

Decisions on Conditions and guidance for GCSE, AS and A level Classical Civilisation



In February 2016 we published a consultation about the rules and guidance we proposed to put in place for new GCSE, AS and A level qualifications in classical civilisation.

This consultation set out draft Subject Level Conditions, requirements and guidance which would apply to all new GCSEs, AS and A levels in this subject.

We have reviewed the responses to the consultation and are now announcing our decisions. We are also publishing a more detailed analysis of the responses alongside this document.¹

Compliance with content requirements

We proposed that all reformed GCSEs, AS and A levels in classical civilisation should comply with the subject content requirements published by the Department for Education,² and with our assessment objectives.

All the respondents who commented on this proposal supported it. No respondents raised any concerns with this aspect of our proposals.

We have therefore decided to confirm our proposals in this area.

Assessment objective wording

The wording of the assessment objectives in GCSE, AS and A level classical civilisation were outside the scope of this consultation.³

However, one respondent commented that the wording of assessment objective AO1 for AS and A level could be interpreted as applying to literature and visual/material culture only, and could prevent proper assessment of the ‘classical thought’ content.

¹ www.gov.uk/government/consultations/gcse-as-and-a-level-reform-regulations-for-ancient-history-and-classical-civilisation

² www.gov.uk/government/publications/gcse-classical-civilisation and www.gov.uk/government/publications/gce-as-and-a-level-classical-civilisation

³ We took decisions on assessment objectives following our earlier consultation ‘[Developing new GCSEs, AS and A Levels for first teaching in 2017 - Part 2](#)’

Although we would not normally reconsider the wording of assessment objectives at this stage, the concerns raised were sufficiently serious that we decided to look again at our earlier decision

On reflection, we believe the respondent's comment is valid. We have decided to amend the wording of AO1 for both AS and A level classical civilisation to ensure it explicitly includes classical thought.

Guidance

We proposed to introduce guidance clarifying the interpretation of our assessment objectives. Respondents supported introducing this guidance, but some also commented on the wording and arrangement of the guidance.

For GCSE classical civilisation, one respondent commented that, for assessment objective AO2, the way the elements of the assessment objective had been divided did not break up the assessment objective into its logical constituent parts.

We have considered the respondent's comments, and decided to make changes to the structure of the elements to address the concerns raised.

For AS/A level classical civilisation, one respondent commented that, for assessment objective AO1, our definition of 'interpretations' was narrow, and excluded some valid forms of interpretation, such as literary interpretation.

We reviewed our definition of 'interpretations', and have decided to amend it to ensure it covers all valid forms of interpretation.

Next steps

We have published the following documents which formally introduce our rules and guidance for GCSE, AS and A level classical civilisation:

- *GCSE Subject Level Conditions for Classical Civilisation*⁴
- *GCSE Subject Level Guidance for Classical Civilisation*⁵
- *GCE Subject Level Conditions for Classical Civilisation*⁶
- *GCE Subject Level Guidance for Classical Civilisation*⁷

⁴ www.gov.uk/government/publications/gcse-9-to-1-subject-level-conditions-and-requirements-for-classical-civilisation

⁵ www.gov.uk/government/publications/gcse-9-to-1-subject-level-guidance-for-classical-civilisation

⁶ www.gov.uk/government/publications/gce-subject-level-conditions-and-requirements-for-classical-civilisation

⁷ www.gov.uk/government/publications/gce-subject-level-guidance-for-classical-civilisation