



## Analysis of the Completing GCSE, AS and A level Reform Consultation

Final report

December 2014

Ofqual/14/5549

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## Executive Summary

### Background

From 4 June to 30 July Ofqual undertook a consultation on Completing GCSE, AS and A level reform. This consultation was about what needs to be settled so that the reform of these qualifications in England can be completed.

The consultation proposed that all subjects should be reformed and that comparability of standards across them would be promoted by the development of core content. It suggested how this might be done if neither the Government nor the A Level Content Advisory Board (ALCAB) intends to take a role in reviewing subject content for the remaining subjects, given that Ofqual is not responsible for curriculum development or subject content.

The consultation also proposed principles to determine subject availability and proposed timescales for last awards of legacy subjects. This included subjects similar to, or overlapping with, those already reformed or already being considered for reform. The consultation invited respondents to identify whether any such subjects served a distinctive purpose and should be granted an exception to continue alongside the reformed ones, with a view to them being reformed to a later date. The consultation made clear that ultimately under the proposals, it would be for exam boards to make decisions about which subjects they proposed to develop for reform for first teaching in 2017, and that Ofqual would consider whether there was a strong case that such subjects met its proposed regulatory expectations.

Following a tendering process, Pye Tait Consulting was contracted by Ofqual to undertake the analysis of the responses to this consultation. Responses were logged by Ofqual and handed over to Pye Tait Consulting for independent analysis and anonymous reporting in line with the Data Protection Act 1988 and Market Research Society (MRS) Code of Conduct.

Responses to the consultation were possible through a variety of media, including submission of an online, electronic or paper copy of the completed consultation questionnaire; via email or other hard copy correspondence.

## Overview of Responses

In total, 1,656 consultation responses were analysed to inform this report, of which 1,138 (69%) were in the form of completed questionnaires and the remainder a mix of free-form emails and hard copy letters.

- Among the 1,138 respondents to the formal consultation questionnaire, the majority (86%) were personal (individual) views and 14% were official (organisation-level) views;
- Among the 518 hard copy and email respondents (i.e. those not enclosing a completed questionnaire), a similar majority (88%) were personal views, 59 (11%) were official views and less than 1% were either indeterminable or consisted of emails sent to Ofqual informing them of a petition on the planned reforms;
- Of the 974 personal responses received via the consultation questionnaire, the vast majority (82%) were from teachers; and
- Of the 455 personal responses received via hard copy and email responses, just under half (49%) were from teachers and 29% from current or former students.

## Developing Core Content

Ofqual proposed that every subject will have defined core content and that qualifications will be developed by exam boards on the basis of this content.

The majority of respondents to the survey agree that the use of core content will help make sure qualifications are:

- Comparable across exam boards (951 of 1,125 respondents, 85%);
- Fit for purpose (877 of 1,131 respondents, 78%);
- Easier for users to understand (855 of 1,121 respondents, 76%); and
- Comparable over time (818 of 1,117 respondents, 73%).

Between 4% and 5% of respondents (between 116 and 199 individuals) stated that they strongly disagreed with one or more specific aspects relating to the development of core content (Table 1 in the main section of the report).

Ofqual proposed to set up a regulatory framework to define and detail how exam boards can work together to develop core content and of 1,118 respondents, 835 (75%) agree with this proposal.

A smaller number of respondents were opposed to some or all of the proposals in relation to core content: some respondents are critical of the value of core content in ensuring fitness for purpose of qualifications (38 responses), while others raised concerns about exam boards leading the development of subject content (43 responses) and 110 responses expressed criticism of the concept of core content in general.

## Consulting with Stakeholders

Ofqual proposed that exam boards will be required to consult with key stakeholders, such as subject associations and teachers, in order for them to input into core content development.

Of the 1,121 consultation questionnaire respondents:

- Almost all (1,084, 97%) agree that exam boards should consult with stakeholders when developing core content for all reformed qualifications (of which 760 (68%) strongly agree with the statement); and
- 97% also agree with the key stakeholder groups that Ofqual suggested should be consulted as part of this process (i.e. subject associations, teachers, employers, higher and further education and equality groups).

All respondents were invited to suggest additional stakeholders to be consulted when developing core content, and a total of 417 respondents made suggestions. The most common suggestion (raised by 168 respondents) was that current or former students should be involved. Other suggestions included professional bodies and learned societies, parents and industry professionals.

## Developing Subjects – Key Considerations

Respondents to the consultation questionnaire were asked the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with a range of key principles relating to the reforms.

The findings reveal agreement is most common in relation to the following:

- The performance of students taking GCSEs/AS/A levels in any subject should be differentiated against the full grade range using the relevant grading scale (92% or 1,014 of 1,104 respondents agree);
- GCSE/AS/A level subjects should be set at a level of demand consistent with that of reformed qualifications (79% or 866 of 1,100 respondents agree); and

- Current GCSE/AS/A level subjects cannot always be easily distinguishable from others with a similar title (61% or 678 of 1,104 respondents disagree) – in other words, the majority of respondents do believe that qualifications can be easily distinguishable and three quarters (75% or 836 of 1,114 respondents) also agree that they should be easily distinguishable from other GCSE/AS/A level subjects.

## Last Award of Unreformed Qualifications

Ofqual proposed that reformed GCSE, AS and A level qualifications should not run alongside unreformed versions for any longer than is necessary. It expects the last award of all unreformed GCSEs, AS and A levels to take place by 2018.

- Around two thirds of respondents to the consultation questionnaire agree with the timescale for the last award of unreformed qualifications by 2018. Specifically:
  - Of 1,003 respondents that provided their views on GCSE qualifications, 689 (69%) agreed;
  - Of 1,068 respondents that provided their views on A level qualifications, 709 (66%) agreed; and
  - 710 out of 1,062 respondents (67%) agreed with respect to AS qualifications.

The main points of disagreement (based on 333 responses across the three qualifications) is that the current timeframe is too short to fully consult with those who need to be involved, to ensure new qualifications can be properly designed, and for candidates to understand the options open to them.

A total of 92 respondents provided suggestions for two alternative approaches for implementing the changes whilst maintaining continuity and minimising potential confusion and overlap. Specifically, a staggered approach to the reform timescale so that students studying a reformed GCSE go on to study a reformed AS and A level subject (50 responses); and changes being introduced for all qualifications and subjects at the same time, so students are not taught reformed and unreformed subjects and qualifications concurrently (42 responses).

## Similar or Overlapping Qualifications

Ofqual proposed that the content of each subject should be distinct, should encompass core content appropriate for that subject, and that the more subject variants there are in qualifications that claim to serve the same purpose and cover similar subject areas, the more difficult it can be to ensure validity and comparability.



Appendix B of the consultation document contained two lists:

- GCSE, AS and A level subjects proposed by Ofqual for possible discontinuation (as they have been provisionally identified as similar to, or having considerable overlap with, other continuing subjects); and
- GCSE, AS and A Level subjects that could be reformed for first teaching from 2017 should exam boards choose to do so.

Those subjects proposed for possible discontinuation had been determined based on them being “unlikely to meet [Ofqual’s] standards requirements” as part of the reform process (Consultation document, p. 14) since they were judged similar to, or overlapping with, subjects that have been reformed for first teaching in 2015 or 2016. It should be noted that prior to the consultation taking place, Ofqual had not made firm decisions about the future of these subjects, as they may still be open to reform should it be possible that they can meet the required standards.

The consultation document made clear that Ofqual does not want any particular qualification unavailable for any time if a strong case can be made for the subject and if subsequent reform would bring it in line with regulatory expectations. Ofqual particularly wanted to understand whether some of these qualifications do in fact serve a very distinct purpose and should remain as subjects in their own right.

Views were put forward primarily by teachers of specific subjects, keen to emphasise the continuing validity and distinctiveness of these subjects, as well as their value in supporting students’ onward education and career development.

- The majority of questionnaire respondents (680 of 1,104 respondents, 62%) disagree that Ofqual should start to apply its principles to discontinue similar or overlapping qualifications alongside the current reforms;
- 75% or 804 of the 1,074 respondents believe that similar or overlapping qualifications being considered by Ofqual for discontinuation serve a very distinct purpose from the reformed subjects, of whom the vast majority (697 of 796 respondents that answered this question or 88%) believe that any alternative qualifications should be granted an exception to continue alongside the reformed ones in a given subject; and
- The most significant amount of support has been received for retaining *Environmental Studies/Environmental Science* (372 supporters), followed by *Catering* (181 respondents) and *Home Economics (Food, Nutrition and Health)*; 167 respondents).

Further detail about the volume of support for retaining individual subjects is presented in section 7 and a summary of respondents’ arguments in support of individual subjects is explored in Appendix 2.

## Equality Impact

- Of 1,048 respondents, 428 (41%) were of the view that there are potential equality impacts from Ofqual's proposals that have not yet been identified;
- A similar proportion (389 of 1,003 respondents, 39%) were of the view that Ofqual could take additional steps to mitigate any negative impacts of the proposals on persons who share a protected characteristic; and
- A small proportion (137 of 994 respondents, 14%) stated that they had other comments on the impact of the proposals on persons who share a protected characteristic.

Altogether 410 respondents commented in response to open questions of the consultation questionnaire, or via email and hard-copy submissions, on possible equality impacts of the proposals.

Of these, some 59 respondents specifically mentioned impacts on students with protected characteristics and ten respondents identified possible equality impacts of the proposals if specific subjects are to be discontinued. Collectively these respondents feel that vocational, creative and applied subjects proposed for possible discontinuation tend to be more accessible to students with disabilities and special educational needs; that some of those subjects are more accessible for males, while others are more accessible to females; and that certain subjects offer the opportunity for different learning channels, such as visual and kinaesthetic.

Section 8 of the report provides more detailed analysis of the Equality Impact of the reforms, an overview of responses submitted by equality organisations/groups, as well as comments in relation to specific subjects.

## Regulatory Impact

The consultation questionnaire asked respondents whether they envisaged any regulatory impact resulting from the proposals that had not already been identified.

- A small proportion, 130 of 983 respondents (13%) confirmed this to be the case, of which 20 respondents provided detailed comments; and
- Most of these 20 respondents identified cost implications, as well as the potential impact from discontinuing certain subjects. These are set out in detail in section 9.

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Background and Context

In February 2013 the Secretary of State for Education initiated reform of GCSE, AS and A level qualifications. The reform of GCSEs is intended to make them more challenging so pupils are better prepared for further academic or vocational study, or for work<sup>1</sup>. The reform of AS and A levels is to make sure they properly equip students for higher education<sup>2</sup>.

Ofqual is responsible for ensuring that the reformed GCSE, AS and A level qualifications are of the right standard and in-line with Government policy aims. The reform of subjects being undertaken for first teaching in 2015 and 2016 is already underway. The Department for Education (DfE) is leading on the development of subject content, with Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) also advising on certain A level subjects through the A Level Content Advisory Board (ALCAB).

While the 2015/2016 subjects cover the majority of GCSE and A level qualification entries, there is still a considerable list of subjects with lower participation numbers that are yet to be reformed. The Government will not be leading on the content development for these remaining subjects. Ofqual has proposed a strategy for the development of content for these subjects that will meet its standards requirements and enable effective regulation.

Ofqual facilitated the *Completing GCSE, AS and A level Reform*<sup>3</sup> consultation between 4<sup>th</sup> June 2014 and 30<sup>th</sup> July 2014. The purpose was to obtain views and feedback on issues yet to be decided in relation to the reform of these remaining subjects.

A key element of the reform process is that the content of each of these subjects should be distinct (i.e. not similar to, or overlapping with, other subjects) and of a comparable standard. The consultation document included suggestions for how this could be achieved and an indicative end-date for the reform of these subjects.

Further details about Ofqual's proposals and suggestions as part of the reform of these subjects are summarised at the start of each chapter of this report.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/reforming-qualifications-and-the-curriculum-to-better-prepare-pupils-for-life-after-school/supporting-pages/gcse-reform> [Accessed 05.08.14]

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/reforming-qualifications-and-the-curriculum-to-better-prepare-pupils-for-life-after-school/supporting-pages/a-and-as-level-reform> [Accessed 05.08.14]

<sup>3</sup> [http://ofqual.gov.uk/ofdoc\\_categories/consultation-docs/consultation-on-completing-gcse-as-and-a-level-reform-june-2014/](http://ofqual.gov.uk/ofdoc_categories/consultation-docs/consultation-on-completing-gcse-as-and-a-level-reform-june-2014/) [Accessed 05.08.14]

## 1.2 Overview of the Consultation, Analysis and Reporting

### 1.2.1 Acquisition of Responses

Ofqual's consultation document, *Completing GCSE, AS and A Level Reform*<sup>4</sup>, explained the proposed changes and featured a questionnaire for individuals or organisations to complete and return. In addition, or as an alternative to completing the questionnaire, Ofqual invited responses via email or letter.

Responses were logged by Ofqual and handed over to Pye Tait Consulting for independent analysis and anonymous reporting in line with the Data Protection Act 1988 and Market Research Society (MRS) Code of Conduct.

Responses were received in a combination of ways, including:

- Completion of an online version of the consultation questionnaire;
- Submission of an electronic copy (Word/PDF) or printed copy of the consultation questionnaire;
- Email (with or without the enclosure of an electronic copy of the consultation questionnaire in MS Word/PDF format); and
- Letter (with or without the enclosure of a completed hard copy of the consultation questionnaire).

The scale and format of consultation responses is presented in Section 2.

### 1.2.2 Analysis and Reporting

This report presents the findings from the formal consultation questionnaire and summarises views and opinions raised via emails and letters. A combination of Tables and textual analysis is used to collate and set out the findings.

From section 3 onwards, the majority of the Tables<sup>5</sup> present the quantitative analysis from the consultation questionnaire. This encompasses responses to the structured yes/no questions as well scaling questions that measured perceptions from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'.

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<sup>4</sup> [http://ofqual.gov.uk/ofdoc\\_categories/consultation-docs/consultation-on-completing-gcse-as-and-a-level-reform-june-2014/](http://ofqual.gov.uk/ofdoc_categories/consultation-docs/consultation-on-completing-gcse-as-and-a-level-reform-june-2014/) [Accessed 05.08.14]

<sup>5</sup> NB: Tables 20 to 25 provide data covering all respondents (including those who submitted freeform email and letters).

For ease of reference, the consultation questionnaire numbers are included within the Tables and the base number of respondents for each question is shown below each Table.

Breakdowns of the results by type of respondent are presented in Appendix 3 (personal respondent categories) and Appendix 4 (official respondent categories).

Each chapter begins by presenting the main findings from the consultation questionnaire's multiple-choice and Likert-scale questions (i.e. 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'). Where applicable, these are followed by a summary of responses to open-ended questions – shown in **bold**. In addition, quotes are provided to illustrate the types of personal and official organisation-level views.

Throughout the report, the term 'exam board' is used to denote those organisations which are accredited to offer GCSEs, AS and A levels, while the term 'awarding organisation' is used to denote all organisations that are recognised by Ofqual to deliver regulated qualifications.

#### **Point of clarity:**

Appendix B of the consultation document contained two lists:

- GCSE, AS and A level subjects proposed by Ofqual for possible discontinuation (as they have been provisionally identified as similar to, or having considerable overlap with, other continuing subjects); and
- GCSE, AS and A Level subjects that could be reformed for first teaching from 2017 should exam boards choose to do so.

Those subjects proposed for possible discontinuation had been determined based on their being "unlikely to meet [Ofqual's] standards requirements" as part of the reform process (Consultation document, p. 14) since they were judged similar to, or overlapping with, subjects that have been reformed for first teaching in 2015 or 2016. It should be noted that prior to the consultation taking place, Ofqual had not made firm decisions about the future of these subjects, as they may still be open to reform should it be possible that they can meet the required standards.

The consultation document made clear that Ofqual does not want any particular qualification unavailable for any time if a strong case can be made for the subject and if subsequent reform would bring it in line with regulatory expectations. Ofqual was particularly interested to understand whether some of these qualifications do in fact serve a very distinct purpose and should remain as subjects in their own right.

## 2. Overview of Consultation Responses

The consultation generated 1,712 total responses, of which 1,656 were valid for analysis. Of all the responses analysed, 1,138 (69%) were in the form of completed questionnaires, 445 were submitted via email, and 73 were hard-copy responses.

- Among the 1,138 respondents who replied using the formal consultation questionnaire, the majority (86%) provided personal (individual) views and 14% provided official (organisation-level) views<sup>6</sup>;
- Among the 518 hard copy and email respondents (i.e. those not enclosing a completed questionnaire), a similar majority (88%) provided personal views, 59 (11%) provided official views, and less than 1% could not be determined in terms of their perspective or were auto-generated petition emails sent to Ofqual's consultation email address;
- Of the 974 personal responses received via the consultation questionnaire, the vast majority (82%) were from teachers;
- Of the 455 personal responses received via hard copy and email, just under half (49%) were from teachers and 29% were from students;
- These findings reveal that most students replied to the consultation via email or letter to express individual views about matters of particular importance to them, as opposed to completing the full consultation questionnaire;
- Among official responses from schools, a mix of different school types are represented;
- The vast majority (96%) of responses to the formal consultation questionnaire were from England, with minority representation from the three other UK nations and from overseas, including Dubai, Gibraltar, Poland, Hong Kong and Indonesia; and
- The majority of hard copy and email responses were also from England (at least 79%) although the nation of origin could not be determined for 19% of these responses.

Further detail about the profile of consultation respondents (including breakdowns of respondent numbers by various characteristics) is presented in Appendix 6.

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<sup>6</sup> Respondents were asked to classify their views as being either their personal views or an official response from the organisation they represent.

### 3. Developing Core Content

#### Summary of proposals

As reformed qualifications may be offered by more than one exam board, Ofqual proposed that exam boards should develop these qualifications based on defined core content. This core content is the minimum expected from an exam board offering the qualification in that subject (with the same purpose and/or title). The intention is to ensure qualifications in the same subject are of comparable demand and standard.

As core content is central to maintaining standards, Ofqual proposed that exam boards should not be able to develop GCSE, AS and A level qualifications unless core content has first been determined. It is believed this approach will strike the right balance between ensuring a reasonable range of subjects and involving the right expertise at the right stages.

Furthermore, Ofqual proposes a regulatory framework to define and detail how exam boards can work together to develop core content (*Completing GCSE, AS and A level Reform* policy consultation document, p. 8-9).

Over three quarters of consultation questionnaire respondents agree that the use of core and common content will help make sure qualifications are fit for purpose, comparable across exam boards and easier for users to understand.

A similar (albeit slightly smaller) majority of 73% agree that this will also help make qualifications comparable over time.

Only a very small proportion of respondents, between 4% and 5%, strongly disagree with the four statements (Table 1).

**Table 1 Core and common content – extent of agreement**

Core and common content across all exam boards offering a qualification will help make sure qualifications are:		Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know/ no opinion
Q1	Fit for purpose <i>Base 1, 131 responses</i>	21.8%	55.9%	14.7%	5.2%	2.4%
Q2	Comparable across exam boards <i>Base 1, 125 responses</i>	27.1%	57.4%	10.3%	3.6%	1.6%
Q3	Comparable over time <i>Base 1, 117 responses</i>	18.1%	55.1%	17.8%	4.2%	4.7%
Q4	Easier for users to understand <i>Base 1, 121 responses</i>	19.1%	57.2%	15.8%	4.4%	3.6%

Respondents to the questionnaire were also asked about their views on a regulatory framework to let exam boards develop core subject content and three quarters (75%) of respondents agree with Ofqual's proposal (Table 2).

**Table 2 Regulatory Framework – extent of agreement**

		Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know/no opinion
Q5	Ofqual proposes to set up a regulatory framework to let exam boards develop core subject content	12.7%	62.0%	12.4%	4.5%	8.4%

*Base 1, 118 responses*

Some respondents shared their concerns and alternative ideas about the development of core content and a total of 258 questionnaire respondents (23%) raised concerns about:

1. The potential value of core content in ensuring fitness for purpose;
2. The proposed developmental process of core content; and
3. The concept of core content more generally.

Respondents' views in relation to each of these three areas is summarised in sections 3.1 to 3.3, below



### 3.1 The Potential Value of Core Content

Respondents who agreed with the proposals relating to core content were not asked to expand on their views, but from the responses received via email, one exam board gave a more detailed explanation:

*“Ofqual’s stated purposes of GCSEs and A-levels are helpful, and it is important that common content satisfies these purposes if the qualifications are to be fit for purpose.”*

*Exam board (official response)*

Other views:

- **Core content only ensures fitness for purpose if it is not too prescriptive (15 respondents);**
- **More emphasis needs to be placed on assessment standards rather than similar content to ensure fitness for purpose of qualifications (14 respondents); and**
- **Standards should be set around the development of core skills rather than core content (9 respondents).**

*“Core content may ensure that specifications from different exam boards cover broadly the same content, but it will not, in itself, ensure comparability of offerings from those exam boards. Comparability encompasses many different elements, but perhaps the most commonly held view would be comparability of demand is the most important one. In other words, ensuring it is no easier or harder to get a certain grade with one exam board than another. Core content alone will not guarantee this.”*

*Exam board (official response)*

*“Where only one awarding organisation offers a qualification, we do not believe that centrally specified (or agreed) common core content is a prerequisite for fitness for purpose. It is important to avoid inhibiting innovation through a requirement for common subject content.”*

*Exam board (official response)*

*“We are supportive of establishing a degree of common content, but how content is assessed is much more important than it being common in terms of fitness for purpose and comparability between boards and over time.”*

*Business representative group (official response)*

*“We believe there should be a stronger link between the curriculum and assessment and that the Education Select Committee's proposal of national subject committees would have served this purpose. Allowing exam boards to develop the subject content inverts the logical process and will increase the risk of the KS4 curriculum being entirely driven by exam considerations.”*

*Equality organisation or group*

### **3.2 The Proposed Development Process for Core Content**

A small number of respondents expressed views about the development process for core content and who should be involved.

- **A total of 54 respondents agreed with Ofqual that in addition to exam boards, other organisations and groups should have involvement in the development of core content;**
- **Core content should be developed by a neutral and independent body (22 respondents); and**
- **Exam boards should not be involved at all as content development should be left to other institutions. (21 respondents).**

Taken together, these respondents mentioned a variety of alternative organisations and groups, such as academic or subject experts and educators, learned societies,

Ofqual and/or the DfE, and those benefitting from the reforms, such as industry. Some respondents stated that they felt exam boards might have a conflict of interest and may not take into account the long-term value of skills in academic and employment contexts.

*“We have some concerns about the proposal for exam boards to work together to develop core subject content. We strongly agree that there must be core subject content but are not convinced that this suggestion will be either workable or desirable. It also seems odd that there should be one system for A level development, involving ALCAB, and a different system for GCSE. In the longer term there may be a case for setting up a body outside government, comprised of stakeholders and subject experts, which reviews and proposes subject content for all general qualifications.”*

*School or teacher representative group (official response)*

#### **Views raised by exam boards on the development process of core content:**

Exam boards themselves also expressed some concerns about the possible development process and highlighted potential uncertainties and concerns. As they are proposed to lead on the development of core content, their views are stated here in more detail – notably:

- Exam boards leading on the development of subject content may compromise the objective of achieving neutrally agreed, robust content that is essential for ensuring inter-board comparability of standards;
- The DfE should lead the process of re-developing common subject criteria as this approach has a proven track record that commands consensus among awarding organisations and the main relevant stakeholders;
- It is unclear to what extent Ofqual would be involved in the process and as Ofqual regulates awarding organisations, it is unclear where the boundaries lie in its role as regulatory authority and in terms of the start and end points of curriculum development; and
- In the interests of public confidence an independent and respected third party should be involved in or even lead the development of new subject criteria – such as by engaging with stakeholders, drafting content or undertaking public consultation.

### 3.3 The Concept of Core Content

Some respondents noted general concerns around the principle of core content itself and made other suggestions as to core content development:

- **The introduction of core content could limit the choices of teachers and students and remove flexibility (55 respondents);**
- **General expression of disagreement or reservations about the principle of core content, although no further details provided (36 respondents);**
- **The interests of students should be at the heart of this process (13 respondents);**
- **Exam boards should offer unique qualifications or set their own core content (6 respondents);**
- **Exam boards should be merged to one central organisation (6 respondents); and**
- **The existence of separate exam boards isn't necessarily appropriate if they are all offering the same qualifications (4 respondents).**

*“If the requirement to have common core content reduces diversity then the needs of some groups may not be met which may reduce validity.”*

*Exam board (official response)*

*“We can see that allowing awarding organisations to develop core subject content should result in a broader range of subjects being available than if subject content development was left to the Department for Education. However, we have some concerns that smaller volume, niche qualifications will either become more expensive to offer or will disappear if they are simply subject to market forces.”*

*School or teacher representative group (official response)*

*“Allow examination boards to develop [qualifications] where content to be studied is of equal rigor but contains different content. This allows schools, teachers & students far more flexibility in respect to which qualification (and exam board) is chosen.”*

*Academy and/or free school*

*“As we have stated in previous consultation responses, a single awarding organisation offering multiple specifications would remove many of the difficulties associated with regulating this particular market.”*

*Subject association or learned society (official response)*

## 4. Consulting with Stakeholders

### Summary of proposals

Ofqual will require exam boards to make sure those with an interest in the subject can contribute to the development of core content and as such will require exam boards to consult with a suitable range of stakeholders.

Ofqual proposes that exam boards give subject associations and other key stakeholders such as teachers, employers, higher education and further education representatives the opportunity to engage with core content development so they can be sure new qualifications are fit for purpose (*Completing GCSE, AS and A level Reform* policy consultation document, p. 8-9).

Almost all consultation questionnaire respondents (97%) agree (and two thirds strongly agree) that exam boards should consult with stakeholders when developing core content for all reformed qualifications, mirroring the concerns voiced in some of the open responses discussed in the last section.

Similar proportions also agree with the key stakeholder groups that Ofqual suggested should be consulted as part of this process (Table 3).

**Table 3 Consulting with stakeholders – extent of agreement**

		Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know/ no opinion
Q7	Exam boards should consult with stakeholders and take their views into account when developing core content for all reformed GCSE, AS and A level qualifications <i>Base 1, 120 responses</i>	67.9%	28.9%	1.3%	1.0%	1.0%
Q8	Ofqual has identified key stakeholder groups that need to be consulted in core content development (subject associations, teachers, employers, higher and further education, relevant equality groups). To what extent do you agree or disagree with Ofqual's proposal that exam boards should include these groups when developing core content? <i>Base 1, 125 responses</i>	69.3%	27.7%	1.3%	0.6%	1.0%

Respondents were invited to suggest additional stakeholders whom they felt should be consulted when developing core content.

**A total of 417 respondents made suggestions and the most commonly named groups to be included are:**

- **Current or former students (168 respondents);**
- **Professionals/Professional bodies and learned societies (62 respondents);**
- **Parents (59 respondents);**
- **Teachers and schools (45 respondents); and**
- **Industry professionals (33 respondents).**

Some 75 respondents named specific organisations or types of organisations and people relevant to individual subjects.

One exam board affirmed its commitment to involving stakeholders but made the point that, as potential leaders of subject development, exam boards should not feel bound by their views.

*“It is important that awarding organisations are not bound by stakeholder views, where either a consensus between stakeholders cannot be found, or stakeholder views are at odds with the need to develop technically robust assessments that are reliable and valid.”*

*Exam board (official response)*

*“Visually impaired candidates often require extensive modification to curriculum and assessment to remove barriers to access. It is essential to involve subject specialists in core content development to minimise these barriers.”*

*Equality organisation or group (official response)*

*“Stakeholders need to include representation from a variety of relevant bodies - not just one of each. So, for Geology you need to engage with the Earth Science Teachers Association, the Geological Society of London and representative of different types of HE institutions.”*

*Education specialist (personal response)*

## 5. Developing Subjects – Key Considerations

### Summary of proposals

Ofqual proposed to set out clear principles that will be used to determine whether a subject should be developed. If it does not meet these principles, Ofqual will not allow it to be developed as a GCSE, AS or A level subject.

The key principles are:

- Meeting the key purposes for GCSE, AS and A level qualifications (as set out in the consultation document);
- Ensuring different subjects are set, as far as possible, at the same level of demand as other reformed subjects within the same qualification type;
- Ensuring subject content acts as a foundation for qualifications that will produce valid and reliable results, and that assessments are manageable across large cohorts of students;
- Differentiating student performance by using in full a numbered grading system for GCSEs (1 being lowest and 9 being highest), grades A to E for AS levels and grades A\* to E for A levels;
- Ensuring that each subject's content is distinct and encompasses core content appropriate for that subject, as a greater number of subject variants cause issues with validity and comparability.

Public confidence in current qualifications has been dented by concerns about whether assessment arrangements produce valid results. It is therefore vitally important to Ofqual to have suitable, consistent and principle-based assessment arrangements that are likely to produce valid outcomes and inspire confidence.

*(Completing GCSE, AS and A level Reform policy consultation document, p. 10-12).*

Respondents to the consultation questionnaire were asked the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with a range of key principles relating to the reforms (Table 4).

The findings reveal agreement is most common in relation to the following:

- Statement 12e: The performance of students taking GCSEs/AS/A levels in any subject should be differentiated against the full grade range using the relevant grading scale (92% agree);



- Statement 12f: GCSE/AS/A level subjects should be set at a level of demand consistent with that of reformed qualifications (79% agree); and
- Statements 12a and 12c: The majority of respondents (61%) disagree that current GCSE/AS/A level subjects cannot always be easily distinguishable from others with a similar title (12a). In other words, the majority do believe that qualifications can be easily distinguishable and three quarters (75%) also agree that they should be easily distinguishable (12c).

**Table 4: Key principles – extent of agreement**

		Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know/ no opinion
Q10	The benefit of having additional GCSE, AS and A level subjects is worth any additional costs incurred by exam boards in developing core and common content across all exam boards offering a qualification <i>Base 1,100 responses</i>	32.7%	41.4%	6.5%	1.6%	17.8%
Q11	Ofqual should develop principles to determine in advance which remaining or new subject areas can be developed as GCSE, AS or A level qualifications <i>Base 1,110 responses</i>	15.9%	53.2%	15.2%	5.2%	10.5%
Q12 a	Current GCSEs/AS/A levels cannot always be easily distinguished from others with a similar title <i>Base 1,104 responses</i>	4.9%	29.3%	43.9%	17.5%	4.3%
Q12 b	Subjects that can be easily distinguished will help make it easier for users* to understand the different qualifications available <i>Base 1,112 responses</i>	11.4%	54.8%	23.5%	6.3%	4.0%
Q12 c	GCSE/AS/A level subjects should be easily distinguishable from other GCSE/AS/A level subjects <i>Base 1,114 responses</i>	15.0%	60.1%	16.8%	3.4%	4.8%
Q12 d	GCSE/AS/A level subjects should only be developed if they meet the specific qualification purpose <i>Base 1,103 responses</i>	14.9%	56.1%	17.2%	4.4%	7.3%
Q12 e	The performance of students taking GCSEs/AS/A levels in any subject should be able to be differentiated against the full grade range using the relevant grading scale <i>Base 1,104 responses</i>	32.3%	59.5%	4.3%	1.1%	2.8%

Q12 f	GCSE/AS/A level subjects should be set at a level of demand consistent with that of reformed qualifications <i>Base 1,100 responses</i>	18.9%	59.8%	9.3%	3.3%	8.7%
Q12 g	GCSE/AS/A level subjects should be capable of being validly assessed (mainly by exam assessment, except for those essential skills that can't be assessed by an exam) <i>Base 1,114 responses</i>	22.3%	52.3%	14.8%	9.2%	1.4%

### Comments on assessment arrangements

Ofqual did not ask any direct follow-up questions relating to assessment arrangements or to other key principles set out in Table 4, particularly as assessment arrangements for reformed subjects have been previously subject to consultation<sup>7</sup>.

Nevertheless, a total of 65 respondents provided opinions relating to this area, with most generally concerned about the suggestion to assess subjects purely via written exams only, stating that:

- Exams are better suited to some students than others;
- Exams only assess part of a student's ability and skills; and
- Exams can be highly influenced by students' acute nerves and stress levels.

*"We support the notion that the most appropriate assessment methodology should be employed in each situation. Therefore, as with the reformed qualifications, it is important that a case is made where written examinations are deemed not to be the most valid form of assessment, with evidence used to support this stance."*

*Exam board (official response)*

<sup>7</sup>Further information can be found via the following links: <http://comment.ofqual.gov.uk/gcse-reform-june-2013> and <http://comment.ofqual.gov.uk/a-level-regulatory-requirements-october-2013> [Accessed 05.08.14]

*“Assessment should be fit for purpose and there should not be any overriding presumption that this should include one type of assessment. Each subject should be approached separately and a decision made according to what is to be assessed.”*

*School or teacher representative group (official response)*

*“The reliance of end of course examined assessment could have a negative impact on students who learn information and prefer to display this knowledge in ways other than through external exams. Certain socio, cultural and economic groups may be disadvantaged by this method of assessment.”*

*Further Education College (official response)*

Ten respondents made the point that the choice of assessment method should be linked to what is most appropriate for the subject, for example by using a range of approaches, including practical for applied and creative subjects.

Additional points made by respondents regarding assessment of students with protected characteristics are discussed in section 8 Equality Impact.

## 6. Last Award of Unreformed Qualifications

### Summary of proposals

In light of the differences in assessment structure between reformed and unreformed qualifications, Ofqual proposed that reformed GCSE, AS or A level qualifications should not run alongside unreformed versions for any longer than necessary.

For example, where reformed qualifications are being introduced in 2015, the last award of their predecessors will be in 2016. Likewise, for those being introduced in 2016 the last award of their predecessors will be in 2017, and so on.

Ofqual expects the last award of all unreformed GCSEs, AS and A levels to take place by 2018. Exceptions are not envisaged although it will be important to avoid unnecessary gaps in provision. If necessary, Ofqual will reconsider the position in 2016 (*Completing GCSE, AS and A level Reform* policy consultation document, p. 12-13).

The majority (over two thirds) of questionnaire respondents agree with Ofqual's statement that the last award of all unreformed qualifications by 2018 is appropriate. The extent of agreement is very similar with respect to GCSEs, AS and A levels (Table 5).

**Table 5: Last award by 2018 – whether in agreement**

Requiring the last award of all unreformed qualifications by 2018 is appropriate for:		Yes	No
Q13	GCSE qualifications <i>Base 1,003 responses</i>	68.7%	31.3%
Q14	A level qualifications <i>Base 1,068 responses</i>	66.4%	33.6%
Q15	AS qualifications <i>Base 1,062 responses</i>	66.9%	33.1%

Two respondents in favour of the proposed timeline gave reasons for their views within email responses:

- A representative group noted that the timeline was appropriate, as the phasing period is potentially confusing for all involved and should not be unduly prolonged; and

- An exam board was keen to point out that a common cut-off date would be helpful, especially for GCSEs. However, they stated:

*“We would wish for the possibility of a further resit opportunity to remain available after this date; i.e. for qualifications with last teaching commencing in September 2016 and last awarding in 2018, we would wish to have the option (although not a requirement) to offer one further, resit series in 2019.”*

*Exam board (official response)*

The consultation questionnaire only invited comments about the suggested timeline from respondents who disagreed, i.e. one third of questionnaire respondents.

- **The most common issue (raised by 333 respondents) is that the timescale for reform is too short.**

While 63 respondents made this point without providing further details, others gave more lengthy explanations, including:

- **Not enough preparatory time for the introduction of reformed or new qualifications, such as designing the qualifications and developing teaching materials (119 responses);**
- **Insufficient time to fully consult with those who need to be involved (90 responses);**
- **Not enough time to prepare students for change or that the rapid pace of change could impact negatively on students (31 responses); and**
- **Too much change happening at the same time (30 responses).**

*“We are concerned that the timescale is too short for the new qualifications to be properly designed and for candidates to understand the options open to them. The needs of individuals should be considered ahead of the need to complete the reform process.”*

*Equality organisation or group (official response)*

*“If the final examination is in 2018, the final teaching start for a two year course will be 2016. This is too soon to axe established qualifications which many institutions have “positioned” themselves to deliver and that many students have aimed their studies towards.”*

*Teacher (personal response)*

Only 14 respondents described their concerns about the proposed timeline with reference to individual subjects. Specifically:

- *Catering and Home Economics (Food, Nutrition and Health)* (5 respondents);
- *Engineering* (2 respondents);
- *Applied Business* (2 respondents);
- *Environmental and Land-based Science* (2 respondents);
- *Environmental Studies* (1 respondent);
- *Electronics* (1 respondent); and
- *Performance studies* (1 respondent).

*“The agricultural, horticultural, environmental and related industry sectors need time to develop an alternative to Environmental and Land-Based Science for approval, otherwise there will be nothing for those centres currently planning delivery, and qualifications will not address other government departmental priorities such as climate change and food security.”*

*Other representative or interest group (official response)*

Some respondents suggested alternative approaches to the timescale for the introduction of reformed subjects. Specifically:

- A staggered approach to the reform timescale so that students studying a reformed GCSE go on to study a reformed AS and A level subject (50 responses);
- Changes being introduced for all qualifications and subjects at the same time, so students are not being taught reformed and unreformed subjects and qualifications concurrently. As an example, the last award for some GCSE

subjects being considered for discontinuation is scheduled for 2016, whereas for other GCSE subjects it is scheduled for 2017 (42 responses).

*“It would be more sensible to delay reform until all subjects could undergo the changes at the same time, thereby avoiding inevitable confusion.”*

*Sixth-form college (official response)*

*“There needs to be an appropriate length of time to adapt A level qualifications so that they can provide a clear extended pathway from the reformed GCSE; otherwise there is a real danger of failing to produce a coordinated approach.”*

*Teacher (personal response)*

*“Students who have completed the unreformed GCSEs will have to sit A levels that their GCSEs have not prepared them for.”*

*Education specialist (personal response)*

## 7. Similar or Overlapping Qualifications

### Summary of proposals

In England a large range of subjects and a variety of qualifications exist with different titles. Some of these have been identified by Ofqual as potentially containing overlaps (the consultation document provides the example of *Biology* and *Human Biology*). Ofqual has indicated that this makes standards difficult to maintain and also that it may be confusing. In particular, where there are overlaps between legacy and reformed qualifications, Ofqual proposed that it would not be in the best interests of students to having them running alongside each other. It may also be confusing to higher education and employers, who would expect students to have been taught new content and assessed in comparable ways.

To ensure that confidence in qualification standards is maintained Ofqual is considering preventing exam boards from producing variations of a subject unless there is a strong case to do so.

Appendix B of the consultation document contained two lists:

- GCSE, AS and A level subjects proposed by Ofqual for possible discontinuation (as they have been provisionally identified as similar to, or having considerable overlap with, other continuing subjects); and
- GCSE, AS and A Level subjects that could be reformed for first teaching from 2017 should exam boards choose to do so.

Those subjects proposed for possible discontinuation had been determined based on them being “unlikely to meet [Ofqual’s] standards requirements” as part of the reform process (Consultation document, p. 14). It should be noted that prior to the consultation taking place, Ofqual had not made firm decisions about the future of these subjects, as they may still be open to reform should it be possible that they can meet the required standards.

The consultation document made clear that Ofqual does not want any particular qualification unavailable for any time if a strong case can be made for the subject and if subsequent reform would bring it in line with regulatory expectations. Ofqual was particularly interested to understand whether some of these qualifications do in fact serve a very distinct purpose and should remain as subjects in their own right (*Completing GCSE, AS and A level Reform policy consultation document*, p. 13-14).



## 7.1 Extent of Agreement with Proposals

The majority of questionnaire respondents (62%) disagree that Ofqual should start to apply its principles to discontinue similar or overlapping qualifications alongside the current reforms (Table 6), with one third (33%) strongly disagreeing.

**Table 6: Principles for discontinuation – extent of agreement**

		Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know/ no opinion
Q16	Ofqual should start to apply its principles, to discontinue similar or overlapping qualifications, alongside the current reforms	6.8%	25.9%	28.6%	33.4%	5.2%

Base 1,096 responses

Three quarters (75%) of respondents believe that similar or overlapping qualifications being considered by Ofqual for discontinuation serve a very distinct purpose from the reformed subjects (Table 7) and of these respondents, the vast majority (88%) believe that any alternative qualifications should be granted an exception to continue alongside the reformed ones in a given subject (Table 8).

**Table 7: Overlapping subjects serve a distinct purpose**

		Yes	No
Q18 a	Do any of the similar or overlapping qualifications proposed in Appendix B of the consultation document serve a very distinct purpose from the reformed subjects?	74.9%	25.1%

Base 1,074 responses

**Table 8: Whether exceptions should be granted**

		Yes	No
Q18 b	If Yes, should any alternative qualifications be granted an exception to continue alongside the reformed ones in a given subject?	87.6%	12.4%

Base 796 responses

Respondents who agreed to both of these statements (Tables 7 and 8) were asked to specify subjects for which exceptions should be granted, as well as comments to explain why those subjects should be allowed to be continued.

The vast majority of respondents provided arguments in support of retaining specific subjects and these are set out in Appendix 2.

A small number of respondents provided more general views for why similar or overlapping subjects proposed for possible discontinuation should be retained. These are set out immediately below.

**General (non-subject specific) arguments for retaining similar or overlapping subjects being considered for possible discontinuation:**

- There are clear and distinct differences in the content between subjects being considered for discontinuation versus those subjects identified to be potentially carried forward in their place;
- There are concerns that discontinuing certain subjects could lead to less choice available for students – particularly where a more focused subject strand (e.g. *Human Biology*) may be more appealing to some students than its more general counterpart (*Biology*);
- Students may be less well prepared or have difficulty being accepted on to more specialist education and associated career pathways, for example through Further and Higher Education if they lack a specific qualification;
- Others noted that subjects selected for possible discontinuation should not be based on uptake numbers, as even small subjects may be vital for the labour market;
- Several stakeholders, such as exam boards and representative groups, argued that as long as subjects have a distinct purpose, level of demand and validity, they do not need to be defined in terms of how similar they are to others, as maintaining choice is an important factor.

*“What will be important is to ensure that the selection of qualifications being reformed or cut is not at odds with those that are currently valued by employers. Comparatively low levels of take-up do not necessarily mean that a qualification is not valued in the labour market, and discussions with relevant stakeholder bodies should be undertaken to ensure that young people are not being disadvantaged by these changes.”*

*Business representative group (official response)*

## **7.2 Volume of Support for Retaining Subjects Proposed for Possible Discontinuation**

Tables 9 and 10 list those subjects being considered for discontinuation that have received at least 10 responses of support.

Table 11 presents the same information for subjects receiving fewer than 10 responses of support. Subjects for which specific cases of support were not received are not included in the tables or the discussion<sup>8</sup>.

In each Table, the list of subjects is ordered from those receiving most support (left) to those receiving least support (right), measured in terms of the total number of responses for that subject.

### **Summary of Table 9:**

- A total of fourteen subject titles being considered for discontinuation (at one or more levels) received at least 10 responses of support;
- *Environmental Studies/Environmental Science* has received the largest amount of support (372 responses) and from the widest range of personal sources, including 145 teachers, 128 students, 36 educational specialists, 10 parents and eight lecturers from Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) among others;
- *Catering and Home Economics (Food, Nutrition and Health)* have received the second and third largest amounts of support (181 responses and 167 responses, respectively);
- For each listed subject, personal responses from teachers account for the largest proportion of all responses;

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<sup>8</sup> These subjects are: Digital Communication (GCSE); and Economics and Business (A level).

- *Use of Mathematics* has received the largest volume of official responses compared with other subjects (18), of which 12 are from sixth form colleges.

Appendix 2 (sections A2.1 and A2.2) presents the detailed arguments emerging from the consultation in support of all subjects proposed for possible discontinuation.

**Table 9: Volume of support for retaining subjects proposed for possible discontinuation – by type of respondent (AT LEAST 10 responses per subject)**

		Environmental Studies/Science	Catering	Home Economics (Food, Nutrition and Health)	Performance Studies	Performing Arts	Engineering	Applied Science	Expressive Arts	Use of Mathematics	Environmental and Land-based Science	Electronics	Applied Business*	Human Biology	Humanities
<b>Total responses across all formats</b>		372	181	167	89	83	55	52	52	50	35	28	21	19	11
<b>Personal Responses</b>	<b>Total (Personal)</b>	355	167	150	73	70	48	39	41	32	33	21	16	14	8
	Student	128	0	6	13	5	0	0	5	0	1	1	0	0	0
	Parent	10	0	2	2	3	1	1	2	1	1	0	1	0	0
	Teacher	145	157	125	36	49	43	32	17	29	18	14	15	11	5
	HEI Lecturer	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Educational Specialist	36	8	16	14	8	3	6	12	2	6	6	0	3	3
	General Public	17	2	1	8	5	1	0	5	0	6	0	0	0	0
	Other	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
<b>Official Responses</b>	<b>Total (Official)</b>	17	14	16	16	13	7	13	10	18	3	7	5	5	4
	Awarding organisation	0	0	1	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0
	Government department/agency or organisation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Local authority	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	University or higher education institution	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Employer	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	School/college	11	10	13	14	7	1	10	6	15	1	4	5	3	1
	Other representative group/interest group	4	3	2	2	4	4	3	4	3	2	2	0	1	3

\* Applied Business is being considered for discontinuation at AS/A level and for reform at GCSE. All responses relating to this subject are collated in this Table as many did not reference the qualification level.

**Table 10: Breakdown of Table 9 by type of school/college**

	Environmental Studies/Science	Catering	Home Economics (Food, Nutrition and Health)	Performance Studies	Performing Arts	Engineering	Applied Science	Expressive Arts	Use of Mathematics	Environmental and Land-based Science	Electronics	Applied Business*	Human Biology	Humanities
<b>Total responses from all schools and colleges</b>	11	10	13	14	7	1	10	6	15	1	4	5	3	1
<b>Academy and/or free school</b>	0	5	2	2	1	0	3	1	1	1	0	2	0	1
<b>Comprehensive</b>	1	4	3	0	2	1	3	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>State selective</b>	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
<b>Independent/private</b>	0	0	6	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	4	0	0	0
<b>Special school</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Further Education</b>	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	0
<b>Sixth-form college</b>	8	0	1	9	4	0	4	2	12	0	0	3	0	0
<b>None of the above</b>	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0

\* Applied Business is being considered for discontinuation at AS/A level and for reform at GCSE. All responses relating to this subject are collated in this Table as many did not reference the qualification level.

**Table 11: Volume of support for retaining subjects proposed for possible discontinuation – by type of respondent (FEWER than 10 responses per subject)**

		Science in Society	Quantitative Methods	Additional Applied Science	Manufacturing	Human Health and Physiology	Applied Art and Design
<b>Total responses across all formats</b>		6	5	5	3	3	2
<b>Personal Responses</b>	<b>Total (Personal)</b>	6	2	5	2	2	2
	Student	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Parent	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Teacher	3	2	4	1	0	1
	HEI Lecturer	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Educational Specialist	3	0	1	1	2	1
	General Public	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Other	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Official Responses</b>	<b>Total (Official)</b>	0	3	0	2	1	0
	Awarding organisation	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Government department/agency or organisation	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Local authority	0	0	0	0	0	0
	University or higher education institution	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Employer	0	0	0	0	0	0
	School/college	0	1	0	0	1	0
	Other representative group/interest group	0	2	0	2	0	0

## 7.3 Volume of Support for Retaining Subjects Considered for Reform

While Ofqual only sought comments from respondents in relation to subjects proposed for possible discontinuation, the consultation also generated views in relation to other subjects, i.e. those being considered for reform. Responses generally provided a case for the continuation of these subjects, which may have emerged from concerns that these subjects risk being discontinued in the future.

The arguments in relation to subjects being considered for reform are included here for completeness and to provide a full and transparent picture of the consultation.

Tables 12 and 13 show the breakdown of responses in support of retaining subjects considered for reform, where responses were received from at least 10 supporters.

Table 14 presents the same information for subjects receiving fewer than 10 responses of support. Subjects for which specific cases of support were not received are not included in the tables or the discussion<sup>9</sup>.

In each Table, the list of subjects is ordered from those receiving most support (left) to those receiving least support (right), measured in terms of the total number of responses.

### Summary of Table 12:

- Most feedback has been received in relation to *Film Studies*<sup>10</sup>, followed by *Media Studies*, *Hospitality* and *Classical Civilisation*;
- *Film Studies* and *Media Studies* have also received comparatively larger volumes of official responses compared to *Hospitality* and *Classical Civilisation*.

Appendix 2 (sections A2.3 and A2.4) presents the detailed arguments emerging from the consultation in support of all subjects proposed for reform.

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<sup>9</sup> These subjects are: Business and Communication Systems (GCSE); Business Studies and Economics (GCSE); General Studies (all levels); Leisure and Tourism (GCSE); Leisure Studies (AS and A level); Travel and Tourism (AS and A level); and Media: Communication and Production (AS and A level).

<sup>10</sup> When the consultation was launched via Ofqual's website, the original version of the consultation document incorrectly listed *Film Studies* as a subject proposed for possible discontinuation. The consultation document was promptly taken down and replaced with a corrected version showing *Film Studies* listed as being considered for reform. It is possible that the original incorrect information may still have been used as a reference source and influenced the level of response in relation to this subject.



**Table 12: Volume of support for retaining subjects proposed for reform – by type of respondent (AT LEAST 10 responses per subject)**

		Film Studies	Media Studies	Hospitality	Classical Civilisation
<b>Total responses across all formats</b>		110	65	17	15
<b>Personal Responses</b>	<b>Total (Personal)</b>	92	55	15	12
	Student	4	1	0	0
	Parent	1	0	0	0
	Teacher	79	48	14	11
	HEI Lecturer	3	1	0	0
	Educational Specialist	4	5	1	1
	General Public	0	0	0	0
	Other	1	0	0	0
<b>Official Responses</b>	<b>Total (Official)</b>	18	10	2	3
	Awarding organisation	2	0	0	0
	Government department/agency or organisation	0	0	0	0
	Local authority	0	0	1	0
	University or higher education institution	0	0	0	0
	Employer	0	0	0	0
	School/college	13	8	1	1
	Other representative group/interest group	3	2	0	2

**Table 13: Breakdown of Table 12 by type of school/college**

	Film Studies	Media Studies	Hospitality	Classical Civilisation
<b>Total responses from all schools and colleges</b>	13	8	1	1
<b>Academy and/or free school</b>	2	1	0	0
<b>Comprehensive</b>	2	1	1	0
<b>State selective</b>	0	0	0	0
<b>Independent/private</b>	0	0	0	1
<b>Special school</b>	1	0	0	0
<b>Further Education</b>	1	0	0	0
<b>Sixth-form college</b>	7	6	0	0
<b>None of the above</b>	0	0	0	0

Table 14: Volume of support for retaining subjects proposed for reform – by type of respondent (FEWER than 10 responses per subject)

		Law	Information and Communication Technology	Health and Social Care/Health and Social Care Single Award	Geology	Ancient History	Astronomy	Communication and Culture	Archaeology	Government and Politics	Business Studies	Philosophy	Critical Thinking	Creative Writing	Accounting	Statistics	Anthropology	Psychology	Economics	Sociology	Music Technology	World/Global Development	Citizenship Studies	Classics	History of Art	Applied Information and Communication Technology	
<b>Total responses</b>		9	8	6	6	6	5	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
<b>Personal Responses</b>	<b>Total (Personal)</b>	8	7	5	3	3	4	3	1	4	3	2	2	3	2	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	
	Student	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	Parent	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	Teacher	7	5	4	1	2	2	2	1	4	3	2	2	3	2	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	1
	HEI Lecturer	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Educational Specialist	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	General Public	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Official Responses</b>	<b>Total (Official)</b>	1	1	1	3	2	1	1	3	0	0	1	1	0	0	2	2	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	
	Awarding organisation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Government department/ agency or organisation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Local authority	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	University or higher education institution	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Employer	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	School/college	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
	Other representative group/interest group	0	0	0	0	2	1	1	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0

## 7.4 Other Subjects Suggested by Respondents for Possible Discontinuation

Ofqual also asked respondents about other subjects that they would wish to see included in the list of subjects to be discontinued.

**Table 15: Additional suggestions for discontinuation**

		Yes	No
Q17	Referring to the full list of qualifications that Ofqual is proposing to discontinue as subjects are reformed (Appendix B of the consultation document) are there any other qualifications that should be included in the process?	11.7%	88.3%

Base 1,041 responses

Only a small minority of respondents, 122 of 1041 (12%) stated that other subjects/qualifications should be considered for discontinuation alongside those set out by Ofqual in Appendix B of the consultation document (Table 15) and a smaller still minority nominated specific subjects in a following open-response question or throughout other responses gathered through the questionnaire.

A total of 57 respondents currently involved in the teaching of *Catering and Home Economics (Food, Nutrition and Health)* – both being considered for discontinuation – voiced criticism of intentions to maintain *DT: Food Technology* in their place and argued that this DT qualification should be discontinued as an alternative course of action.

*“Design and Technology: Food Technology is not an appropriate alternative for Catering. Food Technology will not equip learners with the practical skills needed to enter the industry or the theoretical breadth of vocational knowledge e.g. roles within the kitchen brigade, using industrial equipment, presenting food items/meals to restaurant standard, types of food service.”*

*Exam board (official response)*

A very small minority of other respondents named specific subjects that they deemed appropriate to be discontinued, all of which are subjects proposed by Ofqual to be reformed included in Appendix B, including:

- *General Studies* (4 respondents);
- *Ancient History* (3 respondents);
- *Travel and Tourism* (3 respondents); and
- *Anthropology* (2 respondents).

## 8. Equality Impact

### Summary of proposals

The Equality Act 2010 requires Ofqual to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.

Protected characteristics refer to age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnerships<sup>11</sup>, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

Ofqual's Conditions of Recognition require exam boards, when designing assessments, to remove factors that may disproportionately affect students who share protected characteristics, and to make reasonable adjustments to meet the needs of students with disabilities. Furthermore exam boards should seek and take account of the views of equality groups during core content development (*Completing GCSE, AS and A level Reform* policy consultation document, p. 15-16).

Four out of ten (41%) of respondents were of the view that there are potential equality impacts from Ofqual's proposals that have not yet been identified (Table 16).

**Table 16: Equality impacts not yet identified**

		Yes	No
Q19	Are there any potential equality impacts of Ofqual's proposals for the next stage of GCSE, AS and A level reform that have not already been identified?	40.8%	59.2%

Base 1,048 responses

<sup>11</sup> for England, Ofqual are not required to consider the impact of the reforms of GCSEs and A levels on those who are married or in a civil partnership: Equality Act 2010, section 149

A similar proportion (39%) were of the view that Ofqual could take additional steps to mitigate any negative impact from the proposals on persons who share a protected characteristic (Table 17).

**Table 17: Additional steps to mitigate negative impacts**

		Yes	No
Q20	Are there any additional steps Ofqual could take to mitigate any negative impacts of the proposals in this document on persons who share a protected characteristic?	38.8%	61.2%

Base 1,003 responses

A small proportion (14%) stated that they had other comments on the possible impact of the proposals on persons who share a protected characteristic (Table 18).

**Table 18: Any other comments regarding equality impact – agreement/disagreement**

		Yes	No
Q21	Have you any other comments on the impacts of the proposals in this document on persons who share a protected characteristic?	13.8%	86.2%

Base 994 responses

Respondents who stated ‘yes’ to the above question were invited to provide further details and respondents who sent in emails and hard-copy responses also provided views on issues surrounding the equality impact of the proposals. These are explored further in sections 8.1 and 8.2, below.

## 8.1 Impact on Students with Protected Characteristics

This section presents arguments specifically in relation to the impact of the proposed reforms on students with protected characteristics. The section begins by summarising ‘general impact’, including detailed analysis of comments provided by equality organisations/groups, followed by subject-specific impact.

### 8.1.1 General Impact

Altogether 410 respondents described the likely equality impact of the proposals and 59 specifically mentioned students with protected characteristics who could be affected. Of these respondents:

- **30 referred to students with special educational needs, students with English as an additional language, dyslexia, or weak literacy and numeracy skills; and**
- **29 referred to other protected characteristics, such as disabilities and gender.**

These 59 respondents taken together feel that vocational, creative and applied subjects proposed for possible discontinuation tend to be more accessible to students with disabilities and special educational needs; that some of those subjects are more accessible for males, while others are more accessible to females; and that these subjects offer the opportunity for learning across different channels, such as visual and kinaesthetic.

Ten respondents expressed concerns about how well students with special educational needs and mental health problems (such as anxiety and panic attacks) might cope with end of course, written exams. These respondents questioned whether the resulting subject and assessment choices would provide a level playing field for all these students to succeed.

*“The intention to assess all of these qualifications predominantly by exam will clearly disadvantage those who struggle with reading and writing. While this might encourage better literacy levels, it is inappropriate for subjects whose eventual destination jobs are much more practical e.g. motor mechanics.”*

*Teacher (personal response)*

Some respondents made the point that it will be extremely important that appropriate equality organisations/groups are consulted when qualifications are reformed and core content is developed.

#### **Views of equality organisations/groups:**

The views of equality organisations/groups tasked with representing the interests of students with protected characteristics are provided in more detail here, as they are well placed to evaluate the possible equality impact of the proposals.



Three equality organisations/groups provided general views in relation to the potential impact of the reforms on students with protected characteristics. Besides these three groups, another respondent provided views specifically in relation to GCSE Electronics (cf. section 8.1.6).

One equality organisation/group noted that the removal of subjects with a wider scope, such as *Expressive Arts* and *Performing Arts* compared to the specialist subjects of *Dance*, *Drama* and *Music*, could disadvantage candidates with certain disabilities, although further details or examples were not provided. This respondent also noted that the timeframe of reform should be sufficient to allow specifications and sample papers to be reviewed by language modifiers and/or revisers. Also, they were of the view that the downgrading or even removal of coursework could have a negative effect on some students with protected characteristics.

Another equality organisation/group believes that low numbers should not be the primary reason for discontinuing qualifications, without further checking that these qualifications do not serve a particularly important need. For example, the assessment criteria for some of these qualifications may make them more suitable for visually impaired candidates than the qualifications which are proposed to replace them and that each qualification should be looked at in detail to make sure this is not the case. The respondent did not provide examples for this, however. The respondent added that the proposed timescale may make it even more likely that concerns of minority groups will not be properly addressed. As a mitigating step, the respondent proposed that disability specialists are more involved in consultations about the potential impact of these reforms. Concern was also expressed about the potential emphasis on exam-only assessment.

*“Visual impairment is a low incidence disability and access to some niche qualifications may form a necessary part of their educational entitlement and access to Further and Higher Education and employment... We are unhappy with the emphasis on terminal exam-only assessment which we believe will have an adverse impact on visually impaired candidates who are forced to rely heavily on access arrangements. This puts undue pressure on them and does not create a level playing field. We believe that coursework and modular assessment should be considered as legitimate in their own right.”*

*Equality organisation/group (official response)*

The third equality group noted that despite contributing to previous consultations on the matter, there remains a concern that proposed assessment arrangements could adversely impact candidates with dyslexia/specific learning difficulties.

*“Dyslexia/specific learning difficulties are most often characterised by a deficit in information processing and working memory, speed of working and difficulty accessing and recording written information. This can be exacerbated in an examination context, due to stress, making it particularly difficult for students to demonstrate their ability, knowledge and understanding through one off, timed examinations.”*

*Equality organisation/group (official response)*

This group was not confident that exam boards “have due regard for the accessibility of their assessments, either in relation to the use of alternative formats for use with assistive technology or overly complicated and unnecessary language used in questions”. As mitigating steps, the respondent suggested that assessments for all students should be computerised with assistive technology enabled, and that exams should be designed to minimise stress and time-commitment, reducing the need for special accommodation.

The respondent would also like Ofqual to take on a more active role in this area, for example by developing guidance for exam boards which clearly set out the difficulties of candidates with special educational needs and clear expectations about core content and assessment. They noted that exam boards will likely need some support in this process and suggested a public consultation or one among expert reference groups.

The consultation generated views relating to matters of equality impact for specific subjects. These are set out below on a subject-by-subject basis.

### **8.1.2 Environmental Studies/Use of Mathematics (both considered for discontinuation)**

According to two respondents, one supporting each subject, females and dyslexic students are more likely to access A level *Environmental Studies* than *Chemistry* or *Physics*; and are more likely to access the AS qualification of *Use of Mathematics* rather than pure *Mathematics*. Dyslexic students in particular may find the abstract nature of some concepts covered in Chemistry and Physics more of a challenge. It was argued these subjects should not be removed as they encourage these groups to more actively engage with science in school, as well as lead them into potential careers in science.

### **8.1.3 Catering GCSE (considered for discontinuation)**

Two respondents stated that *Catering* seems to be a popular choice and more popular than *DT: Food Technology*; one of them stating this to be the case for males, the other stating this to be the case for females. It was argued that *Catering* also seems to be very well suited for dyslexic students (one response) and students with special education needs (two responses), not because the subject is less challenging, but because it allows these students to express their creativity and display skills that other subjects do not provide for. Again, it was argued by a teacher that the *Catering* syllabus is more accessible compared to *DT: Food Technology*, in the sense that it is less abstract and more practical.

### **8.1.4 Performance Studies/Performing Arts/Expressive Arts (considered for discontinuation)**

A 15-year old student wrote to describe how the subject she is taking (Expressive and Performing Arts at GCSE) has opened up many opportunities in light of her disabilities, these being cerebral palsy, vertical gaze palsy and deafness. This has included delivery of a monologue about how she experiences life to a variety of classes, as well as preparing an animation, using sign language, to communicate the difficulties disabled people face throughout life.

### **8.1.5 Applied Science (considered for discontinuation)**

Two respondents noted that *Applied Science* both at GCSE and A level was particularly well suited for students with English as an additional language, as writing skills and the development of English language skills are developed as part of the coursework. This argument may not be valid in the future due to the proposition to reduce or remove coursework from the syllabus of all qualifications.

### **8.1.6 Electronics GCSE (considered for discontinuation)**

For students who have disabilities such as Asperger's syndrome and may need home schooling, *Electronics* is considered by one respondent to be practical to deliver in a home environment, in contrast to *DT: Electronic Products*, as it needs less equipment.

### **8.1.7 Environment and Land-based Science GCSE (considered for discontinuation)**

The subject offers a practical way of learning that according to one respondent is particularly beneficial for students with Autistic Spectrum Disorder.

### **8.1.8 Film Studies (considered for reform)**

According to two respondents, *Film Studies* is very well suited for students with good analytical skills, but who could potentially struggle with the vast quantity of reading in *English Literature*. Two others reported that students' confidence in their own abilities increases as a result of studying *Film Studies* A level, and this is particularly noticeable for those students with physical disabilities or learning difficulties.

### **8.1.9 Media Studies (considered for reform)**

According to one respondent, *Media Studies* A level is successful for introducing a larger number of female students to technology in a way that other subjects are unable to achieve to the same extent. This provides them with the technical knowledge and skills required to enter a wider range of careers in the media and creative industries.

## **8.2 Impact on Equality of Opportunity and Diversity**

This section focuses on wider issues relating to the impact of the proposals on equality of opportunity and diversity, i.e. beyond the theme of protected characteristics.

While Ofqual has previously consulted on assessment arrangements for reformed qualifications<sup>12</sup>, a number of respondents made use of the consultation opportunity to express further concerns about the equality impact of those arrangements. These views are included to present a comprehensive and transparent picture of responses.

A total of 150 respondents provided general comments relating to equal opportunities, as well as diversity issues that could result from the reforms.

Most of these respondents (96) are particularly concerned about the potential divide between a student's aspirations, talents and learning styles and the opportunities given to them by a potentially restricted curriculum, particularly in relation to applied, vocational and creative subjects, and a possible narrowing of available assessment methods.

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<sup>12</sup> Further information can be found via the following links: <http://comment.ofqual.gov.uk/gcse-reform-june-2013> and <http://comment.ofqual.gov.uk/a-level-regulatory-requirements-october-2013> [Accessed 05.08.14]

The vast majority of those respondents did not specify a qualification for this, but rather commented more generally.

A further 52 respondents reflected the view that the proposed reform on all qualification levels could disadvantage learners with lower academic abilities and those from lower socio-economic backgrounds.

Nine respondents mentioned how the reforms might disadvantage students of higher ability, for example highly gifted students in cross-cutting subjects such as *Performing Arts*, who might be forced to choose between their talents in a single-discipline subject such as *Dance* or *Drama*.

## 9. Regulatory Impact

### Summary of proposals

GCSE, AS and A level qualifications are some of the most popular qualifications undertaken by 16- to 18-year-olds. Therefore, it is important to consider the potential impact of these proposals, if introduced, on the various groups of stakeholders directly affected: higher education institutions, learned societies, colleges, schools, exam boards and students.

Before taking final decisions, Ofqual will evaluate and take into account the potential regulatory impact of these proposals. Where details are yet to be refined, Ofqual will consider how to implement these in the best, and least burdensome, ways (*Completing GCSE, AS and A level Reform policy consultation document*, p. 17).

### 9.1 General Regulatory Impact

A small proportion (13%) of consultation questionnaire respondents were of the view that there could be a potential regulatory impact from the proposals that has not already been identified by Ofqual (Table 19).

**Table 19: Regulatory impact not yet identified**

		Yes	No
Q22	Is there any potential regulatory impact from the proposals in this document that Ofqual has not identified?	13.2%	86.8%

Base 983 responses

Respondents who stated ‘yes’ to this question were asked to provide further details. Of 123 sets of comments covering a range of issues, one respondent identified a positive regulatory impact and 20 respondents identified a negative impact. Subject-specific issues are covered separately in section 9.2.

The respondent who identified a positive impact explained that the widening of some course content could generate more interest for such a course and allow schools to offer content that might otherwise not be available to their students.

Potential negative regulatory issues from the reforms primarily centre on the cost implications of the reforms in general or of discontinuing certain subjects in favour of others:

- **Sixth-form colleges offer many of the courses proposed for reform and are therefore concerned these courses could be under threat if not considered economically viable by exam boards;**
- **Staff/teaching expertise may be lost, possibly disadvantaging students in schools where any discontinued subjects are widely delivered;**
- **The implementation of reform arrangements could lead to additional investments required for staff training and likely increases in examination costs charged by exam boards for longer exams; and**
- **Reducing the independence of exam boards could adversely affect innovative research into subject content and qualifications development.**

#### **Views of exam boards:**

As the responsibility of the development process of the subject reforms is proposed to be placed on awarding organisations, their views in relation to the regulatory impact are presented in more detail here.

Three of the four exam boards commented on the possible regulatory impact from the reforms:

- One stated that a prescriptive regulatory framework could increase the burden upon them and endanger flexibility and innovation;
- Two others expressed concerns about the cost associated with running the reform process itself, especially in the case of reforming and offering subjects with low uptake numbers or where only one examination board currently offers or is interested in developing a qualification;
- The same two exam boards stated that some details of the proposals were unclear, such as whether all exam boards would share the cost if only one of them wished to offer a qualification and whether a public consultation would be required in reforming the qualifications.

“Some of the affected subjects have very low entry and the proposals from Ofqual are the same for all subjects whether they have 20,000 or 200 learners. We believe that all learners deserve the best qualifications and there is a risk that it will not be possible for awarding organisations to produce the same quality qualifications for all subjects with these requirements. Some organisations may decide that they are not able to develop subject content and these subjects may be lost from provision.”

*Exam board (official response)*

## 9.2 Subject-Specific Regulatory Impact

Some of the 20 respondents who commented on the regulatory impact provided views relating to specific subjects. While they do not present the majority of views, they have been detailed here for ease of reference.

### 9.2.1 Catering and Home Economics (Food, Nutrition and Health)

- Unlike *Catering*, qualifications in *DT: Food Technology* focus on the use of new industry technology in the manufacturing of food products. If *Food Technology* is to become the primary food-related subject, schools would struggle to fund access to these technologies in order for students to gain the most out of the course;
- The cost of funding new technologies, as well as ingredients, may have to be passed on to the parents;
- Alterations to classroom facilities and equipment could create significant expense.

### 9.2.2 Electronics

- Unlike *Electronics*, qualifications in *DT: Electronic Products* require the use of workshop and laboratory facilities which schools will not always be able to afford. *Electronics* does not require these types of facilities and, as a result, respondents pointed out that schools can deliver the course without excessive financial cost;
- Trained staff to deliver the new qualification may not be available, and staffing positions of the discontinued subject will have to be reconfigured;



- A school pointed out that they recently invested a significant sum in new equipment, which they will now not be able to use.

### 9.2.3 Engineering

- Unlike *Engineering*, qualifications in *DT: Systems and Control Technology* require additional and costly equipment which schools may not be able to afford. This could result in a loss of all access to *Engineering* courses for students.

### 9.2.4 Environmental and Land-based Science

- Four respondents mentioned the possible closure of school farms, if Environmental and Land-based Science GCSE is discontinued as schools will not be able to fund them if they do not result in pupils gaining a valid qualification. According to one respondent, there are over 100 such farms currently being maintained by schools.

*“There is a real risk that those schools with practical gardening and farming resources may need to close those provisions due to league tables and not wishing to offer students qualifications that will not be recognised; these resources are used by many subject teachers (a different learning context to the classroom/real life learning), and students develop caring, teamwork and many other skills and attributes that result in more 'rounded' people, more confident and better able to contribute to society.”*

*Other representative or interest group (official response)*

## Appendix 1. Scale and Format of Consultation Responses

**Table A1.1 Scale and format of responses (including manual adjustments)**

	E-mails	Hard copies	Questionnaire responses
<b>Total responses originally received by format</b>	<b>528</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>1,100 (online)</b>
<b>Manual adjustments:</b>			
Emails/hard copy letters that <u>only</u> contained a completed consultation questionnaire (1)	-25	-9	+34
Emails/hard copy letters that <u>also</u> contained a completed consultation questionnaire (2)	n/a	n/a	+8
Duplicate 'automatic' petition emails – deducted (3)	-52	n/a	n/a
Excluded responses – deducted (4)	-10	-2	-4
Multiple responses in a single document – added (5)	+4	n/a	n/a
<b>Total responses analysed by format</b>	<b>445</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>1,138</b>

1: These responses were subsequently keyed in to the online consultation tool by Pye Tait Consulting and were analysed as online submissions rather than email/hard copy responses.

2: These responses were subsequently keyed in to the online consultation tool by Pye Tait Consulting and analysed as both online submissions and email/hard copy responses.

3: An online petition relating to *Film Studies* was responsible for 53 e-mails being automatically generated and sent to Ofqual that provided updates on the number of petition signatures. These have been treated as a single response for the purpose of the consultation although details about the petition and number of signatures have been included in this report.

4: A small number of responses were excluded from the analysis. These included requests for information, points about the layout of the questionnaire, duplicate emails and questionnaire submissions, and in one case a request to retract an online consultation response submission.

5: A small number of emails enclosed separate responses from other individuals. These cases have therefore been counted as additional responses.

## Appendix 2. Detailed Subject Analysis

### A2.1 The Case for Retaining Subjects Proposed for Possible Discontinuation (at least 10 responses)

This section presents the arguments put forward by consultation respondents for retaining subjects proposed by Ofqual for possible discontinuation.

These subjects had been determined based on their being “unlikely to meet [Ofqual’s] standards requirements” as part of the reform process (Consultation document, p. 14). It should be noted that prior to the consultation taking place, Ofqual had not made firm decisions about the future of these subjects, as they may still be open to reform should it be possible that they can meet the required standards. This section presents respondents’ views on the case for retaining specific subjects and what makes them distinctive.

In most cases respondents did not mention specific qualification levels, however, this information has been included for subjects with more than 10 responses in favour each, where it has been identifiable.

#### A2.1.1 Environmental Studies/Environmental Science<sup>13</sup> (372 responses)

Instances of specific reference to qualification levels in support of retaining this subject	
All/not specified	✓
GCSE	
AS	✓
A level	✓

<sup>13</sup> Environmental Science refers to the subject at GCSE, whereas Environmental Studies is the name of the corresponding AS/A level. However, respondents have sometimes used both titles interchangeably. Therefore, we also used both titles and refer to GCSE, AS and A level, where arguments were related to specific levels.

**Summary of views in support of retaining this subject (qualification level not specified):**

- The content of *Environmental Studies/Environmental Science* does not overlap with other science subjects but approaches similar and overarching topics from a different angle and with different emphasis<sup>14</sup>;
- The subject complement and supports progression through other sciences and humanities, such as *Geography*;
- The subject provides good onward progression opportunities in Further and Higher Education and beyond – especially for those who are less interested in *Biology* due to its non-environmental topics;
- It covers unique topics and subjects which are not taught as part of other *Science* subjects – such as marine biology and ecology – and prepares learners for Higher Education courses in these specific fields;
- The subject is extremely important for educating future generations about environmental issues; and by tackling topics which are often put in the media spotlight invoke learners’ passions for the environment and enthusiasm for its protection;
- Students praised the real-world application of the knowledge they acquire in *Environmental Studies/Environmental Science*, and how the subject supports their understanding of topics in other subjects.

**Summary of views in support of retaining these subjects (AS and A level):**

Ofqual’s proposals to potentially discontinue the *Environment Studies* A level has spurred the formation of an online petition which, at the time of writing, has reached 2,226 signatures.

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<sup>14</sup> This wording is similar to that used in an e-petition for the retention of Environmental Studies, and also features as part of an online call for the support of this subject, published by Greenwood Education. Further details and references are contained later in this section.

**Extract from the online petition<sup>15</sup> in support of retaining the Environmental Studies A level:**

*Please do not ignore how important this subject is, it may one day save our planet. Education is the most powerful tool in saving the planet and helping us sustain ourselves and further generations.*

*Environmental Studies has not just empowered students, but also changed the way they think and act about their education, their lives, and where they live. For me it's been the biggest page turner in my life, and without it I wouldn't be where I am now. This subject hasn't just helped me, it has helped countless other young adults in the UK find their passion in life and set them on their path for life, who are we to deprive others of such an opportunity? Furthermore it has actually encouraged students to go into STEM subjects at university, something that the government actually would like more people to do.*

*Whilst some think that Environmental Studies overlaps with the other sciences, I can assure you the approach to similar topics is far from the same and each take their own angles and focus on completely different areas. This is a subject that deserves our attention, our care, and our devotion.*

*We only have one earth, we only have one chance at this life, and how are we supposed to understand how we are affecting our home if we are not educated.*

Similar wording to the above petition is used in an online call for the support of *Environmental Studies*, published by Greenwood Education<sup>16</sup> and echoes the views of other consultation respondents.

Other arguments in favour of retaining the *Environmental Studies/Environmental Science* AS and A level:

- *Environmental Studies* at A-level is distinct from other science subjects, as it includes substantial coverage of conservation, ecology, hydrology, sustainability and the use of biotic resources – not taught in other subjects;
- The subject stimulates real interest among students for protection of the environment and, for many, motivates them to continue to study the subject at university level;

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<sup>15</sup> <https://you.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/save-environmental-studies> [Last accessed 31.07.2014]

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.greenwoodeducation.org.uk/blog/help-save-environmental-studies> [Last accessed 31.07.2014]

- Teachers supporting this subject reported that their former students frequently cite *Environmental Studies* A level as the reason behind their decision to pursue environment-focused professions such as environmental law, sustainable architecture, wildlife protection charitable work, and scientific research in ecology, marine biology, and renewable technologies;
- Many teachers reported that *Environmental Studies* is a popular choice among students who have not taken another Science AS or A level – not because it may be perceived as an easy choice (a large number of teacher and student respondents were keen to dispel this assumption, with some comparing the subject's complexity to that of Biochemistry) – but because the topics were more interesting to students than AS/A Level *Biology* or *Chemistry*.

*"The subject opened my eyes to the potential difference I could make not only as a scientist, but as an ordinary citizen who is aware of the environment and what needs to be done to protect it. It is very important that others have the chance to become inspired in the same way, and A Level Environmental Studies has an essential part to play in this."*

*Former student (personal response)*

Of all responses received to date in favour of retaining the *Environmental Studies* AS/A level, a total of 77 responses have been received from one educational institution, mainly from teachers (37) and current/former students (40) and their arguments mirrored the general tenor of supporters noted above.

Four other educational institutions generated numerous individual responses in support of retaining the *Environmental Studies* AS/A level and their responses were similar to the arguments given above:

- Further Education College in the North West (14 responses);
- Further Education College in the South West (14 responses);
- Sixth Form and Further Education College in the South West (14 responses); and
- Sixth Form College in Southern England (16 responses).

### **References to Government policy or agendas:**

The following points summarise respondents' arguments for retaining this subject where specific references or inferences were made to Government policy.

- In relation to the Government agenda on increasing employability skills, *Environmental Studies* students possess desirable attributes which will potentially make them more employable. This is due to the fact environmental issues are a growing concern for employers and, as such, employers are increasingly seeking candidates with a good understanding of the science of environmental change and its implications;
- *Environmental Studies* contributes and supports the Government's push on STEM subjects and encourages more students into science; Supporters argued that students often choose to study *Environmental Studies* because they are interested in science but do not want to specialise in a certain core subject.

*"I see employability as an increasing area of concern for school leavers. This includes bringing knowledge and skills to the workplace which will be of value both to the employer and to the nation. I would put knowledge of environmental issues as an increasingly important strand here."*

*Education specialist (personal response)*

### **A2.1.2 Catering (181 responses)**

#### **Summary of views in support of retaining this subject (GCSE):**

*Catering* is only offered at GCSE, therefore the following summary of responses only relate to this level.

- *Catering* has been mentioned as having a high uptake compared to *DT: Food Technology* – the latter of which was favoured by a number of respondents for discontinuation in place of *Catering* or *Home Economics (Food, Nutrition and Health)*;
- *Catering* covers distinctly different areas than those taught in *DT: Food Technology*. It covers home cooking skills and a good understanding of nutrition, the cost of food and dietary requirements, as well as specific skills valuable for a career in catering, such as knowledge about the food and beverage industry, front of house, the types of products and services provided, an overview over the range of customer groups, job roles, career opportunities, appropriate forms of communication within the industry, the importance of record keeping, as well as

the range of equipment used in the hospitality and catering industry. *DT: Food Technology*, on the other hand, focuses on the industrial design and production of food that is more relevant to industrial food production;

- Respondents fear that discontinuing *Catering* will result in students being less prepared to pursue career choices in the hospitality industry;
- *Catering* is a demanding subject and it is by no means easy to achieve high grades;
- The subject is considered important in teaching young people a healthy lifestyle, thereby supporting the prevention of obesity and life-style related diseases;
- Owing to its practical approach and assessment strategy, *Catering* supports those students who are not as academically capable, and provides them with transferable skills and a route in a career.

**References to Government policy or agendas:**

- Some supporters referenced the Government’s agenda on tackling the obesity crisis;
- Several respondents mentioned the importance of educating and instilling the importance of nutrition among students, including cooking techniques.

*“Linking the Government decision to make food – and in particular cooking skills compulsory prior to Key Stage 4, it reinforces the need for Catering to be reformed and not discontinued.”*

*Exam board (official response)*

**A2.1.3 Home Economics (Food, Nutrition and Health) (167 responses)**

Instances of specific reference to qualification levels in support of retaining this subject	
All/not specified	✓
GCSE	✓
AS	✓
A level	✓



**Summary of views in support of retaining this subject:**

The majority of respondents supportive of this subject did not specify a qualification level. Arguments given for AS or A level *Home Economics* were similar to those put forward for GCSE, especially in relation to the obesity crisis.

- While *DT: Food Technology* GCSE is considered to involve the design of food products, the *Home Economics (Food, Nutrition and Health)* GCSE approaches the science behind food – focusing on nutrition and the chemical and biological requirements of healthy eating, in addition to teaching students the practical skills of cooking and budgeting for meals;
- Recent changes to the national curriculum have seen cooking and nutrition treated as separate topics, with an emphasis on practical cooking skills. Respondents argued that the *DT: Food Technology* GCSE would not successfully deliver on this agenda;
- *Home Economics (Food, Nutrition and Health)* at all levels provides the skills and knowledge essential to help the younger generation overcome the issue of unhealthy diets and the health problems these cause;
- The subject provides students with extensive knowledge of nutrition and meal planning relevant to careers in nursing, physiotherapy, and sports nutrition;
- As a greater number of children have grown up in families in which both parents work, children are thought to be exposed to less home cooking and as a result do not acquire the basic skills in food and meal preparation. *Home Economics (Food, Nutrition and Health)* trains students in these skills to prepare them for adult life – an education they would miss out on if the subject is discontinued.

*“DT: Food Technology is not an appropriate alternative to Food and Nutrition as the nutritional content in Design and Technology is minimal and the focus is on combining ingredients to make food products as opposed to gaining a high standard of practical skills that can be used to produce meals to meet specific dietary needs.”*

*Exam board (official response)*

**References to Government policy or agendas:**

- The National Curriculum for Key Stage 3 has recently been altered to promote the delivery of more practical cooking lessons in schools. Respondents argued that *DT: Food Technology* does not involve as much practical learning as *Home Economics (Food, Nutrition and Health)*, therefore, its discontinuation would leave no natural progression from Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 4, and the National Curriculum would not be honoured at this level;
- Tackling the obesity crisis and related health problems is a key agenda for the Government. According to 33 respondents, while *Home Economics (Food, Nutrition and Health)* would work towards fulfilling this agenda with its smaller focus on practical cooking skills, *DT: Food Technology* would not provide students with the necessary practical skills or nutritional information needed to overcome the crisis;
- *Home Economics (Food, Nutrition and Health)* provides the skills and knowledge essential to help the younger generation overcome the issue of unhealthy diets and the health problems these cause.

***Home Economics (Child Development) (26 responses); and Home Economics (Textiles) (9 responses)***

A total of 26 respondents argued in favour of retaining *Home Economics (Child Development)*. The responses indicate that teachers interpreted reference to *Home Economics* on the list of GCSE subjects being considered for discontinuation to also include *Home Economics (Child Development)* or *Home Economics (Textiles)* at GCSE level.

Supporters (including two exam boards) argued that *DT: Food Technology* would not be able to cover *Child Development*. The same case was put forward in relation to *Textiles*, which also attracted support from one exam board.

**A2.1.4 Performance Studies (89 responses) /Performing Arts (83 responses)/Expressive Arts (52 responses)**

Instances of specific reference to qualification levels in support of retaining these subjects		
	Performance Studies	Performing Arts
All/not specified	✓	✓
GCSE		✓
AS	✓	✓
A level	✓	✓

*Performance Studies* is being considered for discontinuation at AS and A level; *Performing Arts* for discontinuation at all qualification levels; and *Expressive Arts* for discontinuation at GCSE level.

**Summary of views in support of retaining these subjects:**

Most respondents did not specify a level as part of their support for either *Performance Studies* or *Performing Arts*, but those that did mostly named *Performing Arts* GCSE and *Performance Studies* A level.

- The main argument for retaining these subjects is that while they overlap with the content of single creative subjects, such of *Drama*, *Dance* or *Music* for example, they fulfil a distinct purpose to those other subjects, as they allow students to study a wide range of integrated art forms together, in contrast to single studies. *Performing Arts*, for example, combines art, dance, gymnastics, drama and music into a performance;
- *Expressive Arts* offers an even wider range, covering five arts areas: *Creative Writing*; *Art and Design*; *Music*; *Drama*; and *Dance*;
- *Performing Arts* also incorporates the more technical aspects of performance, such as stage management, lighting and sound, which is reported not to be covered in any other subject;
- Discontinuation of these subjects could result in students with a wide range of talents having to limit themselves to one of the component areas of the arts;
- The creative and performing arts industry is in need of integrated multi-disciplined performers and by limiting students to one of the component areas, they will have difficulty making a career in the creative industry or progressing to higher education;
- The subjects are highly demanding and not an easy option for students;

- These subjects provide access to a range of creative disciplines, whereas single component subjects are often only taken by students who have undertaken private tuition (for example music and dance). From an equality perspective, children from a poorer financial background are not always able to succeed in these single subjects.

*“Performing Arts is to be discontinued because it is too similar to Dance and Drama. However, although Performing Arts does contain elements of drama, dance and music which can be studied as separate GCSEs, it is the only GCSE in an arts subject which allows students to combine the disciplines of music, drama and dance. This feature makes the subject distinct from the other GCSEs and unique in what it offers. It fulfils a need as a basis for career progression to theatre studies where experience of all disciplines is a key foundation.”*

*Exam board (official response)*

*“Expressive Arts includes five areas: creative writing, art and design, music, drama and dance, of which candidates must cover at least three although most cover all five. This makes it distinctive from the individual arts GCSEs. The current specification is accessible and is taken by mainstream and special schools.”*

*School or teacher representative group (official response)*

*“A level Performance Studies is well regarded by universities as a challenging qualification and has two written exams where knowledge across two disciplines must be demonstrated, including an understanding of the political and cultural background in which works have been created.”*

*School or teacher representative group (official response)*

### **A2.1.5 Engineering (55 responses)**

Instances of specific reference to qualification levels in support of retaining this subject	
All/not specified	✓
GCSE	✓
AS	✓
A level	✓

**Summary of views in support of retaining this subject:**

Most respondents did not specify a qualification level, but those that did referred to GCSE Engineering with a few commenting on AS and A level.

- The main argument in support of maintaining *Engineering* at all qualification levels is that the subject is very different from *DT: Systems Control and Technology*, i.e. *Engineering* is a manufacturing based subject, whereas *DT: Systems Control and Technology* is a design based subject;
- Students who take *Engineering* often progress on to Further Education and employment opportunities in the Construction and Engineering sectors, which are vital in addressing the skills shortages faced by these sectors;
- The course is accessible to students of all abilities and provides them with the opportunity to succeed in a discipline with strong routes into Further Education and a future career.

**References to Government policy or agendas:**

- Manufacturers, engineers and technicians are in great demand and Government provides support for STEM subjects in order to address this potential shortfall.

*“The UK is facing an unprecedented shortage of engineers at technician and professional levels. Already, major employers are finding difficulty recruiting to certain engineering roles, such as electrical and electronic engineering in the automotive sector. This situation is only likely to get worse in the short to medium term. The UK government’s industrial strategy is to place productive industries, based on engineering and technology skills, at the heart of the growth agenda. Ofqual’s proposal to discontinue engineering, manufacturing and electronics subjects at GCSE, AS and A level is entirely at odds with the government’s strategy for growth and the need to encourage more young people into engineering careers.”*

*Subject association or learned society (official response)*

### A2.1.6 Applied Science (52 responses)/Use of Mathematics (50 responses)

Instances of specific reference to qualification levels in support of retaining these subjects		
	Applied Science	Use of Mathematics
All/not specified	✓	✓
GCSE	✓	
AS	✓	✓
A level	✓	✓

#### **Summary of views in support of retaining these subjects:**

Supporters of *Applied Science* at all qualification levels and *Use of Mathematics* at AS/A level offered similar arguments for both subjects, hence these are presented together.

- Supporters believe that these subjects - particularly at the AS/A level - provide students with a background needed for a wide range of career choices such as nursing, paramedics, midwifery, and primary science teaching;
- *Use of Mathematics* is distinct from *Maths*, as it covers topics above higher GCSE, for example exponential, log and normal distribution functions, regression analysis and calculus, and focuses on applying these to practical situations (modelling data with functions and interpreting situations in context) with a greater emphasis on the use of ICT;
- Many professional and technical job roles (such as engineering) benefit from mathematical techniques taught in *Use of Mathematics*;
- Respondents expressed concern that students currently taking these AS/A level subjects might not otherwise choose the AS/A level in Maths, Biology, Chemistry, or Physics (for example where they do not wish to study a pure maths or science subject or where they may not meet the entry requirements). By taking *Applied Science* and *Use of Mathematics*, students could take forward valuable additional maths and science education that they may not otherwise receive.

#### **References to Government policy or agendas:**

- Proposals to discontinue these subjects appear to go against the grain of the Government's interest in increasing STEM subjects at higher levels.

*"This course is an opportunity for students coming from GCSE Applied science to*

access a post 16 qualification that is robust and recognised by many HE providers. To take it away without replacement to me seems ridiculous.”

Comprehensive school (official response)

### **A2.1.7 Environmental and Land-based Science (35 responses)**

#### **Summary of views in support of retaining this subject:**

*Environmental and Land-based Science (ELBS)* is being considered for discontinuation at GCSE level, therefore arguments either related specifically to GCSE or were otherwise not specified by respondents.

- The proposed new GCSE *Science* specification does not overlap with the subject content of *ELBS* as the latter covers management of the natural environment, plant cultivation, small animal care, commercial horticulture, agriculture, livestock husbandry, as well as gardening skills;
- *ELBS* is a practical science course, which supports and provides opportunities for students and offers a clear progression pathway, for example to level 3 courses available in agricultural and horticultural studies, veterinary surgery, horticulture, food production; and the environmental science careers;
- Other respondents provided similar arguments to those in favour of retaining *Environmental Studies* AS/A level, that greater knowledge of how to maintain and protect the environment and – in particular for *ELBS* – the countryside, is essential for future generations;
- The subject is particularly valuable for students from farming or countryside backgrounds, with the subject considered essential for those who intend to continue onto agricultural college or directly into a land-based career. Teachers were particularly concerned that these students would not be able to pursue these careers if *ELBS* is discontinued and that this could have a dramatic effect upon the UK’s farming and countryside industries.

### **A2.1.8 Electronics (28 responses)**

#### **Summary of views in support of retaining this subject:**

*Electronics* is being considered for discontinuation at GCSE, therefore arguments have been assumed to refer to this level where they did not make explicit reference.

- The topics covered by *Electronics* are not delivered by alternative *Physics* or *DT* subjects;
- Teachers are concerned that discontinuing this subject would result in fewer students pursuing Engineering at University and as a future career owing to students' lack of knowledge about the subject;
- *Electronics* is a supporting subject, leading to complementary AS/A level subjects such as *Mathematics*, *Physics* and *Chemistry*, and that it has inspired many students' decision to study Engineering at University;
- The subject involves rigorous assessment and remains a popular subject among students;
- *Electronics* provides students with the practical and designing skills and knowledge required to enter industries such as telecommunications, telecom-engineering and computer science;
- The course requires less equipment and specialist facilities, meaning that home school students are able to obtain qualifications in a practical subject with clear routes into Further Education and a possible career.

*“GCSE Electronics should not be discontinued. At a time when much is in the press about the shortage of engineers removing a subject such as Electronics really is not compatible with increasing the number of engineers in the future.”*

*Exam board (official response)*

*“The rationale behind this proposal is that it has the same purpose and covers a similar subject area to the GCSE Design Technology: Electronics Products qualification, but this is a most serious misjudgement. The main similarity is that they share the word Electronics in their title, but otherwise the two specifications are very different in their ethos, body of knowledge, pupil profile and career paths.”*

*Independent/private school (official response)*

*“The Electronics course offers distinct learning outcomes and provides a route to further study of the sciences that will not be replaced by DT or any other proposed course.”*

*Subject association or learned society (official response)*



### A2.1.9 Applied Business (21 responses)

Instances of specific reference to qualification levels in support of retaining this subject	
All/not specified	✓
GCSE	✓
AS	✓
A level	✓

#### **Summary of views in support of retaining this subject:**

As with other applied subjects, respondents who were in favour of retaining *Applied Business* at all levels stressed the following points:

- The subject is approached from a different angle;
- The subject does not overlap with other business-related subjects;
- It provides a clear link for progression into higher education.

*“The Applied Business A level serves a very distinct purpose from either the BTEC or Business Studies A levels by providing a rigorous vocational option. I have taught numerous students on this course who have subsequently gone on to succeed at university on business courses and in business.”*

*School/College (official response)*

### A2.1.10 Human Biology (19 responses)

Instances of specific reference to qualification levels in support of retaining this subject	
All/not specified	✓
GCSE	
AS	✓
A level	✓

**Summary of views in support of retaining this subject:**

Respondents provided arguments for retaining *Human Biology* at AS/A levels and arguments were similar to those put forth for *Applied Science*:

- *Human Biology* is distinct from *Biology*, with only very little overlap;
- The subject offers distinct routes into further and higher education, for example into Physiotherapy, Nursing, Care, Conservation Biology, the sports sector and medical courses;
- Students can learn analytical, evaluative and numeracy skills, which increases their employability;
- It offers more extended investigations and experiments than *Biology*;
- The subject is rigorously tested.

*“The broad nature of Biology means that in A level Biology the capacity to include very much human biology becomes very much reduced. Although there is overlap in content with Biology, the benefits that A level Human Biology has, is that it allows there to be more focus on human physiology, this is very appealing for many learners.”*

*Exam board (official response)*

**A2.1.11 Humanities (11 responses)**

Instances of specific reference to qualification levels in support of retaining this subject	
All/not specified	✓
GCSE	✓
AS	
A level	

**Summary of views in support of retaining this subject:**

- *Humanities* fulfils a distinct purpose to *History* or *Geography* and draws in topics from other subjects, such as *Sociology*, *Environmental Studies*, *Religious Studies*, and *Economics* and examines links between them;

- Besides academic skills, the subject also equips students with broader knowledge about issues such as prejudice, families, global inequality and conflict and raises awareness of social issues, which is not covered by other subjects.

*“The subject requires independent learning and interpretation of source materials that focus on interesting and relevant topics in today's society not covered by History or Geography such as the Syrian conflict, gay rights or changes in the modern workplace.”*

*Education specialist (personal response)*

## **A2.2 The Case for Retaining Subjects Proposed for Possible Discontinuation (fewer than 10 responses)**

For the subjects presented in this section, summary tables on the qualifications mentioned are not included, as they have in most cases not been identified by the respondent. Where a respondent did specify a qualification, those are included in the summary of the arguments presented.

### **A2.2.1 Science in Society (6 responses)**

#### ***Summary of views in support of retaining this subject:***

Respondents in support of *Science in Society* often also supported *Applied Science* and cited similar arguments for both, i.e. that the subject offers a science education post 16 for those who do not want to take the pure *Science A* levels.

*“Science in Society has completely different aims, content and purposes to AS/A-level courses in Biology, Chemistry and Physics. It has a distinctive assessment model which includes a requirement to engage with science literature written for the general public. Providing a non-specialist science course post-16 seems a legitimate thing for an Awarding Body to do. It seems that Ofqual’s principles will make it difficult, if not impossible, for further attempts to develop courses along these lines in future.”*

*Education specialist (personal response)*

### **A2.2.2 Quantitative Methods (5 responses)**

#### ***Summary of views in support of retaining this subject:***

*Quantitative Methods*, alongside *Mathematics* and *Further Mathematics* allows schools and colleges to offer specialisms in Maths and provides the opportunity for students to continue and enhance their mathematical learning.

### **A2.2.3 Additional Applied Science (5 responses)**

#### ***Summary of views in support of retaining this subject:***

Five respondents mentioned the value of retaining this subject as an alternative to other Science course, much the same as *Applied Science*.

#### **A2.2.4 Manufacturing (3 responses)**

##### ***Summary of views in support of retaining this subject:***

Similar to *Engineering*, supporters of *Manufacturing* GCSE do not see the content of this subject adequately covered by the proposed replacement subject *DT: Product Design*.

*“At a time when there is a national shortage of young people entering post school courses in engineering and manufacturing, and at a time when it has been predicted that by 2020 we will need a million more employed in engineering at different levels from technician to graduate, closing possible routes to attract young people might be seen as unhelpful. Its removal would not send out positive messages about the value of studying these subjects.”*

*Other representative or interest group (official response)*

#### **A2.2.5 Human Health and Physiology (3 responses)**

##### ***Summary of views in support of retaining this subject:***

Similar to *Human Biology – Human Health and Physiology* is vocationally based, gives students a good insight into the working of the body and the opportunity to go on to, for example, nursing courses.

#### **A2.2.6 Applied Art and Design (2 responses)**

##### ***Summary of views in support of retaining this subject:***

Respondents in favour of retaining *Applied Art and Design* were also in favour of other creative subjects such as *Performing Arts* and provided similar views for the continuation of both.

## A2.3 Support for Subjects to be Considered for Reform (at least 10 responses)

The consultation document listed a range of subjects at GCSE, AS and A level that Ofqual is considering for reform, rather than discontinuation. Many respondents provided arguments setting out the importance of these subjects and there appear to be concerns that they risk being discontinued in the future.

This section presents the case for subjects being considered for reform that received at least 10 responses of support.

### A2.3.1 Film Studies (110 responses)

Instances of specific reference to qualification levels in support of retaining this subject	
All/not specified	✓
GCSE	✓
AS	✓
A level	✓

#### **Summary of views in support of this subject (qualification level not specified):**

- All respondents who commented about *Film Studies* were in support of continuing it as a separate course from *Media Studies* and *Theatre Studies*;
- Supporters were keen to dispel apparent myths of *Film Studies* being a soft subject and emphasised the rigorous assessment strategies at all qualification levels, in addition to the range of skills student acquire whilst studying film, such as text analysis, critical thinking, and theoretical positioning. Most often, respondents compared the subject's complexity and academic rigour to that of *English Literature*;
- The subject helps to provide students with transferable skills which can be used to support their progression in other subjects and applied in a university or work setting;
- Teachers commented that students examine the social, economic and political factors portrayed in and which inspire films, and that this often involves a high level of philosophical thought;

- Young people need to be exposed and introduced to the practical processes involved in film production in order to be trained as the future generation of film makers;
- The UK film industry needs continued support by nurturing and creating new creative talent; and
- *Film Studies* supports those students who may not possess the reading confidence required to study literature and offers them an opportunity to develop analytical and writing skills – an opportunity which would be absent without the subject.

*“Film Studies helps to cater for intelligent students with strong visual and auditory cognition skills. Many students who might have struggled with the reading load in an English Literature course have discovered that they can develop a similar range of creative, analytical, interpretive and research skills through the study of Film.”*

*Education specialist (personal response)*

#### **Summary of views in support of this subject (GCSE):**

- GCSE *Film Studies* is deemed to provide the necessary skills and knowledge to act as a bridge towards higher level *Film Studies* at A level, thus preparing students for the next stage in their film education.

#### **Summary of views in support of this subject (AS and A level):**

- Film is a legitimate art form and field of academic study at university level, with several respondents identifying the Russell Group and Oxbridge universities which offer well recognised and prominent Film departments;
- Many A level *Film Studies* students are enthused by the subject and motivated to pursue it at university level and beyond;
- Two petitions have been established in support of retaining the *Film Studies* A level where there appear to be concerns that the subject risks being discontinued in the future.
  - An e-petition published via Change/org<sup>17</sup> has received 71 signatures at the time of writing and states: “Ofqual’s consultation on the reforms is likely to lead to the scrapping of *Film Studies* which has been described as a soft

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.change.org/en-GB/petitions/secretary-of-state-for-education-michael-gove-protect-film-studies-a-level> [Accessed 31.07.14]

*subject. We believe Film Studies is a subject of serious merit in its own right that should not be bundled together with performing arts or media studies. Cinema is a modern art form and students should have the right to study and explore it as they do with Fine Art, Drama, Music and other A level subjects.”*

- An e-petition published via Direct.Gov<sup>18</sup> has received 23 signatures to date and argues that film should continue to be recognised and taught as an art form in its own right.

### **A2.3.2 Media Studies (65 responses)**

Instances of specific reference to qualification levels in support of retaining this subject	
All/not specified	✓
GCSE	✓
AS	✓
A level	✓

#### **Summary of views in support of this subject (qualification level not specified):**

The majority of responses in support of *Media Studies* did not specify a qualification level.

- The subject provides students with transferable skills they can apply to other subjects, further education and future careers such as journalism and public relations;
- Respondents are keen to dispel the negative public perception of media-based subjects, arguing that the subject is rigorous in its assessment;
- A main argument in support of *Media Studies* is that as creative industries continue to grow in importance, so too must the education of future generations on the social, economic, technological, and political impact media has on modern day society;
- The subject teaches young people the skills and knowledge needed to navigate the increasingly mass media centric society, such as visual and media literacy – an essential skill for modern life;

<sup>18</sup> <http://epetitions.direct.gov.uk/petitions/65977> [Accessed 31.07.14]



- Teachers argued that the subject enables students to develop and practise their research, analysis and writing skills which support and complement other subjects such as *English Language* and *English Literature*;
- The combination of practical and academic learning has benefits for all students at all qualification levels according to a large proportion of respondents.

*“It is gratifying to see students, many of whom start with us as being under-confident and uncertain of their future direction, grow in maturity and confidence as a result of completing one or both of [Media Studies and Film Studies]. Similarly, we see academically-gifted young people being really stretched by the challenging content of each course.”*

*Sixth Form College (official response)*

#### **References to Government policy or agendas:**

- Owing to their exposure to World Cinema and current affairs, students of *Media Studies* are encouraged to investigate and discuss matters of equality, diversity and inclusion which are important to Ofsted (for example, through its Single Equality Scheme<sup>19</sup>).

#### **A2.3.3 Hospitality (17 responses)**

##### **Summary of views in support of this subject:**

All respondents who provided arguments for retaining *Hospitality* GCSE were also in favour of keeping *Catering*. The arguments are therefore very similar, in that both *Catering* and *Hospitality* at GCSE:

- Are very different from the proposed *DT: Food Technology* in content, skills learnt and career paths for students in further and higher education;
- Both offer opportunities for study for students of a wide range of abilities.

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<sup>19</sup> <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/single-equality-scheme-2010-13> [Accessed 28.07.14]

### A2.3.4 Classical Civilisation (15 responses)

Instances of specific reference to qualification levels in support of retaining this subject	
All/not specified	✓
GCSE	✓
AS	✓
A level	✓

#### **Summary of views in support of this subject:**

- *Classical Civilisation* offers an accessible way for all children to learn about Western culture and the Greek and Roman world in a way that other subjects do not. For example, the *Classical Civilisation* specification allows for a breadth and depth of study of the Classical world which is not possible within the *Latin* or *Classical Greek* specifications because of the amount of time needed to master and decode the language;
- Classical Civilisation may also be distinguished from other subjects by the way in which it encourages a holistic and sometimes interdisciplinary view on ancient Greece and Rome;
- The nature of the subject and its assessment allow gifted and talented students the opportunity to stretch their abilities and advance in a way they may not be able to experience with other subjects;
- The subject provides students with the wide breath of skills and knowledge to read classic disciplines at university level, as it teaches them at AS/A level to handle translated texts, literary analysis for literature topics, historical causation, understanding of theatre, synthesis and analysis of different kinds of source material, and sifting and evaluating evidence for the ancient history topics.

*“By instilling enthusiasm for the ancient world in students at GCSE, many students are led to take related subjects at A-level or BA-level studies: in particular, to the university-level study of Classics, Drama, English, History, Philosophy and Politics (thereby helping traditionally ‘elite’ degree subjects to widen the participation of students from non-traditional backgrounds).”*

*School or teacher representative group (official response)*

## A2.4 The Importance of Subjects Considered for Reform (fewer than 10 responses)

A number of respondents also came forth in support of other subjects proposed for reform and these are presented below with a short summary of the main arguments. For the subjects presented in this section, summary tables on the qualifications mentioned are not included, as they have in most cases not been identified by the respondent. Where a respondent did specify a qualification, those are included in the summary of the arguments presented.

### A2.4.1 Law (9 responses)

#### ***Summary of views in support of this subject:***

- *Law* at A level is academically rigorous and equips students with transferable skills in planning, verbal and written communication, problem solving, analysis, evaluation, and autonomous learning. These skills are valued by Russell Group and Oxbridge universities as well as employers;
- The A level prepares students for a university level *Law* education - they understand how to research legal cases and have basic knowledge of the legal system;
- A level *Law* students are better informed about their choice of university discipline;
- Studying *Law* at A level opens up the legal profession to students of all backgrounds and exposes them to higher education and career opportunities they may not have otherwise considered. In turn, this will help to promote diversity within the legal profession.

*“It is often unappreciated how far the A level encourages students from a wide range of non-traditional backgrounds to access law at university and as a career. Many students from my college have gone on to qualify in the profession having been the first in their family to go to university and having come from less privileged backgrounds.”*

*Teacher (personal response)*

#### A2.4.2 Information and Communication Technology (8 responses)

##### **Summary of views in support of this subject:**

- *Information and Communication Technology* at all qualification levels equips students with the technical skills and knowledge to successfully participate in an increasingly technology integrated society;
- The subject has little cross over with *Computing* as the two subjects require different skills sets – while *Information and Communication Technology* educates students about how to utilise computer technology, *Computing* focusses upon programming and technical aspects.

#### A2.4.3 Health and Social Care/Health and Social Care Single Award (6 responses)

##### **Summary of views in support of this subject:**

- *The Health and Social Care A level* is a spring board subject for those wishing to pursue higher level medical education or careers such as nursing, midwifery, radiology, and speech and language therapy. It introduces students to the knowledge and skills of the medical sector which are not covered by any other *Science A level*, and teachers report that their former students have felt better prepared for their medical degree studies than their peers who did not study the A level;
- The subject is growing in popularity among students and provides those of lower academic ability the opportunity to achieve an academic qualification and progress to university.

*“The course content is unique amongst A levels, covering such important concepts as quality care, equality and diversity and quality assurance mechanisms which (particularly in the post Stafford Hospital era) are vital to the health and social care practitioners of the future.”*

*Teacher (personal response)*

#### A2.4.4 Geology (6 responses)

##### **Summary of views in support of this subject:**

- The content covered by *Geology* at GCSE and A level is not addressed by other *Science* or *Geography* subjects. Students would not be exposed to and provided

with the necessary foundation in these topics in order to study *Geology* at university if the subject is abolished;

- *Geology* is growing in popularity and many A level students are motivated to study the subject at university;
- Several geological related occupations have been identified as being in high demand and short supply and students who go into these professions contribute to highly valued sectors and research areas such as engineering, environmental studies, and hydrocarbon.

*“Although a minority subject at A level - a very high percentage of A level students studying the subject go on to University to study it.”*

*Higher Education lecturer (personal response)*

#### **A2.4.5 Ancient History and Classics (6 responses and 1 response, respectively)**

##### ***Summary of views in support of this subject:***

- *Ancient History* and *Classics* serve as an introduction to classical subjects for many students and their loss could have a detrimental effect upon the uptake of classical subjects at Higher Education level;
- Students are equipped with a foundation in core concepts such as democracy, classical languages, leadership, governance, and participation which not only prepares them for university study and support their progression in other historical subjects, but also broadens their understanding of their own culture, institutions and identities;
- *Ancient History* and *Classics* develop transferable skills such as text analysis and critical thinking which can be used in other subjects and are desirable by universities and employers;
- The subjects are academically rigorous and intellectually stimulating.

#### A2.4.6 Astronomy (5 responses)

##### **Summary of views in support of this subject:**

- The subject at GCSE and A level provides students with the necessary skills and knowledge to progress onto to study *Astronomy* at university which are not covered by *Physics*;
- *Astronomy* at GCSE introduces students to science from a different perspective to that of the traditional core sciences; the enthusiasm for Science these students acquire inspires many to undertake Science disciplines, such as *Physics*, at university.

*“Our 2009 survey found that 53% of first year physics undergraduates cited Astronomy as a significant interest for their decision to pursue a degree course in Physics.”*

*Subject association or learned society (official response)*

#### A2.4.7 Communication and Culture (4 responses)

##### **Summary of views in support of this subject:**

- *Communication and Culture* equips students with transferable skills in academic writing and referencing skills in high demand by universities and employers, and the independent project part of the course trains students in autonomous research;
- The subject encourages students to become open minded and take an active interest in society in addition developing their social and cultural literacy; a key skills in contemporary society;
- The skills and knowledge acquired while studying *Communication and Culture* supports students’ development in other subjects such as *Sociology, English, Politics, History, and Humanities*, as well their progression into media and communications courses at university and beyond.

#### A2.4.8 Archaeology (4 responses)

##### **Summary of views in support of this subject:**

- The subject serves as an introduction to *Archaeology*, and encourages many A level students to read *Archaeology* at university level and progress into archaeological careers. The absence of an equivalent GCSE qualification, A level *Archaeology* is the only course which provides students with access to the discipline before university;
- Students gain a greater appreciation of their historical environment and national heritage.

*“It is unthinkable that a major academic discipline which is taught at degree levels at over 50 higher education institutions across the UK would not be represented within the GCSE or A Level syllabus range.”*

*Subject association/learned society (official response)*

#### A2.4.9 Government and Politics (4 responses)

##### **Summary of views in support of this subject:**

- *Government and Politics* encourages students to engage with current issues, to think autonomously and develop theories and ideas on topics such as conflict resolution. The subject encourages political maturity among students and provides them with the knowledge for them to make their own informed political judgements; this is particularly pertinent in the face of decreasing voter turnout rates;
- The lack of a GCSE in *Government and Politics* means that the A level serves as an introduction to the discipline before university;
- There is little overlap between *Government and Politics* and other subjects such as *History* and *Citizenship Studies*, rather students chose to study the subject for its unique content and skills. The subjects provides students with a foundation in people and politics which cannot be acquired through studying any other subject.

*“If Politics is not taught as an A Level then the only way that young people will be able to learn about Politics is through their peers and family. This system would promote Political engagement in social groups already engaged by politics and fail to promote engagement in social groups who are disinterested. This would generate a self-perpetuating climate of political families and discourage social mobility, particularly in the world of politics.”*

*Teacher (personal response)*

#### **A2.4.10 Business Studies (3 responses)**

##### ***Summary of views in support of this subject:***

The subject encourages and trains students in key skills important to the UK economy, such as entrepreneurship, which are not covered by other subjects. These skills are also valued by universities, and A level *Business Studies* supports students' applications to top Higher Education Institutions.

*“For students who may already have a [business] idea this is essential for them to become young entrepreneurs, something our society and country value highly!”*

*Teacher (personal response)*

#### **A2.4.11 Philosophy (3 responses)**

##### ***Summary of views in support of this subject:***

- The subject equips students with a variety of high-level cognitive and academic skills including analysis and lateral thinking that are in demand by top universities and employers;
- *Philosophy* requires students to engage with a wide range of issues and analytical methods, including those associated with ethical and moral concerns; these opportunities are not provided by other subjects.

*“Philosophy is not a subject that requires students to memorise and regurgitate facts - rather, it is a methodological approach to thinking and problem solving that draws on a rich heritage of analytical thought.”*

*Teacher (personal response)*



#### **A2.4.12 Critical Thinking (3 responses)**

##### ***Summary of views in support of this subject:***

*Critical Thinking* equips students with transferable skills in, for example, identifying, constructing and evaluating arguments, detecting common mistakes in reasoning, problem solving, and critically analysing statistics. These skills can be used to support students' progression in other subjects, prepare them for Higher Education study, and are also in high demand by employers.

#### **A2.4.13 Creative Writing (3 responses)**

##### ***Summary of views in support of this subject:***

*Creative Writing* teaches students about the craft of writing, offers more opportunities for self-expression than the *English* subjects, and students learn important writing skills in demand from employers such as writing to a brief, a deadline or to a particular length.

#### **A2.4.14 Accounting (2 responses)**

##### ***Summary of views in support of this subject:***

*Accounting* at A level can be used by students as a springboard to embark on an Accounting Apprenticeship and are able to progress immediately onto the level 3 qualification, with the added advantage of a fast track route. The skills learned in this course are also valuable for employers and makes the students more appealing for local accountancy practices.

#### **A2.4.15 Anthropology (2 responses)**

##### ***Summary of views in support of this subject:***

- The subject is academically rigorous and stretches students in order for them to achieve to the best of their ability;
- *Anthropology* provides students with a unique opportunity to study different cultures and religions, thus widening their perspective of tolerance and diversity within their social context.

#### **A2.4.16 Music Technology (1 response)**

##### ***Summary of views in support of this subject:***

The subject introduces students to the technical aspect of the music industry, and equips them with the skills they require to advance on to study *Music Technology* at university and beyond in entertainment careers such as technician and broadcasting.

#### **A2.4.17 Citizenship Studies (1 response)**

##### ***Summary of views in support of this subject:***

- Students are encouraged to take an active interest in current affairs and politics, and the subject educates young people about the democratic process, conflict resolution, legal and human rights, and the role of international organisations such as the UN and EU. This knowledge is important for participation in contemporary society;
- *Citizenship Studies* encourages young people to be more active in their local communities which helps them to develop self-confidence, and broadens their perspective on diversity within society and the concept of ‘Britishness’ – a key Government agenda.

*“Citizenship Studies gives them a voice: in the life of their schools, in their communities and in society at large.”*

*Teacher (personal response)*

#### **A2.4.18 History of Art (1 response)**

##### ***Summary of views in support of this subject:***

- *History of Art* is a recognised field of academic study and the subjects’ rigour is comparable to that of other core subjects including *Humanities*, *English Literature* and *History*. Students develop visual literacy – an important skills required for the analysis of contemporary society - as well as a deep understanding of historical methodology;
- The subject trains students in those skills in high demand by universities, including: autonomous research and source finding; written communication and referencing; analysis; and critical thinking;

- The UK heritage and cultural industries are world recognised and economically and socially important to the whole economy. *History of Art* A level serves as a spring board for students to study the subject at university and beyond as a career, thereby supporting these sectors; and
- There is no conflict or confusion over the core content of the *History of Art* A level as it is currently only offered by one exam board.

Other subjects were mentioned as in need of retention, however these responses were not accompanied by supporting commentaries:

- *Statistics* (2 responses);
- *Psychology* (1 response);
- *Economics* (1 response);
- *Sociology* (1 response);
- *World/Global Development* (1 response);
- *Applied Information and Communication Technology* (1 response).

## Appendix 3. Cross-Tabulations by Type of Personal Respondent

This section presents the consultation questionnaire responses cross-tabulated by type of personal respondent.

The base number of respondents varies considerably between each group, meaning that caution must be taken when considering any apparent differences in the findings (summarised below):

- In response to the majority of consultation questions, educational specialists showed a greater tendency to agree (and also 'strongly agree' in the case of Likert-scale questions) than other types of respondents;
- With respect to proposals requiring the last award of all unreformed qualifications by 2018, the majority of students disagreed that this was appropriate with respect to A levels and AS levels particularly (56% and 58% respectively). This compares with a minority of 33% among all personal respondents – Tables A3.18 and A3.19;
- 32 out of 32 students (100%) agreed that similar or overlapping qualifications proposed in Appendix B of the consultation document serve a very distinct purpose from the reformed subjects. This compares with a slightly lower 75% among all personal respondents – Table A3.22; and
- 5 out of 15 parents/carers (33%) disagreed/strongly disagreed with proposals to set up a regulatory framework to let exam boards develop core subject criteria. This compares with a lower 17% among all personal respondents – Table A3.5.

**A3.1 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Core content - common content across all exam boards offering a qualification - will help make sure qualifications are fit for purpose.**

Q1	All personal respondents	Student	Parent/carer	Teacher (but not responding on behalf of a school)	Educational specialist	General public (interested in education but no direct link)
<b>Base</b>	<b>967</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>794</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>22</b>
Strongly agree	204 (21.1%)	5	2	173 (21.8%)	22 (22.0%)	2
Agree	544 (56.3%)	15	9	451 (56.8%)	55 (55.0%)	14
Disagree	147 (15.2%)	10	2	113 (14.2%)	18 (18.0%)	4
Strongly disagree	50 (5.2%)	-	2	43 (5.4%)	4 (4.0%)	1
Don't know/no opinion	22 (2.3%)	6	-	14 (1.8%)	1 (1.0%)	1

**A3.2 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Core content - common content across all exam boards offering a qualification - will help make sure qualifications are comparable across exam boards.**

Q2	All personal respondents	Student	Parent/carer	Teacher (but not responding on behalf of a school)	Educational specialist	General public (interested in education but no direct link)
<b>Base</b>	<b>962</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>791</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>22</b>
Strongly agree	253 (26.3%)	7	2	210 (26.5%)	31	3
Agree	562 (58.4%)	18	10	468 (59.2%)	53	13
Disagree	96 (10.0%)	6	1	75 (9.5%)	11	3
Strongly disagree	35 (3.6%)	1	2	30 (3.8%)	2	-
Don't know/no opinion	16 (1.7%)	3	-	8 (1.0%)	2	3

**A3.3 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Core content - common content across all exam boards offering a qualification - will help make sure qualifications are comparable over time.**

Q3	All personal respondents	Student	Parent/carers	Teacher (but not responding on behalf of a school)	Educational specialist	General public (interested in education but no direct link)
<b>Base</b>	<b>954</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>787</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>21</b>
Strongly agree	169 (17.7%)	4	2	138 (17.5%)	23	2
Agree	527 (55.2%)	12	8	447 (56.8%)	46	14
Disagree	167 (17.5%)	9	2	132 (16.8%)	22	2
Strongly disagree	42 (4.4%)	2	2	35 (4.4%)	3	-
Don't know/no opinion	49 (5.1%)	5	1	35 (4.4%)	5	3

**A3.4 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Core content - common content across all exam boards offering a qualification - will help make it easier for users\* to understand the qualification.**

Q4	All personal respondents	Student	Parent/carers	Teacher (but not responding on behalf of a school)	Educational specialist	General public (interested in education but no direct link)
<b>Base</b>	<b>959</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>791</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>21</b>
Strongly agree	178 (18.6%)	2	2	149 (18.8%)	23	2
Agree	545 (56.8%)	18	7	451 (57.0%)	55	14
Disagree	158 (16.5%)	7	1	130 (16.4%)	17	3
Strongly disagree	40 (4.2%)	-	2	36 (4.6%)	2	-
Don't know/no opinion	38 (4.0%)	6	3	25 (3.2%)	2	2

**A3.5 We propose to set up a regulatory framework to let exam boards develop core subject content. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal?**

Q5	All personal respondents	Student	Parent/carer	Teacher (but not responding on behalf of a school)	Educational specialist	General public (interested in education but no direct link)
<b>Base</b>	<b>956</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>790</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>20</b>
Strongly agree	120 (12.6%)	2	-	100 (12.7%)	15	3
Agree	590 (61.7%)	14	8	499 (63.2%)	59	10
Disagree	123 (12.9%)	7	4	90 (11.4%)	18	4
Strongly disagree	40 (4.2%)	1	1	37 (4.7%)	1	-
Don't know/no opinion	83 (8.7%)	9	2	64 (8.1%)	5	3

**A3.6 To what extent do you agree or disagree that exam boards should consult with stakeholders and take their views into account when developing core content for all reformed GCSE, AS and A level qualifications?**

Q7	All personal respondents	Student	Parent/carer	Teacher (but not responding on behalf of a school)	Educational specialist	General public (interested in education but no direct link)
<b>Base</b>	<b>959</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>789</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>23</b>
Strongly agree	637 (66.4%)	19	7	534 (67.7%)	65 (65.0%)	12
Agree	288 (30.0%)	13	4	229 (29.0%)	33 (33.0%)	9
Disagree	14 (1.5%)	1	1	10 (1.3%)	1 (1.0%)	1
Strongly disagree	10 (1.0%)	-	-	9 (1.0%)	1 (1.0%)	-
Don't know/no opinion	10 (1.0%)	1	1	7 (0.9%)	-	1

**A3.7 We have identified key stakeholder groups that need to be consulted in core content development (subject associations, teachers, employers, higher and further education, relevant equality groups). To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal that exam boards should include these groups when developing core content?**

Q8	All personal respondents	Student	Parent/carer	Teacher (but not responding on behalf of a school)	Educational specialist	General public (interested in education but no direct link)
<b>Base</b>	<b>963</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>793</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>23</b>
Strongly agree	656 (68.1%)	18	7	563 (71.0%)	55 (55.0%)	13
Agree	276 (28.7%)	10	7	209 (26.4%)	42 (42.0%)	8
Disagree	15 (1.6%)	2	-	11 (1.4%)	1 (1.0%)	1
Strongly disagree	6 (0.6%)	-	-	5 (0.6%)	1 (1.0%)	-
Don't know/no opinion	10 (1.0%)	3	-	5 (0.6%)	1 (1.0%)	1

**A3.8 To what extent do you agree or disagree that the benefit of having additional (to those already being reformed) GCSE, AS and A level subjects is worth any additional costs incurred by exam boards in developing core content (common content across all exam boards offering a qualification)?**

Q10	All personal respondents	Student	Parent/carer	Teacher (but not responding on behalf of a school)	Educational specialist	General public (interested in education but no direct link)
<b>Base</b>	<b>939</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>776</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>19</b>
Strongly agree	297 (31.6%)	10	5	241 (31.3%)	34	7
Agree	391 (41.6%)	12	6	319 (41.1%)	49	5
Disagree	60 (6.4%)	1	1	53 (6.8%)	4	1
Strongly disagree	18 (1.9%)	-	-	15 (1.9%)	3	-
Don't know/no opinion	173 (18.4%)	8	2	148 (19.1%)	9	6



**A3.9 To what extent do you agree or disagree that we should develop principles to determine in advance which remaining or new subject areas can be developed as GCSE, AS or A level qualifications?**

Q11	All personal respondents	Student	Parent/carer	Teacher (but not responding on behalf of a school)	Educational specialist	General public (interested in education but no direct link)
<b>Base</b>	<b>950</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>785</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>23</b>
Strongly agree	144 (15.2%)	4	2	121 (15.4%)	17	-
Agree	507 (53.4%)	13	10	419 (53.4%)	51	14
Disagree	145 (15.3%)	8	-	117 (14.9%)	17	3
Strongly disagree	49 (5.2%)	1	-	40 (5.1%)	5	3
Don't know/no opinion	105 (11.1%)	6	2	88 (11.2%)	6	3

**A3.10 Current GCSEs/AS/A levels cannot always be easily distinguished from others with a similar title.**

Q12a	All personal respondents	Student	Parent/carer	Teacher (but not responding on behalf of a school)	Educational specialist	General public (interested in education but no direct link)
<b>Base</b>	<b>947</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>783</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>21</b>
Strongly agree	45 (4.8%)	1	-	37 (4.7%)	7	-
Agree	263 (27.8%)	7	5	205 (26.2%)	36	10
Disagree	423 (44.7%)	14	5	360 (46.0%)	37	7
Strongly disagree	173 (18.3%)	3	1	151 (19.3%)	15	3
Don't know/no opinion	43 (4.5%)	5	3	30 (3.8%)	4	1

**A3.11 Subjects that can be easily distinguished will help make it easier for users\* to understand the different qualifications available.**

Q12b	All personal respondents	Student	Parent/carer	Teacher (but not responding on behalf of a school)	Educational specialist	General public (interested in education but no direct link)
<b>Base</b>	<b>953</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>789</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>23</b>
Strongly agree	110 (11.5%)	1	-	90 (11.4%)	18	1
Agree	526 (55.2%)	11	10	436 (55.3%)	57	12
Disagree	215 (22.6%)	10	3	182 (23.1%)	12	8
Strongly disagree	65 (6.8%)	3	-	57 (7.2%)	5	-
Don't know/no opinion	37 (3.9%)	6	2	24 (3.0%)	3	2

**A3.12 GCSE/AS/A level subjects should be easily distinguished from other GCSE/AS/A level subjects.**

Q12c	All personal respondents	Student	Parent/carer	Teacher (but not responding on behalf of a school)	Educational specialist	General public (interested in education but no direct link)
<b>Base</b>	<b>953</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>787</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>22</b>
Strongly agree	141 (14.8%)	1	1	115 (14.6%)	24	-
Agree	569 (59.7%)	12	8	478 (60.7%)	55	16
Disagree	155 (16.3%)	10	2	130 (16.5%)	8	5
Strongly disagree	37 (3.9%)	3	1	29 (3.7%)	3	1
Don't know/no opinion	51 (5.4%)	6	3	35 (4.4%)	7	-

**A3.13 GCSE/AS/A level subjects should only be developed if they meet the specific qualification purpose.**

Q12d	All personal respondents	Student	Parent/carers	Teacher (but not responding on behalf of a school)	Educational specialist	General public (interested in education but no direct link)
<b>Base</b>	<b>946</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>781</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>20</b>
Strongly agree	129 (13.6%)	2	1	104 (13.3%)	19	3
Agree	529 (55.9%)	6	9	457 (58.5%)	50	7
Disagree	168 (17.8%)	12	2	127 (16.3%)	20	7
Strongly disagree	45 (4.8%)	5	-	35 (4.5%)	4	1
Don't know/no opinion	75 (7.9%)	6	3	58 (7.4%)	6	2

**A3.14 The performance of students taking GCSEs/AS/A levels in any subject should be able to be differentiated against the full grade range using the relevant grading scale.**

Q12e	All personal respondents	Student	Parent/carers	Teacher (but not responding on behalf of a school)	Educational specialist	General public (interested in education but no direct link)
<b>Base</b>	<b>946</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>783</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>20</b>
Strongly agree	283 (29.9%)	6	2	233 (29.8%)	41	1
Agree	583 (61.6%)	16	8	492 (62.8%)	52	15
Disagree	42 (4.4%)	3	1	32 (4.1%)	3	3
Strongly disagree	9 (1.0%)	1	-	8 (1.0%)	-	-
Don't know/no opinion	29 (3.1%)	6	1	18 (2.3%)	3	1

**A3.15 GCSE/AS/A level subjects should be set at a level of demand consistent with that of reformed qualifications.**

Q12f	All personal respondents	Student	Parent/carer	Teacher (but not responding on behalf of a school)	Educational specialist	General public (interested in education but no direct link)
<b>Base</b>	<b>939</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>780</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>19</b>
Strongly agree	162 (17.3%)	4	1	130 (16.7%)	26	1
Agree	564 (60.1%)	13	7	481 (61.7%)	52	11
Disagree	89 (9.5%)	2	1	70 (9.0%)	11	5
Strongly disagree	33 (3.5%)	1	1	29 (3.7%)	2	-
Don't know/no opinion	91 (9.7%)	10	3	70 (9.0%)	6	2

**A3.16 GCSE/AS/A level subjects should be capable of being validly assessed (mainly by exam assessment, except for those essential skills that can't be assessed by an exam).**

Q12g	All personal respondents	Student	Parent/carer	Teacher (but not responding on behalf of a school)	Educational specialist	General public (interested in education but no direct link)
<b>Base</b>	<b>953</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>788</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>21</b>
Strongly agree	204 (21.4%)	4	1	168 (21.3%)	28	3
Agree	504 (52.9%)	11	9	416 (52.8%)	54	14
Disagree	148 (15.5%)	7	1	127 (16.1%)	11	2
Strongly disagree	83 (8.7%)	4	2	70 (8.9%)	6	1
Don't know/no opinion	14 (1.5%)	6	-	7 (0.9%)	-	1

**A3.17 Do you think that requiring the last award of all unreformed GCSE qualifications by 2018 is appropriate?**

Q13	All personal respondents	Student	Parent/carers	Teacher (but not responding on behalf of a school)	Educational specialist	General public (interested in education but no direct link)
<b>Base</b>	<b>908</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>760</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>19</b>
Yes	630 (69.4%)	16	7	521 (68.6%)	73	13
No	278 (30.6%)	11	5	239 (31.4%)	17	6

**A3.18 Do you think that requiring the last award of all unreformed A level qualifications by 2018 is appropriate?**

Q14	All personal respondents	Student	Parent/carers	Teacher (but not responding on behalf of a school)	Educational specialist	General public (interested in education but no direct link)
<b>Base</b>	<b>916</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>769</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>19</b>
Yes	614 (67.0%)	12	7	517 (68.6%)	65	13
No	302 (33.0%)	15	6	252 (31.4%)	23	6

**A3.19 Do you think that requiring the last award of all unreformed AS qualifications by 2018 is appropriate?**

Q15	All personal respondents	Student	Parent/carers	Teacher (but not responding on behalf of a school)	Educational specialist	General public (interested in education but no direct link)
<b>Base</b>	<b>910</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>763</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>19</b>
Yes	614 (67.5%)	11	7	516 (67.6%)	67	13
No	296 (32.5%)	15	6	247 (32.4%)	22	6

**A3.20 To what extent do you agree or disagree that we should start to apply our principles, to discontinue similar or overlapping qualifications alongside the current reforms?**

Q16	All personal respondents	Student	Parent/carer	Teacher (but not responding on behalf of a school)	Educational specialist	General public (interested in education but no direct link)
<b>Base</b>	<b>937</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>778</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>19</b>
Strongly agree	63 (6.7%)	-	2	49 (6.3%)	12	-
Agree	223 (23.8%)	3	2	189 (24.3%)	25	4
Disagree	278 (29.7%)	5	4	235 (30.2%)	24	10
Strongly disagree	321 (34.3%)	17	5	261 (33.5%)	33	5
Don't know/no opinion	52 (5.5%)	4	1	44 (5.7%)	3	-

**A3.21 Referring to the full list of qualifications we are proposing to discontinue as subjects are reformed, listed in appendix B, are there any other qualifications that should be included in the process?**

Q17	All personal respondents	Student	Parent/carer	Teacher (but not responding on behalf of a school)	Educational specialist	General public (interested in education but no direct link)
<b>Base</b>	<b>898</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>19</b>
Yes	103 (11.5%)	2	2	83 (11.1%)	15	1
No	795 (88.5%)	27	10	665 (88.9%)	75	18

**A3.22 Do any of the similar or overlapping qualifications we have proposed in appendix B serve a very distinct purpose from the reformed subjects?**

Q18a	All personal respondents	Student	Parent/carer	Teacher (but not responding on behalf of a school)	Educational specialist	General public (interested in education but no direct link)
<b>Base</b>	<b>920</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>756</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>25</b>
Yes	687 (74.7%)	32	12	550 (72.8%)	73	20
No	233 (25.3%)	-	2	206 (27.2%)	20	5

**A3.23 If Yes, should any alternative qualifications be granted an exception to continue alongside the reformed ones in a given subject?**

Q18b	All personal respondents	Student	Parent/carer	Teacher (but not responding on behalf of a school)	Educational specialist	General public (interested in education but no direct link)
<b>Base</b>	<b>680</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>545</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>20</b>
Yes	591 (86.9%)	29	11	469 (86.1%)	62	20
No	89 (13.1%)	2	1	76 (13.9%)	10	-

**A3.24 Are there any potential equality impacts of our proposals for the next stage of GCSE, AS and A level reform that we have not identified?**

Q19	All personal respondents	Student	Parent/carer	Teacher (but not responding on behalf of a school)	Educational specialist	General public (interested in education but no direct link)
<b>Base</b>	<b>898</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>746</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>19</b>
Yes	349 (38.9%)	13	7	283 (37.9%)	37	9
No	549 (61.1%)	17	6	463 (62.1%)	53	10

**A3.25 Are there any additional steps we could take to mitigate any negative impacts of the proposals in this document on persons who share a protected characteristic?**

Q20	All personal respondents	Student	Parent/carer	Teacher (but not responding on behalf of a school)	Educational specialist	General public (interested in education but no direct link)
<b>Base</b>	<b>857</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>707</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>18</b>
Yes	326 (38.0%)	11	7	265 (37.5%)	33	10
No	531 (62.0%)	20	6	442 (62.5%)	55	8



**A3.26 Have you any other comments on the impacts of the proposals in this document on persons who share a protected characteristic?**

Q21	All personal respondents	Student	Parent/carer	Teacher (but not responding on behalf of a school)	Educational specialist	General public (interested in education but no direct link)
<b>Base</b>	<b>852</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>707</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>18</b>
Yes	118 (13.8%)	2	3	93 (13.2%)	15	5
No	734 (86.2%)	24	9	614 (86.8%)	74	13

**A3.27 Are there any potential regulatory impacts of the proposals in this document that we have not identified?**

Q22	All personal respondents	Student	Parent/carer	Teacher (but not responding on behalf of a school)	Educational specialist	General public (interested in education but no direct link)
<b>Base</b>	<b>848</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>702</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>19</b>
Yes	110 (13.0%)	4	4	82 (11.7%)	15	5
No	738 (87.0%)	24	9	620 (88.3%)	71	14

## Appendix 4. Cross-Tabulations by Type of Official Respondent

This section presents the consultation questionnaire responses cross-tabulated by type of official respondent.

Due to the very low base numbers for certain groups, these Tables are provided for information only and further, detailed analysis has not been undertaken.

NB: All ‘awarding organisation’ responses are from the four exam boards that accredit for GCSEs, AS and A level qualifications.

### A4.1 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Core content - common content across all exam boards offering a qualification - will help make sure qualifications are fit for purpose.

Q1	All official respondents	Awarding organisation	Government department/agency or organisation	Local authority	Higher education institute	Employer	School or college	Other representative or interest group
<b>Base</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>44</b>
Strongly agree	41 (25.5%)	2	-	-	2	1	28 (26.4%)	8
Agree	87 (54.0%)	1	1	1	-	-	54 (50.9%)	30
Disagree	19 (11.8%)	1	-	-	-	1	14 (13.2%)	3
Strongly disagree	9 (5.6%)	-	-	-	1	-	7 (6.6%)	1
Don't know/no opinion	5 (3.1%)	-	-	-	-	-	3 (2.8%)	2

**A4.2 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Core content - common content across all exam boards offering a qualification - will help make sure qualifications are comparable across exam boards.**

Q2	All official respondents	Awarding organisation	Government department/agency or organisation	Local authority	Higher education institute	Employer	School or college	Other representative or interest group
<b>Base</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>44</b>
Strongly agree	51 (31.5%)	2	-	-	3	1	33 (31.3%)	12
Agree	84 (51.9%)	1	1	1	1	-	52 (49.1%)	28
Disagree	20 (12.3%)	1	-	-	-	1	15 (14.2%)	3
Strongly disagree	5 (3.1%)	-	-	-	-	-	5 (4.7%)	-
Don't know/no opinion	2 (1.2%)	-	-	-	-	-	1 (0.9%)	1

**A4.3 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Core content - common content across all exam boards offering a qualification - will help make sure qualifications are comparable over time.**

Q3	All official respondents	Awarding organisation	Government department/agency or organisation	Local authority	Higher education institute	Employer	School or college	Other representative or interest group
<b>Base</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>44</b>
Strongly agree	32 (19.8%)	2	-	-	2	1	22 (20.8%)	5
Agree	89 (54.9%)	1	1	1	1	-	55 (51.9%)	30
Disagree	32 (19.8%)	1	-	-	1	1	23 (21.7%)	6
Strongly disagree	5 (3.1%)	-	-	-	-	-	5 (4.7%)	-
Don't know/no opinion	4 (2.5%)	-	-	-	-	-	1 (0.9%)	3

**A4.4 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Core content - common content across all exam boards offering a qualification - will help make it easier for users\* to understand the qualification.**

Q4	All official respondents	Awarding organisation	Government department/agency or organisation	Local authority	Higher education institute	Employer	School or college	Other representative or interest group
<b>Base</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>43</b>
Strongly agree	35 (21.7%)	-	-	-	3	1	24 (22.6%)	7
Agree	96 (59.6%)	4	1	1	-	1	56 (52.8%)	33
Disagree	19 (11.8%)	-	-	-	-	-	17 (16.0%)	2
Strongly disagree	9 (5.6%)	-	-	-	1	-	8 (7.5%)	-
Don't know/no opinion	2 (1.2%)	-	-	-	-	-	1 (0.9%)	1

**A4.5 We propose to set up a regulatory framework to let exam boards develop core subject content. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal?**

Q5	All official respondents	Awarding organisation	Government department/a agency or organisation	Local authority	Higher education institute	Employer	School or college	Other representative or interest group
<b>Base</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>43</b>
Strongly agree	22 (13.7%)	1	-	-	1	-	19 (17.9%)	1
Agree	103 (64.0%)	2	1	1	2	1	65 (61.3%)	31
Disagree	16 (9.9%)	-	-	-	1	1	11 (10.4%)	3
Strongly disagree	10 (6.2%)	1	-	-	-	-	5 (4.7%)	4
Don't know/no opinion	10 (6.2%)	-	-	-	-	-	6 (5.7%)	4

**A4.6 To what extent do you agree or disagree that exam boards should consult with stakeholders and take their views into account when developing core content for all reformed GCSE, AS and A level qualifications?**

Q7	All official respondents	Awarding organisation	Government department/agency or organisation	Local authority	Higher education institute	Employer	School or college	Other representative or interest group
<b>Base</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>43</b>
Strongly agree	122 (76.3%)	2	1	1	3	2	76 (72.4%)	37
Agree	36 (22.5%)	2	-	-	1	-	28 (26.7%)	5
Disagree	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Strongly disagree	1 (0.6%)	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Don't know/no opinion	1 (0.6%)	-	-	-	-	-	1 (1.0%)	-

**A4.7 We have identified key stakeholder groups that need to be consulted in core content development (subject associations, teachers, employers, higher and further education, relevant equality groups). To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal that exam boards should include these groups when developing core content?**

Q8	All official respondents	Awarding organisation	Government department/agency or organisation	Local authority	Higher education institute	Employer	School or college	Other representative or interest group
<b>Base</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>43</b>
Strongly agree	123 (76.4%)	1	-	1	3	1	79 (75.4%)	38
Agree	36 (22.4%)	3	1	-	1	1	26 (24.5%)	4
Disagree	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Strongly disagree	1 (0.6%)	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Don't know/no opinion	1 (0.6%)	-	-	-	-	-	1 (0.9%)	-

**A4.8 To what extent do you agree or disagree that the benefit of having additional (to those already being reformed) GCSE, AS and A level subjects is worth any additional costs incurred by exam boards in developing core content (common content across all exam boards offering a qualification)?**

Q10	All official respondents	Awarding organisation	Government department/agency or organisation	Local authority	Higher education institute	Employer	School or college	Other representative or interest group
<b>Base</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>41</b>
Strongly agree	63 (39.4%)	1	-	-	4	-	41 (38.3%)	17
Agree	64 (40.0%)	2	1	1	-	1	42 (39.3%)	17
Disagree	11 (6.9%)	-	-	-	-	1	9 (8.4%)	1
Strongly disagree	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Don't know/no opinion	22 (13.8%)	1	-	-	-	-	15 (14.0%)	6

**A4.9 To what extent do you agree or disagree that we should develop principles to determine in advance which remaining or new subject areas can be developed as GCSE, AS or A level qualifications?**

Q11	All official respondents	Awarding organisation	Government department/agency or organisation	Local authority	Higher education institute	Employer	School or college	Other representative or interest group
<b>Base</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>43</b>
Strongly agree	33 (20.8%)	1	-	-	2	-	23 (22.1%)	7
Agree	83 (52.2%)	2	1	1	1	1	55 (52.9%)	22
Disagree	24 (15.1%)	-	-	-	-	-	16 (15.4%)	8
Strongly disagree	9 (5.7%)	-	-	-	-	1	7 (6.7%)	1
Don't know/no opinion	10 (6.3%)	1	-	-	1	-	3 (2.9%)	5

**A4.10 Current GCSEs/AS/A levels cannot always be easily distinguished from others with a similar title.**

Q12a	All official respondents	Awarding organisation	Government department/agency or organisation	Local authority	Higher education institute	Employer	School or college	Other representative or interest group
<b>Base</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>40</b>
Strongly agree	9 (5.7%)	-	-	-	3	-	5 (4.8%)	1
Agree	61 (38.9%)	1	1	-	1	1	35 (33.3%)	22
Disagree	62 (39.5%)	2	-	1	-	1	44 (41.9%)	14
Strongly disagree	20 (12.7%)	-	-	-	-	-	20 (19.0%)	-
Don't know/no opinion	5 (3.2%)	1	-	-	-	-	1 (1.0%)	3

**A4.11 Subjects that can be easily distinguished will help make it easier for users\* to understand the different qualifications available.**

Q12b	All official respondents	Awarding organisation	Government department/agency or organisation	Local authority	Higher education institute	Employer	School or college	Other representative or interest group
<b>Base</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>43</b>
Strongly agree	17 (10.7%)	-	-	-	3	-	7 (6.7%)	7
Agree	83 (52.2%)	2	1	1	-	1	55 (52.4%)	23
Disagree	46 (28.9%)	1	-	-	-	1	36 (34.3%)	8
Strongly disagree	5 (3.1%)	-	-	-	-	-	4 (3.8%)	1
Don't know/no opinion	8 (5.0%)	1	-	-	-	-	3 (2.9%)	4

**A4.12 GCSE/AS/A level subjects should be easily distinguished from other GCSE/AS/A level subjects.**

Q12c	All official respondents	Awarding organisation	Government department/agency or organisation	Local authority	Higher education institute	Employer	School or college	Other representative or interest group
<b>Base</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>44</b>
Strongly agree	26 (16.1%)	-	-	-	3	1	15 (14.3%)	7
Agree	100 (62.1%)	3	1	1	1	-	64 (61.0%)	30
Disagree	32 (19.9%)	-	-	-	-	1	25 (23.8%)	6
Strongly disagree	1 (0.6%)	-	-	-	-	-	1 (1.0%)	-
Don't know/no opinion	2 (1.2%)	1	-	-	-	-	-	1

**A4.13 GCSE/AS/A level subjects should only be developed if they meet the specific qualification purpose.**

Q12d	All official respondents	Awarding organisation	Government department/agency or organisation	Local authority	Higher education institute	Employer	School or college	Other representative or interest group
<b>Base</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>41</b>
Strongly agree	35 (22.3%)	2	-	-	2	-	24 (23.1%)	7
Agree	90 (57.3%)	2	1	1	1	1	59 (56.7%)	25
Disagree	22 (14.0%)	-	-	-	-	1	18 (17.3%)	3
Strongly disagree	4 (2.5%)	-	-	-	-	-	1 (1.0%)	3
Don't know/no opinion	6 (3.8%)	-	-	-	1	-	2 (1.9%)	3



**A4.14 The performance of students taking GCSEs/AS/A levels in any subject should be able to be differentiated against the full grade range using the relevant grading scale.**

Q12e	All official respondents	Awarding organisation	Government department/agency or organisation	Local authority	Higher education institute	Employer	School or college	Other representative or interest group
<b>Base</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>43</b>
Strongly agree	74 (46.8%)	2	-	-	4	-	52 (50.5%)	16
Agree	74 (46.8%)	2	1	-	-	1	46 (44.7%)	24
Disagree	5 (3.2%)	-	-	-	-	1	3 (2.9%)	1
Strongly disagree	3 (1.9%)	-	-	1	-	-	1 (1.0%)	1
Don't know/no opinion	2 (1.3%)	-	-	-	-	-	1 (1.0%)	1

**A4.15 GCSE/AS/A level subjects should be set at a level of demand consistent with that of reformed qualifications.**

Q12f	All official respondents	Awarding organisation	Government department/agency or organisation	Local authority	Higher education institute	Employer	School or college	Other representative or interest group
<b>Base</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>43</b>
Strongly agree	46 (28.6%)	2	-	-	4	-	29 (27.4%)	11
Agree	94 (58.4%)	2	1	1	-	2	61 (57.5%)	27
Disagree	13 (8.1%)	-	-	-	-	-	11 (10.4%)	2
Strongly disagree	3 (1.9%)	-	-	-	-	-	2 (1.9%)	1
Don't know/no opinion	5 (3.1%)	-	-	-	-	-	3 (2.8%)	2

**A4.16 GCSE/AS/A level subjects should be capable of being validly assessed (mainly by exam assessment, except for those essential skills that can't be assessed by an exam).**

Q12g	All official respondents	Awarding organisation	Government department/agency or organisation	Local authority	Higher education institute	Employer	School or college	Other representative or interest group
<b>Base</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>44</b>
Strongly agree	44 (27.3%)	1	-	-	4	-	28 (26.7%)	11
Agree	79 (49.1%)	3	1	-	-	2	52 (49.5%)	21
Disagree	17 (10.6%)	-	-	1	-	-	10 (9.5%)	6
Strongly disagree	19 (11.8%)	-	-	-	-	-	14 (13.3%)	5
Don't know/no opinion	2 (1.2%)	-	-	-	-	-	1 (1.0%)	1

**A4.17 Do you think that requiring the last award of all unreformed GCSE qualifications by 2018 is appropriate?**

Q13	All official respondents	Awarding organisation	Government department/agency or organisation	Local authority	Higher education institute	Employer	School or college	Other representative or interest group
<b>Base</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>36</b>
Yes	99 (67.3%)	3	1	-	2	-	68 (67.3%)	25
No	48 (32.7%)	-	-	1	2	1	33 (32.7%)	11

**A4.18 Do you think that requiring the last award of all unreformed A level qualifications by 2018 is appropriate?**

Q14	All official respondents	Awarding organisation	Government department/agency or organisation	Local authority	Higher education institute	Employer	School or college	Other representative or interest group
<b>Base</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>38</b>
Yes	95 (62.5%)	4	1	-	1	2	62 (60.8%)	25
No	57 (37.5%)	-	-	1	3	-	40 (39.2%)	13

**A4.19 Do you think that requiring the last award of all unreformed AS qualifications by 2018 is appropriate?**

Q15	All official respondents	Awarding organisation	Government department/agency or organisation	Local authority	Higher education institute	Employer	School or college	Other representative or interest group
<b>Base</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>39</b>
Yes	96 (63.2%)	4	1	-	1	2	63 (62.4%)	25
No	56 (36.8%)	-	-	1	3	-	38 (37.6%)	14

**A4.20 To what extent do you agree or disagree that we should start to apply our principles, to discontinue similar or overlapping qualifications alongside the current reforms?**

Q16	All official respondents	Awarding organisation	Government department/agency or organisation	Local authority	Higher education institute	Employer	School or college	Other representative or interest group
<b>Base</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>42</b>
Strongly agree	12 (7.5%)	-	-	-	3	-	5 (4.8%)	4
Agree	61 (38.4%)	3	1	1	1	-	33 (31.4%)	22
Disagree	36 (22.6%)	-	-	-	-	2	25 (23.8%)	9
Strongly disagree	45 (28.3%)	1	-	-	-	-	40 (38.1%)	4
Don't know/no opinion	5 (3.1%)	-	-	-	-	-	2 (1.9%)	3

**A4.21 Referring to the full list of qualifications we are proposing to discontinue as subjects are reformed, listed in appendix B, are there any other qualifications that should be included in the process?**

Q17	All official respondents	Awarding organisation	Government department/agency or organisation	Local authority	Higher education institute	Employer	School or college	Other representative or interest group
<b>Base</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>37</b>
Yes	19 (13.3%)	-	-	-	-	1	15	3
No	124 (86.7%)	2	1	1	3	1	82	34

**A4.22 Do any of the similar or overlapping qualifications we have proposed in appendix B serve a very distinct purpose from the reformed subjects?**

Q18a	All official respondents	Awarding organisation	Government department/agency or organisation	Local authority	Higher education institute	Employer	School or college	Other representative or interest group
<b>Base</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>39</b>
Yes	117 (76.0%)	3	-	1	-	2	82 (78.8%)	29
No	37 (24.0%)	1	1	-	3	-	22 (21.2%)	10

**A4.23 If Yes, should any alternative qualifications be granted an exception to continue alongside the reformed ones in a given subject?**

Q18b	All official respondents	Awarding organisation	Government department/agency or organisation	Local authority	Higher education institute	Employer	School or college	Other representative or interest group
<b>Base</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>2</b>	-	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>29</b>
Yes	106 (91.4%)	2	-	1	-	1	75	27
No	10 (8.6%)	-	-	-	1	1	6	2

**A4.24 Are there any potential equality impacts of our proposals for the next stage of GCSE, AS and A level reform that we have not identified?**

Q19	All official respondents	Awarding organisation	Government department/agency or organisation	Local authority	Higher education institute	Employer	School or college	Other representative or interest group
<b>Base</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>40</b>
Yes	78 (52.3%)	1	-	1	-	1	57	18
No	71 (47.7%)	2	1	-	3	1	42	22

**A4.25 Are there any additional steps we could take to mitigate any negative impacts of the proposals in this document on persons who share a protected characteristic?**

Q20	All official respondents	Awarding organisation	Government department/agency or organisation	Local authority	Higher education institute	Employer	School or college	Other representative or interest group
<b>Base</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>39</b>
Yes	62 (42.8%)	-	-	-	-	-	49	13
No	83 (57.2%)	3	1	1	3	2	47	26

**A4.26 Have you any other comments on the impacts of the proposals in this document on persons who share a protected characteristic?**

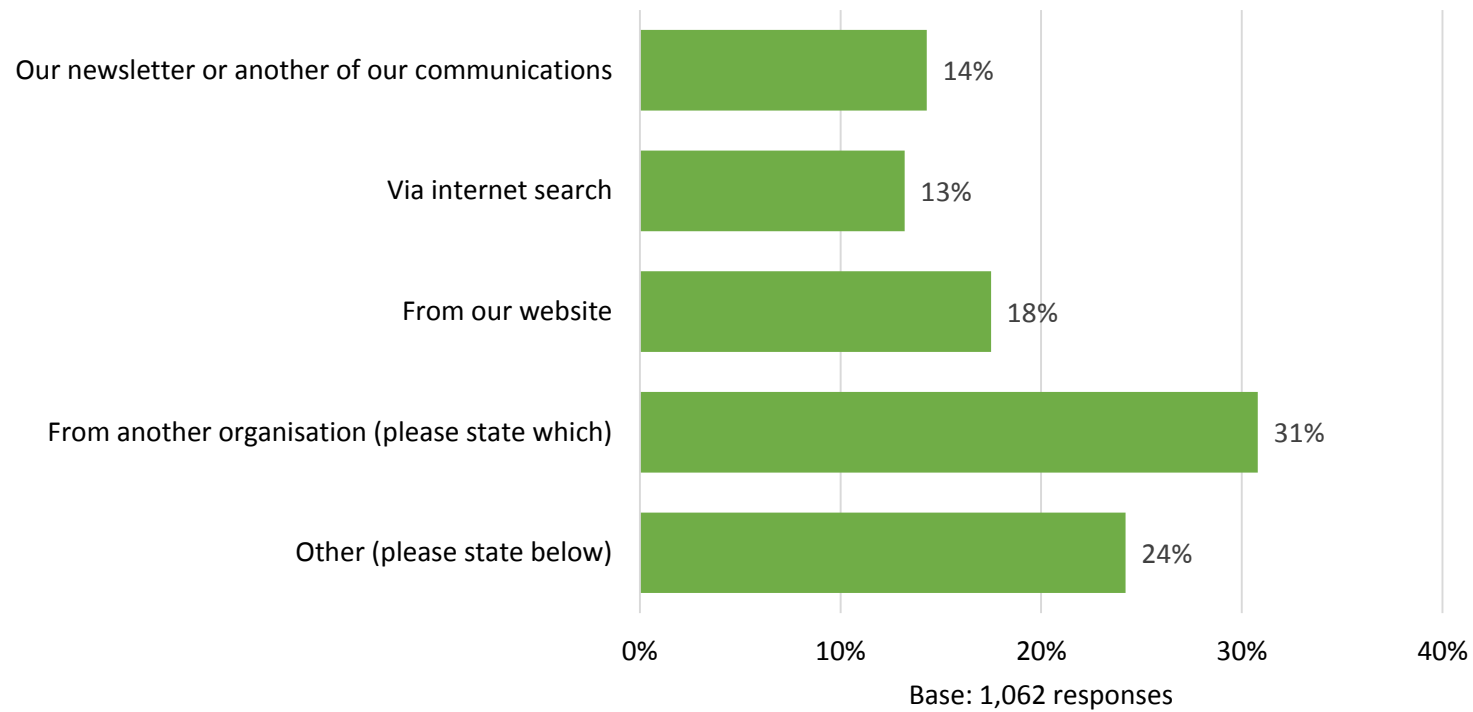
Q21	All official respondents	Awarding organisation	Government department/agency or organisation	Local authority	Higher education institute	Employer	School or college	Other representative or interest group
<b>Base</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>37</b>
Yes	19 (13.4%)	-	-	-	-	-	16	3
No	123 (86.6%)	4	1	1	3	2	78	34

**A4.27 Are there any potential regulatory impacts of the proposals in this document that we have not identified?**

Q22	All official respondents	Awarding organisation	Government department/agency or organisation	Local authority	Higher education institute	Employer	School or college	Other representative or interest group
<b>Base</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>37</b>
Yes	20 (14.8%)	1	-	-	-	1	14	4
No	115 (85.2%)	2	1	1	3	1	74	33

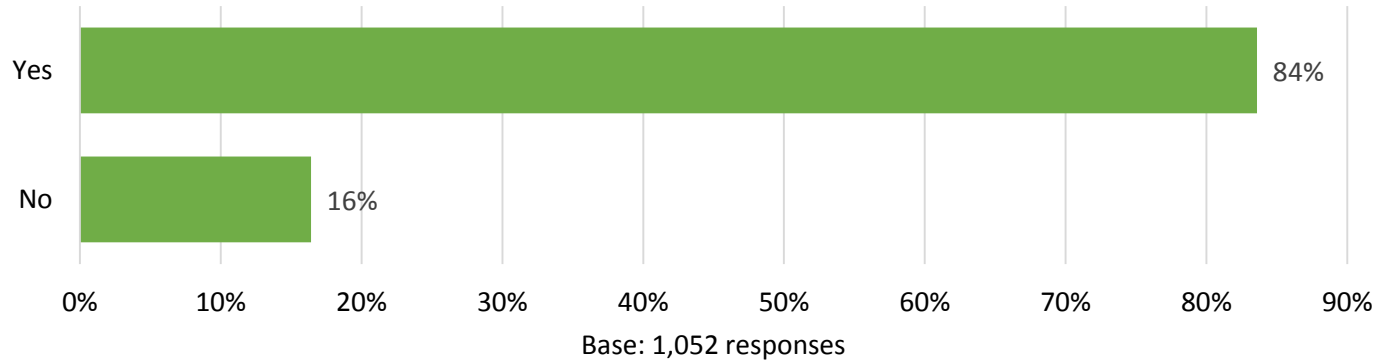
## Appendix 5. Additional Respondent Information

Figure 1: How respondents heard about the consultation

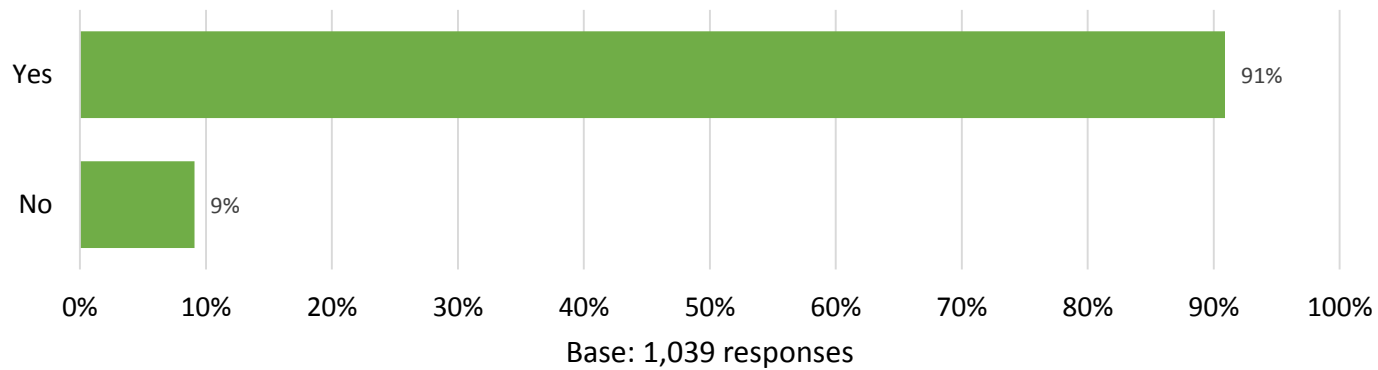




**Figure 2: Whether Ofqual may contact respondents for further information**



**Figure 3: Whether the consultation document is clear, direct and puts the reader first**



## Appendix 6. Profile of Consultation Respondents

### A6.1 Respondents completing the formal questionnaire

Tables A6.1 to A6.6 present profiling information from 1,138 respondents who completed the consultation questionnaire.

**Table A6.1 Personal or official response**

Personal View	974	85.6%
Official View	164	14.4%

*Base 1,138 respondents*

**Table A6.2 Type of personal respondent**

Student	36	3.7%
Parent/carer	15	1.5%
Teacher (but not responding on behalf of a school)	797	81.8%
Educational specialist (e.g. retired teacher, examiner, assessment expert, subject expert, governor)	100	10.3%
General public (interested in education but no direct link)	26	2.7%

*Base 974 respondents*

**Table A6.3 Type of official respondent**

Awarding organisation	4	2.5%
Government department/agency or organisation	1	0.6%
Local authority	1	0.6%
Higher education institute	4	2.5%
Employer	2	1.2%
School or college	107	65.6%
Other representative or interest group	44	27.0%

*Base 163 respondents*

**Table A6.4 Type of official respondent – schools and colleges**

Academy and/or free school	23	22.5%
Comprehensive	22	21.6%
State selective	6	5.9%
Independent/private	13	12.7%
Special school	0	0.0%
Further education	9	8.8%
Sixth-form college	27	26.5%
None of the above	2	2.0%

*Base 102 respondents*

**Table A6.5 Type of official respondent – other representative or interest groups**

Group of Awarding organisations	0
Union	2
Business representative group	3
Equality organisation or group	2
Subject associations or learned societies	13
School or teacher representative group	4
None of the above	21

*Base 45 respondents*

**Table A6.6 Nation**

England	1,095	96.3%
Wales	23	2.0%
Scotland	2	0.2%
Northern Ireland	7	0.6%
Other EU country (please state below)	4	0.4%
Non-EU country (please state below)	6	0.5%

*Base 1,137 respondents*

## A6.2 Respondents providing email or hard copy responses

Tables A6.7 to A45.12 present profiling information manually derived from 516 email and hard copy consultation responses (i.e. those not enclosing a completed questionnaire).

Classifications have been made on a best efforts basis. Where it has not been possible to determine an accurate classification, responses have been listed as 'unknown', accordingly, but this has only been the case for two respondents, so far. Also, we have received emails about two petitions and these are recorded separately.

**Table A6.7 Personal or official response**

Personal View	455	88%
Official View	59	11%
Petition	2	<1%
Unknown	2	<1%

*Base: 518 respondents*

**Table A6.8 Type of personal respondent**

Student	133	29%
Parent/carer	9	2%
Teacher (but not responding on behalf of a school)	225	49%
Educational specialist (e.g. retired teacher, examiner, assessment expert, subject expert, governor)	45	10%
Higher Education Lecturer	16	3%
General public (interested in education but no direct link)	13	3%
Unknown	14	3%

*Base: 455 respondents*

**Table A6.9 Type of official respondent**

Awarding organisation	4
Government department/agency or organisation	0
Local authority	0
Higher education institute	2
Employer	0
School or college	22
Other representative or interest group	31

*Base: 59 respondents*

**Table A6.10 Type of official respondent – schools or college**

Academy and/or free school	3
Comprehensive	2
State selective	0
Special school	1
Independent/private	6
Further education	1
Sixth-form college	8

*Base: 22 respondents*

**Table A6.11 Type of official respondent – representative or interest groups**

Group of Awarding organisations	0
Union	2
Business representative group	2
Equality organisation or group	0
Subject associations or learned societies	20
School or teacher representative group	5
None of the above	2

*Base: 31 respondents*

**Table A6.12 Nation**

England	411	79%
Wales	6	1%
Scotland	2	<1%
Overseas	2	<1%
Unknown	97	19%

*Base: 518 respondents*

## Appendix 7. List of Organisations Represented

This list provides the names of organisations from which official (organisation-level) and personal (individual) responses were received to the online version of consultation questionnaire.

This list only includes names of organisations where the answer ‘No’ was given to the following question in the online consultation:

*“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.”*

**Respondents who did not submit an online response to the consultation (i.e. those who submitted their response via email or in hard copy) are not included in this list. The Word/PDF version of the consultation questionnaire did not include the above question and it cannot be assumed that consent has been granted to publicise their names.**

### A7.1 Official responses

157 Group <sup>20</sup>	Chatham Grammar School for Girls
Addington High School	Chichester College
Allerton High School	Chisleton High School
Alps-Alkemygold Ltd	Cirencester College
Anglo European School	City of Sunderland College
Aquinas 6th Form College	Cornwall College
Archbishop Sentamu Academy	Dalton Associates
Ashton Sixth Form College	Earth Science Education Unit
Barnet and Southgate College	Eastbourne Academy
Barnsley College	English Heritage
British Association of Teachers of the Deaf (BATOD)	Exeter College
Bedford Modern School	Farming and Countryside Education
Belfast Model School for Girls	Focus on Food
Bitterne Park School	Gartree community school
Brighton, Hove and Sussex Sixth Form College	Hagley Catholic High School
Brimsham Green School	Halesowen College
British Nutrition Foundation	Helston Community College
Buxton Community School	Hereford Sixth Form College
Cardinal Wiseman and Community and Rural Dimension Group (CARD)	High Storrs
	Horizons Specialist Academy Trust
	Humberside Engineering Training Association
	Independent Schools Association
	Institution of Civil Engineers

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<sup>20</sup> A Consortium of 29 of the UK’s largest FE Colleges

John Hanson School  
Joint Association of Classical Teachers  
Judd School  
Kimbolton school  
King James's school  
Kingdown School  
Kingsmead Community School  
Kirkbie Kendal School  
Lacon Childe School  
Lewes Old Grammar School  
Luton Sixth Form College  
Lutterworth College  
Malmesbury School  
Manor House School  
Media Education Association  
Meopham School  
Moat House  
Mount School  
National Centre for Biotechnology Education  
Neil Wyatt Environmental  
New College Maths Dept.  
Paullong.net  
Peter Symonds College  
Political Studies Association  
Prendergast Hilly Fields College  
Queen's College  
Rawlins Academy  
Richard Graves Associate  
Royal Astronomical Society  
Royal Central School of Speech and Drama  
Royal Hospital School  
Royal National Institute of Blind People  
Runshaw College  
Saint Benedict CVA  
Salford City College  
School Farms Network  
School of Earth and Ocean Sciences, Cardiff University  
Sharples School  
Shrewsbury Sixth Form College  
Sixth Form College, Colchester  
Sixth Form College Solihull  
St Brendan's 6th Form  
St Peter's Catholic High School and 6th Form  
St Peter's School York  
St. Wilfrid's School

Standing Conference of University Drama Departments (SCUDD)  
Streetly Academy  
Surrey Secondary Heads' Phase Council  
TLM Qualifications  
VCC - Five College Consortium<sup>21</sup>  
Woodlands School  
Worcester 6th Form College

## **A7.2 Personal responses**

Abbey Grange C of E Academy  
Academy at Shotton Hall  
Addey and Stanhope School  
Albany Academy  
Alexandra Park School  
Altrincham Grammar School for Boys  
Alun School  
Aquinas College  
Ashton Sixth Form College  
Attainment in Education  
Aylesbury Grammar School  
Aylesbury High School  
Ayulesbury Grammar School  
Ballymena Academy  
Barnhill Community High School  
Barnsley College  
Barry Comprehensive School  
Barton Peveril College  
Bath Community Academy  
Batley Girls' High School  
Beauchamps High School  
Beaufort Co-operative Academy  
Beaulieu convent school  
Beaulieu School  
Belfast Model School for Girls  
Bellerbys College  
Belvidere school  
Berkhamsted School  
Bewdley School and Sixth Form Centre  
Bilborough College  
Bingley Grammar School

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<sup>21</sup> Consortium members: Aquinas College, Priestley College, Ashton Sixth Form College, Salford City College, Holy Cross College.



Birchwood High School  
Birkdale School, Sheffield  
Bishop Luffa School  
Bishop Rawstone C of E Academy  
Bishop Vesey's Grammar School  
Bishops Bluecoat High school Chester  
Blatchington Mill School  
blue coat school  
Blue Coat School Oldham  
Boston College  
Bourne Academy  
Bradfield College  
Brentwood School  
Bridgwater College  
Brighton and Hove High School  
Brighton, Hove and Sussex Sixth Form College  
Brine Leas High School  
Brine Leas School  
Bristol Grammar School  
Bristol Metropolitan Academy  
Brit School  
Brockenhurst College  
Bulwell Academy  
Bury Grammar School Girls  
Buxton Community School  
Cabot Learning Federation  
Calday Grammar School  
Callington Community College  
Caludon castle scholl  
Camborne academy, cornwall  
Cardiff and Vale College  
Carrickfergus Gammar School  
Casterton B&E College  
Causeway School  
Central Sussex College Haywards Heath  
Chancellors School  
Charters School  
Cheadle hulme School  
Chichester College  
Chipping Campden School  
Chipping Sodbury School  
Christ the King Catholic Maths & Computing College  
Chisleton High School  
Cirencester college  
Cirencester Deer Park School  
City and Islington college  
City of London Freeman's School  
Claverham Community College  
CNS school  
Colchester Sixth Form College  
Coleg Gwent  
Colne Community School and College  
Communicate-ed  
Cotham School  
Cowbridge School  
Cromer Academy  
Crypt School  
Cwmtawe Community School  
Dartford Science and Technology College  
De Ferrers academy  
De Lisle Catholic Academy  
Derby High School  
Discovery School  
Diss High School  
Dorothy Stringer School  
d'Overbroeck's College  
DSFC  
Dulwich College  
Dunottar School, Reigate  
Earth Science Teachers' Association  
East Bergholt High School  
East Norfolk Sixth Form College  
Edgehill University  
Egglescliffe School  
Ellen Wilkinson School  
Ellesmere College  
Ermysted's Grammar School  
ESERO-UK  
Esher College  
Excelsior Academy  
Exeter College  
Fallibroome Academy  
Faringdon Community College  
Filton SGS College  
FMSP  
Framlingham College, Suffolk  
Friends' School  
Fullbrook School  
Fulston Manor School  
George Spencer Academy  
Gilberd School

Glossopdale Community College  
Gosforth Academy  
Graham School  
Grange School  
Great Baddow High School  
Greenbank High School  
Greenwich Free School  
Grwp Llandrillo Menai  
Hadleigh High School  
Halff (charity set up to promote healthy eating)  
Hants County Council  
Hartismere School  
Hathaway Academy  
Haughton Academy  
Havering Sixth Form  
Heartlands Academy  
Heathlands School  
Hereford Sixth Form College  
Herts and Essex High School  
Highams Park School  
Highlands School  
Hills Road Sixth Form College  
Holy Family School  
Homewood School  
Honiton CC  
Howard of Effingham School  
Imberhorne School  
International Federation for Home Economics (IFHE)  
Isle of Wight College  
JACT; Manchester University  
John Cabot Academy  
John Leggott College  
John Lyon School  
Joseph Chamberlain Sixth Form  
Keswick School  
Kettering Science Academy  
Kimbolton School  
King Edward VI Aston School  
King Edward VI College  
King John School  
King's College London  
King's School Canterbury  
King's School Ottery  
Kings School Peterborough  
Kingsbridge Community College  
Kingsbury High School  
Kirk Balk Community College  
La Retraite School  
Landsend Astronomers  
LEAF Academy Trust  
Lincoln Christ's Hospital School  
Long Road VI Form  
Loreto College  
LPA  
Lynn Grove High School (Academy)  
Malbank School and Sixth form College  
Malmesbury School & Colston's Girls' School  
Malton School  
Mangotsfield School  
Manchester Grammar School  
Manchester Institute of Education  
Marist Senior School, Ascot  
Marlborough College  
Marple Hall School  
MMU Cheshire  
Montgomery High School  
Morpeth School  
NBP16 Centre  
New College  
New College Nottingham  
New College Swindon  
New Line Learning Academy  
New Zealand School  
Newcastle University  
Newfield School  
Nidderdale High School  
Noadswood School  
Nobel School  
North East Wolverhampton Academy  
Northallerton College  
Northgate High School  
Notre Dame Catholic Sixth Form College  
Notre Dame School  
Oaks Park School  
OCR  
OCR T&T  
Oldfield School  
Ormiston Victory Academy  
Our Lady Queen of Peace High School  
Our Lady's Abingdon Senior School  
Overton Grange School

Park School Yeovil  
Parliament Hill School  
Patchway Community College  
Peacehaven Community School  
Peter Symonds College  
Philip Morant School  
Plymouth College  
Ponteland High School  
Porthcawl Comprehensive  
Priestley College Warrington  
Priory School  
Prudhoe High School  
Purbeck School  
Queen's University Belfast  
Radclyffe School  
Ramsey Grammar School  
Ranstad employment  
Ravens Wood School  
Raynes Park High School  
Redden Court School  
Reed's School  
Reigate College  
Richard Challoner School  
Richard Lander School  
Richmond School  
Ringwood School  
Rishworth School  
Rotherham MBC  
Royal Anthropological Institute  
Royal Latin School  
Saint Benedict Catholic Academy  
Saint Benedict School  
Salford City College  
Saltash.net Community School  
Sandhurst School  
Sharnbrook Upper School  
Sharples High School  
Sherborne Girls School  
Shrewsbury Sixth Form College  
Sir Frederic Osborn School  
Sir Thomas Wharton Community College  
Sixth Form College Colchester  
Solway Community Technology College  
South Bromsgrove High  
South Downs College  
South Downs National Park Authority  
South Molton Community College  
Southgate school  
Spalding Grammar School  
Springboard Wales  
Springfields Academy  
Sprowston Community High School  
SRC Bede Sixth Form  
St Aidan's C E High School  
St Anne's Catholic school  
St Anthonys Girls Catholic Academy  
St Bartholomew's School  
St Bede's Catholic School and 6th Form  
St Brendan's Sixth Form College  
St Cuthbert Mayne School  
St Edward's School Poole  
St Ivo School  
St John Rigby Sixth Form College  
St Johns RC Academy & 6th Form  
St Joseph's School  
St Leonard's, Catholic School  
St Mary's College  
St Michael's Grammar School  
St Nicholas Catholic High  
St Peters Academy Huntingdon  
St Peter's School  
St Pius X  
St Teresa's  
St. Anne's Catholic High School for Girls  
St. Clere's School  
St. Mary's College  
St. Nicholas Catholic High School  
Stantonbury campus  
Steyning Grammar School  
Stockport Grammar School  
Stoke Newington School  
Stratford-upon-avon school  
Streetly Academy  
Strode College Somerset  
Suffolk One  
Sundorne School & Sports College  
Sussexdowns College  
Sustainability Matters in Stafford Borough  
Sutton Community Academy  
Sweyne Park School  
Tanglin Trust School  
Taunton School International

Tavistock College  
Teesside High School  
Testwood Sports College  
Tettenhall College  
Thomas Alleyne's High School  
Thomas Hepburn Community Academy  
Thomas Keble School  
Thomas Rotherham College  
Tollbar Academy  
Totton College  
Towers School and Sixth Form Centre  
Trinity Catholic School, Nottingham  
Trinity School  
Truro College  
Truro-Penwith College  
UCTC  
Ullswater Community College  
University of Aberdeen  
University of Brighton  
University of Chichester  
University of Leeds  
University of Liverpool  
University of Winchester  
University of Wolverhampton  
Uppingham School  
Upton Court Grammar School  
Ursuline Academy Ilford  
Victoria College  
Wakefield City Academy  
Walsall Academy  
Warriner School  
Warwick School  
Watford Grammar School for Girls  
Wellington College  
West Craven High School  
West Island School  
Weston College  
Westside School  
Wigan & Leigh College  
William de Ferrers School  
Winchcombe School  
Winifred Holtby Academy  
Winstanley College  
Withernsea High  
WJEC  
Wolsingham Community School  
Wolsingham School & Community College  
Woodhey High School  
Worcester Sixth Form College  
Worthing College  
Wyedean School  
Wyggeston and Queen Elizabeth 1 College  
Xaverian  
Xaverian College  
Yeovil College  
York College

## Appendix 8. Consultation Questionnaire

### A8.1 Information pages

#### About you

1. Are the views expressed in response to this consultation your personal views or an official response from the organisation you represent? (tick one only)\*

- Personal views
- Official response from an organisation/group

If you ticked 'personal views', are you a ...? (tick one only)\*

- Student
- Parent/carer
- Teacher (but not responding on behalf of a school)
- Educational specialist (retired teacher, examiner, assessment expert, subject expert, governor) – please state which capacity \_\_\_\_\_
- General public (interested in education but no direct link) – please state which capacity \_\_\_\_\_

2. If you ticked 'official response from an organisation/group', please state which type of responding organisation you represent (tick one only)\*

- awarding organisation
- Government department/agency or organisation
- Local authority
- University or higher education institution
- Employer
- School/college (please complete the next question)
- Other representative group / interest group (please skip to 'type of representative group/interest group')

3. Which school/college type do you represent?

- Academy and/or free school
  - Comprehensive
  - State selective
  - Independent/private
  - Special school
  - Further education
  - Sixth-form college
  - None of the above (please state what)
- 

4. Type of representative group/interest group

- Group of awarding organisations
  - Union
  - Business representative group
  - Equality organisation/group
  - Subject associations/learned societies
  - School or teacher representative group
  - Other representative/interest group (please state what)
- 

5. Nation\*

- England
- Wales
- Scotland
- Northern Ireland
- Other EU country (please state which) \_\_\_\_\_
- Non-EU country (please state which) \_\_\_\_\_

## A8.2 Consultation Questions

**Q1.** To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Core content – common content across all exam boards offering a qualification – will help make sure qualifications are fit for purpose.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know/no opinion

**Q2.** To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Core content – common content across all exam boards offering a qualification – will help make sure qualifications are comparable across exam boards.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know/no opinion

**Q3.** To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Core content – common content across all exam boards offering a qualification – will help make sure qualifications are comparable over time.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know/no opinion

**Q4.** To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Core content – common content across all exam boards offering a qualification – will help make it easier for users\* to understand the qualification.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know/no opinion

\* Persons with a legitimate interest in the qualification or type of qualification made available by the awarding organisation, who may include: (a) Learners and Learners' representatives; (b) Centres; (c) Teachers; (d) employers and employers' representatives; (e) further and higher education establishments; (f) schools; (g) government departments and agencies; and (h) professional bodies.

**Q5.** We propose to set up a regulatory framework to let exam boards develop core subject content. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know/no opinion

**Q6.** If you disagree with our proposal, are there other options we have not considered?

.....

**Q7.** To what extent do you agree or disagree that exam boards should consult with stakeholders and take their views into account when developing core content for all reformed GCSE, AS and A level qualifications?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know/no opinion



**Q8.** We have identified key stakeholder groups that need to be consulted in core content development (subject associations, teachers, employers, higher and further education, relevant equality groups). To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposal that exam boards should include these groups when developing core content?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know/no opinion

**Q9.** Are there other stakeholders you believe should be consulted?

.....

**Q10.** To what extent do you agree or disagree that the benefit of having additional (to those already being reformed) GCSE, AS and A level subjects is worth any additional costs incurred by exam boards in developing core content (common content across all exam boards offering a qualification)?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know/no opinion

**Q11.** To what extent do you agree or disagree that we should develop principles to determine in advance which remaining or new subject areas can be developed as GCSE, AS or A level qualifications?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know/no opinion

**Q12.** Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement below:

Current GCSEs/AS/A levels cannot always be easily distinguished from others with a similar title.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know/no opinion

Subjects that can be easily distinguished will help make it easier for users\* to understand the different qualifications available.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know/no opinion

\* Persons with a legitimate interest in the qualification or type of qualification made available by the awarding organisation, who may include: (a) students and their representatives; (b) Centres; (c) Teachers; (d) employers and employers' representatives; (e) further and higher education establishments; (f) schools; (g) government departments and agencies; and (h) professional bodies.

GCSE/AS/A level subjects should be easily distinguished from other GCSE/AS/A level subjects.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know/no opinion

GCSE/AS/A level subjects should only be developed if they meet the specific qualification purpose.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know/no opinion

The performance of students taking GCSEs/AS/A levels in any subject should be able to be differentiated against the full grade range using the relevant grading scale.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know/no opinion

GCSE/AS/A level subjects should be set at a level of demand consistent with that of reformed qualifications.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know/no opinion

GCSE/AS/A level subjects should be capable of being validly assessed (mainly by exam assessment, except for those essential skills that can't be assessed by an exam).

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know/no opinion

**Q13.** Do you think that requiring the last award of all unreformed GCSE qualifications by 2018 is appropriate?

Yes/No

If No, please comment in relation to the specific subjects.

.....

**Q14.** Do you think that requiring the last award of all unreformed A level qualifications by 2018 is appropriate?

Yes/No

If No, please comment in relation to the specific subjects.

.....

**Q15.** Do you think that requiring the last award of all unreformed AS qualifications by 2018 is appropriate?

Yes/No

If No, please comment in relation to the specific subjects.

.....

**Q16.** To what extent do you agree or disagree that we should start to apply our principles, to discontinue similar or overlapping qualifications alongside the current reforms?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know/no opinion

**Q17.** Referring to the full list of qualifications we are proposing to discontinue as subjects are reformed, listed in appendix B, are there any other qualifications that should be included in the process?

Yes/No

If Yes, please comment in relation to the specific subjects.

.....

**Q18.** Do any of the similar or overlapping qualifications we have proposed in appendix B serve a very distinct purpose from the reformed subjects?

Yes/No

If Yes, should any alternative qualifications be granted an exception to continue alongside the reformed ones in a given subject?

Yes/No

If Yes, please list and comment in relation to the specific subjects.

.....

**Q19.** Are there any potential equality impacts of our proposals for the next stage of GCSE, AS and A level reform that we have not identified?

Yes/No

If Yes, what are they?

.....

**Q20.** Are there any additional steps we could take to mitigate any negative impacts of the proposals in this document on persons who share a protected characteristic?

Yes/No

If Yes, please comment on the additional steps we could take to mitigate any negative impacts.

.....

**Q21.** Have you any other comments on the impacts of the proposals in this document on persons who share a protected characteristic?

Yes/No

If Yes, please comment in relation to the specific subjects.

.....

**Q22.** Are there any potential regulatory impacts of the proposals in this document that we have not identified?

Yes/No

If Yes, what are they?

.....

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

**Q23.** Do you have any special requirements to enable you to read our consultations? (For example screen reader, large text, and so on)

Yes/No

**Q24.** Which of the following do you currently use to access our consultation documents? (Select all that apply)

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

**Q25.** Which of the following document formats would meet your needs for accessing our consultations? (Select all that apply)

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

**Q26.** How many of our consultations have you read in the last 12 months?

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

## Appendix 9. Subjects Proposed for Discontinuation or Reform

This section presents Appendix B of the consultation document and should be read in conjunction with that document for further detail.

### Alternative (similar or overlapping) GCSE subjects that Ofqual is proposing to discontinue

<b>Subject (proposed last award 2016)</b>	<b>UK awards 2012</b>	<b>Related continuing subject(s) (for first teaching 2015 and first award 2017)</b>
Digital communication	3,089	English language
<b>Subject (proposed last award 2017)</b>	<b>UK awards 2012</b>	<b>Related continuing subject(s) (for first teaching 2016 and first award 2018)</b>
Expressive arts	3,948	Dance; Drama
Electronics	1,046	DT: electronic products
Catering	20,891	DT: food technology
Home economics	32,064	DT: food technology
Manufacturing	105	DT: product design
Engineering	1,816	DT: systems and control technology
Performing arts	4,365	Dance; Drama
Humanities	13,782	History; Geography
Applied science	9,577	Science
Additional applied science	19,151	Science
Environmental science	941	Science
Environmental and land-based science	1,333	Science
Human health and physiology	2,226	Biology

### Alternative (similar or overlapping) AS subjects that Ofqual is proposing to discontinue

<b>Subject (proposed last award 2016)</b>	<b>UK awards 2012</b>	<b>Related continuing subject(s) (for first teaching 2015 and first award 2016)</b>
Science in society	942	Sciences
Applied science	5,141	Sciences
Environmental studies	2,370	Sciences



Human biology	3,995	Biology
Applied art & design	645	Art & design
Humanities	N/A	History; Geography (2017)
Economics and business	2,890	Economics; Business studies
Applied business	9,841	Business studies
Home economics (food, nutrition and health)	506	DT: food technology
Engineering	N/A	DT: systems and control technology
Performance studies	1,220	Dance; Drama and theatre studies
Performing arts	1,873	Dance; Drama and theatre studies
<b>Subject (proposed last award 2017)</b>	<b>UK awards 2012</b>	<b>Related continuing subject(s) (for first teaching 2016 and first award 2017)</b>
Quantitative methods		Mathematics
Use of mathematics	2,998	Mathematics

**Alternative (similar or overlapping) A level subjects that Ofqual is proposing to discontinue**

<b>Subject (proposed last award 2016)</b>	<b>UK awards 2012</b>	<b>Related continuing subject(s) (for first teaching 2015 and first award 2017)</b>
Science in society	123	Sciences
Applied science	2,815	Sciences
Environmental studies	1,426	Sciences
Human biology	1,899	Biology
Applied art & design	524	Art & design
Humanities	N/A	History; Geography (2018)
Economics and business	1,954	Economics; Business studies
Applied business	6,656	Business studies
Home economics (food, nutrition and health)	333	DT: food technology
Engineering	225	DT: systems and control technology
Performing arts	1,329	Dance; Drama and theatre studies
Performance studies	1,039	Drama and theatre studies
<b>Subject (proposed last award 2017)</b>	<b>UK awards 2012</b>	<b>Related continuing subject(s) (for first teaching 2016 and first award 2018)</b>
Quantitative methods	N/A	Mathematics
Use of mathematics	680	Mathematics

**GCSE subjects to be considered for reform, for first teaching from 2017<sup>22</sup>**

**(last award of unreformed GCSEs in 2018)**

<b>Subject</b>	<b>UK awards 2012</b>
Ancient history	346
Applied business	4,386
Astronomy	2,723
Business and communication systems	14,936
Business studies	57,339
Business studies and economics	3,740
Classical civilisation	4,395
Economics	3,582
Film studies	5,335
General studies	7,608
Geology	1,070
Health and social care	7,726
Hospitality	1,452
Information and communication technology	42,310
Law	2,889
Leisure and tourism	3,382
Media studies	55,851
Psychology	12,986
Sociology	21,951
Statistics	50,530

**AS qualifications to be considered for reform, for first teaching from 2017<sup>23</sup>**

**(last award of unreformed AS qualifications in 2018)**

<b>Subject</b>	<b>UK awards 2012</b>
Accounting	7,579
Anthropology	512
Applied information and communication technology	13,552
Archaeology	998
Citizenship studies	4,934
Classical civilisation	3,403

<sup>22</sup> Where more than one title relates to a specific subject, we will consider how to apply our principles in the development of the new core content.

<sup>23</sup> Where more than one title relates to a specific subject, we will consider how to apply our principles in the development of the new core content.

Classics	5,124
Communication and culture	3,376
Creative writing	N/A
Critical thinking	13,789
Electronics	2,131
Film studies	10,256
General studies	56,519
Geology	3,224
Government and politics	20,214
Health and social care single award	10,548
History of art	873
Information and communication technology	16,970
Law	22,496
Leisure studies	1,015
Media studies	34,388
Media: communication and production	637
Music technology	3,018
Philosophy	5,788
Statistics	1,404
Travel and tourism	3,360
World/global development	2,101

**A levels to be considered for reform, for first teaching from 2017<sup>24</sup>**

**(last award of unreformed A levels in 2018)**

<b>Subject</b>	<b>UK awards 2012</b>
Accounting	3,791
Anthropology	96
Applied information and communication technology	8,725
Archaeology	509
Citizenship studies	929
Classical civilisation	2,403
Classics	4,133
Communication and culture	2,118
Creative writing	N/A
Critical thinking	229
Electronics	1,165

<sup>24</sup> Where more than one title relates to a specific subject, we will consider how to apply our principles in the development of the new core content.

Film studies	6,882
General studies	35,381
Geology	2,064
Government and politics	14,148
Health and social care single award	6,701
History of art	943
Information and communication technology	9,492
Law	13,144
Leisure studies	956
Media studies	24,503
Media: communication and production	455
Music technology	4, 819
Philosophy	3,211
Statistics	747
Travel and tourism	1,997
World/global development	610

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