



**Rt Hon Michael Gove MP**  
Secretary of State

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Professor Nigel Thrift  
Chair  
A Level Content Advisory Board  
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14 July 2014

Dear Nigel

Thank you for your letter of 7 July, accompanying the three reports from the panels of the A Level Content Advisory Board, on geography, modern and classical languages, mathematics and further mathematics.

The reports are a signal contribution to our reforms, which will introduce A levels designed to match qualifications offered in the highest performing education systems in the world and to keep pace with the understandably high demands of universities and employers. The reports make clear how the content of A levels in these subjects needs to change so that students are well prepared to progress to further study at Russell Group and other universities. I was pleased to note that the panels have worked closely with others in developing recommendations for content – in particular the awarding organisations, Ofqual, teachers and subject associations.

I am grateful for the constructive way in which each of the panels has worked with the subject experts engaged by the Department to draft formal content requirements against which Ofqual will be able to regulate the new A levels. We are, today, publishing the proposed content for public consultation, in parallel with your publication of the panels' reports. Ofqual is also consulting on the assessment arrangements, having taken account of the panels' views. By explaining the rationale for the content for these subjects, the reports will inform and shape the further discussion that will take place during the consultation, which runs until 19 September.

We will welcome ALCAB's advice in helping to develop our response to any relevant issues raised in the consultation. Your ongoing commitment to working with the Department, and with Ofqual, particularly in relation to the proposed post-qualification review process, is also most welcome.

Thank you for your comments on support for larger A level programmes, including funding for students taking four A levels. I agree that we should encourage schools and colleges to stretch their high-performing students, and we will soon announce how we might continue to protect subjects such as further mathematics and languages, taken as fourth A levels, beyond the current funding arrangements.

I would like to extend my thanks to you, as ALCAB chair, and to the members of each of the panels, particularly the chairs, Professor Martin Evans, Professor Stephen Parker, and Professor Richard Craster.

Yours, with grateful thanks for your excellent work,

Michael



MICHAEL GOVE