

**Question 16: Do you have any further comments relating to the assessment of this subject?**

We have some concerns about the apparent requirement to undertake at least three discrete activities at AS-level. We are unsure as to how this number has been arrived at and feel it might result in issues around manageability for teachers. We feel that more flexibility could be given on this number, whilst still allowing comparability.

We would also like some clarification on point 3.20 regarding the *substantial* design and make task at A-level. We feel that greater clarity is needed regarding the terms *substantial* and *sufficient complexity*.

## **GCSE economics**

**Question 17: To what extent do you agree or disagree that GCSEs in economics should be assessed entirely by exams?**

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

Please give reasons for your answer:

All the content and skills can be assessed through a written examination as is the case for the current GCSEs in economics.

**Question 18: To what extent do you agree or disagree that GCSEs in economics should not be tiered?**

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

Please give reasons for your answer:

The assessment of GCSE Economics is not currently tiered and the new content and assessment objectives do not suggest that tiered assessment would need to be introduced for GCSE Economics. As now, assessment will be designed to allow accessibility across the whole ability range, allowing both the less able to achieve a GCSE in economics at the lower end of the grading scales whilst also stretching the most able and allowing them to fully demonstrate their knowledge, understanding and skills. By not having tiered assessment, the risk of failing to fully recognise a student's full abilities recognised and rewarded is eliminated as all students have access to the full range of marks and grades. The new 9-1 grading of GCSEs will give more scope for differentiation within a single paper than is permitted by the current A\* to G grades. The increased overall weighting of the assessment objectives on the higher level skills of application, analysis and evaluation will also allow greater differentiation and are another argument against the need for tiered assessment.

**Question 19: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed assessment objectives are appropriate for GCSEs in economics?**

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

Please give reasons for your answer:

The assessment objectives (AOs) are wholly appropriate for GCSEs in economics and describe effectively the principle abilities that should be displayed by a student who has studied a GCSE specification based on the proposed subject content. They are comparable to the AOs for other reformed GCSEs and allow natural progression to the study of the AS and A-level Economics qualifications (reformed specifications). There is also an appropriate requirement for students to demonstrate quantitative skills and this is also comparable to other reformed GCSEs.

**Question 20: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed weightings of the assessment objectives are appropriate for GCSEs in economics?**

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

Please give reasons for your answer:

The AO weightings would appear to be entirely appropriate for GCSEs in economics. Students have to have acquired knowledge and understanding of the subject content to be in a position to then apply this knowledge and then demonstrate the higher level skills of analysis and evaluation in an economic context. There is enough emphasis on AO1 to allow accessibility to marks for knowledge and understanding for both the less able and the most able. There is also a good balance between AO2 and AO3, but with a slight emphasis on AO2 which would be expected at GCSE. This prepares students well for the shift in emphasis in the reformed AS and A-level assessments where they are required to demonstrate a higher proportion of analysis and evaluation skills.

**Question 21: Do you have any further comments relating to the assessment of this subject?**

Nothing further to add.

## **GCSE engineering**

**Question 22: To what extent do you agree or disagree that for GCSEs in engineering, 60 per cent of the available marks should be allocated to exams and 40 per cent to non-exam assessment?**

- Strongly agree

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

Please give reasons for your answer:

We believe that GCSE Engineering is an academic subject with a strong practical element and, as such, much of the content is delivered in a practical focussed manner. It is therefore, important that a significant proportion of the qualification is dedicated to practical assessment, through NEA. It is noted that the proportion of NEA has been reduced from 60% in the current specification to 40%, in recognition of the fact that the draft content places less of an emphasis upon the design element and a greater emphasis upon subject content that can most appropriately be assessed through an external examination.

We believe that this balance is appropriate in terms of the content that is covered in the 'application of practical skills' section of the subject content, in conjunction with the other areas of the subject content that students will have to draw upon as part of the application of their practical skills.

**Question 23: To what extent do you agree or disagree that GCSEs in engineering should not be tiered?**

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

Please give reasons for your answer:

The proposed subject content for GCSE Engineering requires students to demonstrate a wide range of knowledge and understanding as well as display their practical and problem solving skills through the NEA. We believe that the nature of the subject content is such that it lends itself to an untiered approach, whereby students across the ability range are given the opportunity to access all aspects of the subject content at some level and where differentiation by outcome is achieved.

**Question 24: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed assessment objectives are appropriate for GCSEs in engineering?**

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

Please give reasons for your answer:

On the whole, we agree that the assessment objectives are appropriate in relation to the scope of the proposed subject content. However, there are a few concerns over the wording of some of the assessment objectives for which we have separately requested some clarification. For example, in AO1 we believe there should be some clarification on the term “engineering principles”. We have also suggested that this AO could be reworded to clarify what is meant. Similarly, “engineering contexts” in AO3 could also be made clearer.

There is also concern that, in its current wording, AO2 relates too strongly to NEA where it states “through the use of a range of tools, equipment, materials, components, and manufacturing processes”. We believe that this assessment objective should be able to be covered in part through the examined assessment.

**Question 25: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed weightings of the assessment objectives are appropriate for GCSEs in engineering?**

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

Please give reasons for your answer:

We believe that the proposed weightings of the assessment objectives are appropriate and reflect the balance of the increased subject content with the practical requirements of the subject. They also serve to reflect the increase in demand and

rigour of the qualification by placing more emphasis on higher order skills, such as analysis and evaluation.

**Question 26: Do you have any further comments relating to the assessment of this subject?**

Nothing further to add.

## **AS and A level environmental science**

**Question 27: To what extent do you agree or disagree that AS qualifications in environmental science should be assessed entirely by exams?**

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

Please give reasons for your answer:

All the content and skills can be assessed through written examinations. Subject knowledge and practical skills in environmental science are closely bound together and should therefore be tested together through indirect assessment.

Qualifications in environmental science will integrate suggestions for practical activities into the subject knowledge and understanding that will allow students the opportunity to develop and improve the required practical skills throughout the AS/A-level course.

These skills will be most effectively assessed indirectly through written examinations which will not only challenge students to demonstrate their skills, knowledge and understanding of the practical activities but will also require them to apply these skills to new or unfamiliar situations.

Students will be expected to carry out a variety of investigative activities appropriate to the study of a range of environmental systems.

The practical skills will be best developed by centres choosing activities that are appropriate to the local environmental and available resources. This choice could be limited by direct assessment of practical skills if the tasks required students to investigate a particular system or specified the use of unfamiliar apparatus.

**Question 28: To what extent do you agree or disagree that A levels in environmental science should be assessed entirely by exams?**

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

Please give reasons for your answer:

Please see our response to question 27.

**Question 29: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed assessment objectives are appropriate for AS and A levels in environmental science?**

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

Please give reasons for your answer:

The assessment objectives (AOs) are wholly appropriate for AS/A-level Environmental Science.

The assessment objectives, and associated weightings, have been designed to be comparable to the other A-level sciences. They do however retain a clear environmental focus and are consequently intrinsically linked to the context of the subject. This has removed the need for the level of stranding that appears in some of the other AS/A-level Science assessment objectives.

**Question 30: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed weightings of the assessment objectives are appropriate for AS qualifications in environmental science?**

- Strongly agree

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

Please give reasons for your answer:

Please see our response to question 29.

**Question 31: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed weightings of the assessment objectives are appropriate for A levels in environmental science?**

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

Please give reasons for your answer:

Please see our response to question 29.

**Question 32: Do you have any further comments relating to the assessment of this subject?**

Nothing further to add.

## **GCSE geology**

**Question 33: To what extent do you agree or disagree that GCSEs in geology should be assessed entirely by exams?**

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

Please give reasons for your answer:

AQA is not intending to develop a qualification in geology. We are not therefore commenting on the consultation for this subject.

**Question 34: To what extent do you agree or disagree that GCSEs in geology should not be tiered?**

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

Please give reasons for your answer:

AQA is not intending to develop a qualification in geology. We are not therefore commenting on the consultation for this subject.

**Question 35: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed assessment objectives are appropriate for GCSEs in geology?**

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

Strongly disagree

Please give reasons for your answer:

AQA is not intending to develop a qualification in geology. We are not therefore commenting on the consultation for this subject.

**Question 36: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed weightings of the assessment objectives are appropriate for GCSEs in geology?**

Strongly agree

Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Please give reasons for your answer:

AQA is not intending to develop a qualification in geology. We are not therefore commenting on the consultation for this subject.

**Question 37: Do you have any further comments relating to the assessment of this subject?**

AQA is not intending to develop a qualification in geology. We are not therefore commenting on the consultation for this subject.

## **AS and A level history of art**

**Question 38: To what extent do you agree or disagree that AS qualifications in history of art should be assessed entirely by exams?**

Strongly agree

Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Please give reasons for your answer:

History of Art is a subject that at AS seeks to assess a student's ability to apply their knowledge, skills and understanding to respond to unfamiliar information, and the ability and confidence to express and communicate knowledge and understanding and an awareness of art historical terms, concepts and issues, as well as understanding of the principal methods of analysis and interpretation and the ability to make critical judgements. All these can be validly and reliably assessed by written examination.

**Question 39: To what extent do you agree or disagree that A levels in history of art should be assessed entirely by exams?**

Strongly agree

Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Please give reasons for your answer:

A-level history of art seeks to assess a student's ability to apply their knowledge, skills and understanding to respond to unfamiliar information, and the ability and confidence to express and communicate knowledge and understanding and an awareness of art historical terms, concepts and issues, as well as understanding of the principal methods of analysis and interpretation and the ability to make critical judgements. All these can be validly and reliably assessed by written examination.

**Question 40: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed assessment objectives are appropriate for AS and A levels in history of art?**

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

Please give reasons for your answer:

The assessment objectives are entirely appropriate for AS/A-level in history of art. They describe the abilities that should be displayed by a student who has studied an AS/A-level history of art qualification based on the proposed subject content. They are comparable to the assessments objectives for other reformed AS/A-levels.

**Question 41: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed weightings of the assessment objectives are appropriate for AS qualifications in history of art?**

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

Please give reasons for your answer:

The assessment objective weightings are entirely appropriate for AS qualifications in history of art. Students must acquire knowledge and understanding of the subject content (*contexts of art*) AO1 to be able to apply visual language and demonstrate skills of analysis and interpretation of artists' work (AO2).

This then allows them to make substantiated critical judgements about art by producing coherent and reasoned argument (AO3).

The weighting ranges for each assessment objective provide sufficient opportunity to develop qualifications which secure emphasis on AO1, whilst affording opportunity for candidates of all abilities to apply knowledge and understanding in respect of AO2 and AO3.

The variance in weighting also allows demand across AS and A-level to be differentiated; i.e. in respect of the proportion of marks for application (AO2 and AO3).

**Question 42: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed weightings of the assessment objectives are appropriate for A levels in history of art?**

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

Please give reasons for your answer:

The assessment objective weightings are entirely appropriate for AS qualifications in history of art. Students must acquire knowledge and understanding of the subject content (*contexts of art*) AO1 to be able to apply visual language and demonstrate skills of analysis and interpretation of artists' work (AO2).

This then allows them to make substantiated critical judgements about art by producing coherent and reasoned argument (AO3).

The weighting ranges for each assessment objective provide sufficient opportunity to develop qualifications which secure emphasis on AO1, whilst affording opportunity for candidates of all abilities to apply knowledge and understanding in respect of AO2 and AO3.

The variance in weighting also allows demand across AS and A-level to be differentiated; i.e. in respect of the proportion of marks for application (AO2 and AO3).

**Question 43: Do you have any further comments relating to the assessment of this subject?**

The number of artists, periods, texts, movements, works etc. will allow awarding organisations to develop specifications of appropriate breadth *and* depth. Any increase in the number of artists, for example, will affect our ability to set assessments of sufficient demand.

## **AS and A level music technology**

**Question 44: To what extent do you agree or disagree that for AS qualifications in music technology, 60 per cent of the available marks should be allocated to exams and 40 per cent to non-exam assessment?**

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

Please give reasons for your answer:

AQA is not intending to develop a qualification in music technology. We are not therefore commenting on the consultation for this subject.

**Question 45: To what extent do you agree or disagree that for A levels in music technology, 60 per cent of the available marks should be allocated to exams and 40 per cent to non-exam assessment?**

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

Please give reasons for your answer:

AQA is not intending to develop a qualification in music technology. We are not therefore commenting on the consultation for this subject.

**Question 46: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed assessment objectives are appropriate for AS and A levels in music technology?**

- Strongly agree

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

Please give reasons for your answer:

AQA is not intending to develop a qualification in music technology. We are not therefore commenting on the consultation for this subject.

**Question 47: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed weightings of the assessment objectives are appropriate for AS qualifications in music technology?**

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

Please give reasons for your answer:

AQA is not intending to develop a qualification in music technology. We are not therefore commenting on the consultation for this subject.

**Question 48: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed weightings of the assessment objectives are appropriate for A levels in music technology?**

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

Please give reasons for your answer:

AQA is not intending to develop a qualification in music technology. We are not therefore commenting on the consultation for this subject.

**Question 49: Do you have any further comments relating to the assessment of this subject?**

AQA is not intending to develop a qualification in music technology. We are not therefore commenting on the consultation content for this subject.

## **AS and A level philosophy**

**Question 50: To what extent do you agree or disagree that AS qualifications in philosophy should be assessed entirely by exams?**

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

Please give reasons for your answer:

The existing assessment of Philosophy is entirely by examination. This is most appropriate for the subject and is already proving particularly successful following the recent redevelopment of our specification (first taught from September 2014).

**Question 51: To what extent do you agree or disagree that A levels in philosophy should be assessed entirely by exams?**

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

Please give reasons for your answer:

The nature of Philosophy lends itself to assessment through examination only.

**Question 52: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed assessment objectives are appropriate for AS and A levels in philosophy?**

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

Please give reasons for your answer:

The proposed assessment objectives are quite different from the current ones. The current assessment objectives are supported by strong empirical evidence that they appropriately reflect the subject and drive valid and reliable assessments, which demonstrably meet the Ofqual regulatory criteria. We have concerns about the possible negative impact that the proposed AOs may have on valid and reliable assessments in Philosophy. We are aware that Ofqual has concerns over a two AO model, as per existing AOs and those put forward by AQA and stakeholders during development of criteria, but we want to work with Ofqual to ensure that new AOs support continued effective assessment with the right balance of skills appropriate for the subject.

We look forward to the opportunity to work with Ofqual further to ensure that the proposed AOs might allow the existing, effective assessment to continue. We are happy to provide empirical evidence to support our current approach to assessment in Philosophy.

**Question 53: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed weightings of the assessment objectives are appropriate for AS qualifications in philosophy?**

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

Please give reasons for your answer:

Until we are able to establish how the AOs will operate in assessments, to ensure a continuation of the effective approach working currently, we are unable to agree that the weightings are appropriate. We therefore look forward to working with Ofqual further to discuss how the proposed AOs might be reflected in current, effective assessment of Philosophy.

**Question 54: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed weightings of the assessment objectives are appropriate for A levels in philosophy?**

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

Please give reasons for your answer:

Please see our response to question 53.

**Question 55: Do you have any further comments relating to the assessment of this subject?**

Nothing further to add.

## **GCSE psychology**

**Question 56: To what extent do you agree or disagree that GCSEs in psychology should be assessed entirely by exams?**

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

Please give reasons for your answer:

AQA agree that GCSE Psychology should be assessed entirely by exam. The current GCSE in Psychology is assessed entirely by exam, as is the new AS/A-level. While there is some element of practical work within a GCSE Psychology specification, this can still be carried out by teachers and students without the need for Non Exam Assessment (NEA).

**Question 57: To what extent do you agree or disagree that GCSEs in psychology should not be tiered?**

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

Please give reasons for your answer:

AQA agree that GCSE Psychology should not be tiered. The current GCSE Psychology specifications are not tiered. The content and skills have been designed to allow for appropriate differentiation between all students and there is no rationale to introduce tiering. There is no content that is exclusively accessible to 'higher' tier students and AQA are confident that assessments can be designed (as we are currently able to do) to meet the needs of all students regardless of ability.

**Question 58: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed assessment objectives are appropriate for GCSEs in psychology?**

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

Please give reasons for your answer:

The proposed assessment objectives are appropriate for GCSE Psychology and accurately express the abilities that students will be expected to display at the end of the course. The proposed assessment objectives also allow for progression to AS/A-

Level, which is clear to see as the GCSE assessment objectives have been designed as a direct derivative (where appropriate) of the AS/A-Level assessment objectives. Students will need to be able to show knowledge and understanding, application of that knowledge and understanding and analysis and evaluation and reach judgements and conclusions, across a common set of psychological principles appropriate to the subject and level.

**Question 59: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed weightings of the assessment objectives are appropriate for GCSEs in psychology?**

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

Please give reasons for your answer:

The weightings of the assessment objectives are appropriate for a GCSE in Psychology. Students will be expected to show a considerable amount of knowledge and understanding (35%) and application of their knowledge and understanding (35%). Students will also be required to analyse and evaluate and reach judgement and conclusions to a significant degree (30%) through the examinations. The requirement for 20% of the assessment of the overall qualification to be allocated to Research Methods (of which 10% is allocated to mathematical skills) is appropriate as stakeholders have outlined the importance of these skills to the subject. This also accounts for the slightly higher weighting of AO1 and AO2.

**Question 60: Do you have any further comments relating to the assessment of this subject?**

Nothing further to add.

## **GCSE sociology**

**Question 61: To what extent do you agree or disagree that GCSEs in sociology should be assessed entirely by exams?**

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

Please give reasons for your answer:

Non Exam Assessment is not required as the subject content can be fully assessed via examination.

**Question 62: To what extent do you agree or disagree that GCSEs in sociology should not be tiered?**

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

Please give reasons for your answer:

GCSE Sociology can be assessed by all ability groups without the necessity for tiered exams. In addition, the new grading system will allow for more differentiation between students over a single paper, therefore tiered papers are not necessary.

**Question 63: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed assessment objectives are appropriate for GCSEs in sociology?**

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

Please give reasons for your answer:

The assessment objectives align with the A-level assessment objectives. This ensures consistency of approach and appropriate progression between GCSE and AS and A-level.

**Question 64: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed weightings of the assessment objectives are appropriate for GCSEs in sociology?**

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

Please give reasons for your answer:

The introduction of theory, and more specific research methods and greater breadth and depth increases demand. The weightings of the proposed AOs will ensure that the broader, deeper and more complex content is assessed at a realistic level for 16 year olds. They also facilitate a suitable range of question types that will assess the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding for a GCSE in Sociology. The weightings reflect appropriately those set for the reformed AS sociology and therefore provide suitable challenge across the full range of student abilities.

**Question 65: Do you have any further comments relating to the assessment of this subject?**

Nothing further to add.

## Equality impact

**Question 66: We have identified a number of ways the proposed requirements for reformed GCSEs, AS and A levels may impact (positively or negatively) on persons who share a protected characteristic. Are there any other potential impacts we have not identified? If so, what are they?**

Yes

No

With regards to GCSE Engineering, we are aware of some concerns that the subject content may lend itself to be a more traditionally 'boys' subject, something which the engineering community is keen to move away from. The subject already has a predominantly male entry and there is a concern that the draft content will not reverse this trend. We have included this concern in our response to the DfE subject content consultation.

**Question 67: 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

With regards to GCSE Engineering, there is evidence from some of the stakeholders that the content could be made more engaging and inspiring by including more modern areas of engineering, such as (bio)medical engineering, entertainment, sports engineering etc.

There is also a feeling that an opportunity has been missed in the 'global context' section. It could be presented as a whole new way of thinking about engineering as problem solving for global challenges. These suggestions have been sent to DfE as part of our response on the subject content.

**Question 68: Have you any other comments on the impacts of the proposals on persons who share a protected characteristic?**

Yes

No