



GCSE Reform Consultation Questions

June 2013



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Ofqual/13/5292

Annex 1: All questions

This consultation is about the regulatory aspects of proposed changes to GCSEs taken by students in England.

We would like to know your views on the proposals before we put in place regulatory requirements for reformed GCSEs.

We will publish the evaluation of responses to the consultation later this year. In order for us to evaluate responses properly, we need to understand who is responding and in what capacity. Therefore, however you respond, we will only be able to consider your responses to the consultation questions if you complete the information page.

Details on how to respond are given below.

Please note we may publish all or part of your response unless you tell us in your answer to the confidentiality question below that you want us to treat your response as confidential.

The Department for Education (DfE) is running a parallel consultation¹ on the content of the reformed GCSEs. If you have views on the draft content you should respond to the DfE's consultation. If you do include in your response to this Ofqual consultation comments that should have been directed to the DfE we may copy these to the DfE unless you state that your response is confidential.

The deadline for responses to this consultation is **17.00 on 3rd September 2013**.

How to respond to this consultation

Please respond to the consultation questions using one of these methods.

Complete the online response form at <http://comment.ofqual.gov.uk/gcse-reform-june-2013/category/respond/>

Email your completed response document to [consultations@ofqual](mailto:consultations@ofqual.gov.uk)

Information pages**About you*****Your details:**

Name:	Professor Alice Rogers
Position:	Education Secretary
Name of organisation or group (if applicable):	London Mathematical Society
Address:	57-58 Russell Square, London, WC1B 4HS
Email:	education@lms.ac.uk
Telephone number:	020 7927 0801

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

Yes No

Are the views expressed on this consultation an official response from the organisation you represent or your personal view?*

Personal views

Official response from an organisation/group (complete the type of responding organisation)

If you ticked 'personal views', are you a ...

Student

Parent/carers

Teacher (but not responding on behalf of a school)

Other (including general public) (please state capacity) _____

If you ticked 'official response from an organisation or group', please respond accordingly,

Type of responding organisation*

- Awarding organisation for 14–19 general qualifications
- Awarding organisation for 14–19 vocational qualifications
- Awarding organisation for vocational and/or professional qualifications
- Awarding organisation for other kinds of qualifications
- School/college (please complete the next question)
- Private training provider
- Higher education institute
- Employer
- Government body/organisation (national a

Type of representative group/interest group

- Group of awarding organisations
- Union
- Sector skills council
- Academy chain
- Employer/business representative group
- Equali

Consultation questions

Before answering the questions below we have some general comments to make.

This response relates to mathematics. The London Mathematical Society is pleased to have this opportunity to respond to this consultation, and particularly welcomes the re

(") Strongly disagree

() Don't know/no opinion

2. Do you have any comments to make on these propositions?

We believe that the aim of GCSE must be the assessment of students' achievements, and this must be done in a way to fairly measure the achievement of each individual, encourage valuable learning and lead to successful progression. It is widely recognised that the current system of using GCSE as a school accountability measure has had many damaging consequences, and can lead to a conflict between what is best for an individual and what is best for a school. This makes us extremely cautious about using GCSE results for accountability. It is possible that a more carefully constructed accountability measure based on a wider set of criteria (including use of ALL grades achieved and successful progression to level 3 study, and not heavily dependent on one grade boundary) would remove these undesirable consequences, but the scheme will need careful construction by a team of respected and experienced people which is given time to complete the task well.

Section 2 Key design features – tiering

3. To address concerns that tiering can limit students' ambitions we propose to apply the principle that qualifications should only be tiered if:
- ! manageable assessments cannot be designed that would both allow students at the lower end of the ability range to demonstrate their

Don't know

Do you

Don't know/no opinion

21. November re-sits should be restricted to students in Year 12 and above. To what extent do you agree with this proposition?

Strongly agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Don't know/no opinion

25. Do you have any comments on the proposed assessment arrangements for the reformed GCSEs?

These cannot be fully determined for mathematics until the nature of the double GCSE is determined

Section 4: Key design features: reporting student performance

26. Student performance in the reformed GCSEs should be reported using grades

(rather than marks.) Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree Don't know/no opinion

~~Strongly agree with this proposition~~

- Grades with marks
 - Grades with scaled scores
 - Grades with percentile scores
 - Other combination of approaches
 - Don't know/~~no opinion~~ until double mathematics GCSE is determined
29. Eight grades would allow for sufficient differentiation of performance between students. To what extent do you agree with this proposition?
- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
 - Don't know/~~no opinion~~ until double mathematics GCSE is determined
30. The number of grades at the higher and middle performance range should be increased to allow for greater differentiation. To what extent do you agree with this proposition?
- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
 - Don't know/~~no opinion~~ until double mathematics GCSE is determined
31. The number of grades at the lower end of the performance range should be reduced. To what extent do you agree with this proposition?
- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
 - Don't know/~~no opinion~~ until double mathematics GCSE is determined

32. Grades should be described using a new system to differentiate the

Section 6: Regulating the reformed GCSEs

41. Awarding organisations will be required to use and assess the subject content requirements as set out by the Department for Education in the development of reformed GCSEs (for those subjects for which the Department for Education consults on and publishes subject content requirements). To what extent do you agree with this proposition?

Strongly agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Don't know/no opinion

42. Exam boards should be required to develop assessment strategies for their reformed GCSEs. To what extent do you agree with this proposition?

Strongly agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Don't know/no opinion

The assessment strategy for mathematics should be part of the criteria which all awarding bodies must satisfy, and be constructed by a competent, respected body of mathematicians given time to complete the task

43. Exam boards should be required to review systematically the effectiveness of their assessments for each of their reformed GCSEs. To what extent do you agree with this proposition?

Strongly agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Don't know/~~no opinion~~ **and at OfQual/DfE level**

This should of course be done by each exam board, but also by a competent mathematics team, which the DfE should ensure exists, looking at all boards. The membership of this team, and its operations, should be transparent.

44. The Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009, requires us to consult before we impose an accreditation requirement on exam boards. Do you agree that the reformed GCSEs should be subject to an accreditation requirement, that is, that they must be checked by Ofqual before they can be made available?

Yes

No

45. Do you have any other comments on the regulation of the reformed GCSEs?

Early and multiple entry should at least be discouraged

Section 7: Subject-specific features of the reform

46. Please indicate whether you have read the subject content consultation document and ticking one box per row:

Subject	I have read the DfE subject content	I have not read the DfE subject content
English language		
English literature		
Mathematics	"	
Sciences (biology, chemistry, physics and double award science)		
Geography		

Hi

Contact

Would you be happy for us to contact you again in relation to this consultation response? (") Yes () No

Email address of key contact person to whom we may speak with about your response to this consultation* education@lms.ac.uk

Additional information

How did you find out about this consultation?

- () Ofqual's newsletters or other communications
- () From Ofqual's website
- () Media/press
- () Via internet search
- () Via another organisation (please state which) _____
- (") Other (please state how) direct approach from DfE

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

- () Yes
- () No

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

It would have been preferable if the structure of the questionnaire could have allowed comment on the answer to each question, as the options offered were not, and could not be, sufficient to fully convey a response.

