

# Five year review of standards

A level classical subjects

# Introduction

Every summer, the publication of GCSE and A level examination results prompts public interest in the standards of those examinations.

In 1996, Lord Dearing in his *Review of Qualifications for 16–19 Year Olds* made several recommendations to ensure that ‘there is a basis and accepted procedure ... for monitoring and safeguarding standards over time’. In the same year, SCAA (one of QCA’s predecessors) and the Office for Standards in Education jointly investigated standards in English, mathematics and science (chemistry) in 16+ and 18+ public examinations over time.<sup>1</sup>

The outcomes of this work were published in *Standards in Public Examinations 1975 to 1995*. One of the recommendations was that there should be:

‘... a rolling programme of reviews on a five-year cycle to ensure examination demands and grade standards are being maintained in all major subjects. Physics, history, French and German should be included in the programme at an early stage.’

The five-yearly review of standards programme is a response to these recommendations. It is run by QCA in collaboration with the regulatory authorities for Wales and Northern Ireland, ACCAC and CCEA, and is designed to investigate the standards in A level and GCSE examinations. It aims to find out if:

the demand of syllabuses and their assessment instruments has changed over the last 20 years (examination demand);

the level of performance required of candidates at grade boundaries has changed over the last 20 years (grade standard).

Organised to run in five-year cycles, the programme was structured to cover every major subject during its first cycle. Each year, up to 100 independent specialists review around 2,000 exam scripts, drawn from all the awarding bodies, together with their associated syllabuses, question papers and mark schemes.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> 16+ examinations cover GCE O level and Certificate of Secondary Education (up to 1987), and GCSE (from 1988).

<sup>2</sup> For the purposes of this report, the general term *awarding bodies* is used to cover both the A level examination boards and the GCSE examining groups.

# Methodology

Each study was organised in two stages:

- stage one – investigating changes in examination demand;
- stage two – investigating changes in standards of performance.

Each covered four sample years: the year of the study and its predecessors from five years, 10 years and 20 years earlier.

## Stage one: examination demand

### *Aim*

The aim of this review was to establish whether the demand of syllabuses and their assessment instruments changed over the period of the review.

### *Evidence base*

The awarding bodies were asked to supply, for each subject, copies of one major syllabus from the most recent year and its predecessors for the other three years in the study. They were also asked to provide the related question papers, mark schemes, examiners' reports, and details of the procedures in operation at the time of each examination.

In general, syllabuses and question papers were available from all awarding bodies for all years in a study. Unfortunately, prior to 1988, few mark schemes and few documented details about awarding procedures had been retained.

### *The process*

A coordinator and three reviewers – independent experts from a variety of backgrounds – were appointed for each subject. Each coordinator was given a framework and asked to use it to describe the main differences between the syllabuses from the different years. This description was given to the reviewers, who were asked to study the syllabuses, question papers and mark schemes and independently judge whether the differences between years affected the demand of the examination. After the material had been reviewed, the team for each subject area met and discussed any issues. The coordinator then reported on the findings and identified any conclusions.

## Stage two: standards of performance

### *Aim*

The aim of the second stage was to find out if the level of performance required of candidates at grade boundaries has changed over the period of the study. The review focused on the performance of candidates at grades A and E at A level, and grades A, C and, sometimes, F for 16+ examinations.

### ***Evidence base***

The awarding bodies were asked to provide 15 examples of candidates' work at the defined boundaries for each syllabus studied in stage one. They were asked to submit the complete examination work of candidates, including all examination papers, coursework and any oral examinations.

On the whole, the samples provided for the most recent year of each study were complete. However, the coursework was sometimes missing and work from modular syllabuses presented a problem, in that it was seldom possible to provide the entire work of individual candidates. Usually, several modules from one candidate were provided, supplemented by modules from other candidates to produce the appropriate overall result.

Samples of work from earlier years were much less complete. The awarding bodies could rarely provide work from enough candidates or did not have the complete work of candidates – coursework and orals were usually missing and the work consisted of individual components. No work from the earliest year of the reviews was available.

### ***The process***

A team of up to 12 reviewers was recruited for each subject. The reviewers came from a variety of backgrounds, including universities, selective and non-selective schools, maintained and independent schools, and further education institutions (including sixth form colleges). Some of them had backgrounds working for the various awarding bodies.

The coordinator from stage one was used again in this stage and the syllabus reviewers normally participated.

The review took place over two days. Before the meeting, each coordinator produced a general description of the standards expected for the grade boundaries in the study. Where these were available, published grade descriptions normally formed the basis of the performance descriptors. The coordinators were asked to take into account the fact that they would be looking at borderline performance rather than that comfortably in grade which is the intention of grade descriptions. The performance descriptors were discussed and agreed by the team at the start of the meeting.

Reviewers were each given a batch of scripts for a particular year, grade and awarding body. Working independently, they were asked to judge if the scripts matched the agreed grade description. They could categorise the work as:

- above the expected standard;
- slightly above the expected standard;
- at the expected standard;
- slightly below the expected standard;
- below the expected standard.

They were then given another batch of scripts of the same grade, either from another awarding body or of a different year from the same awarding body. They categorised these scripts and compared them with the first batch to identify any significant differences between candidates' performance. A sampling framework ensured adequate coverage of the sample. A copy of part of one framework is provided on page 5.

At the end of the two days, a plenary session was held and the reviewers discussed their findings and any significant issues. As with stage one, the coordinator reported on the findings and conclusions.

### **Limitations of the study**

Comparing examination standards over time is a complex task, heavily dependent on the evidence available and the ability of reviewers to make valid judgements on it. When considering the findings and conclusions, several limitations need to be kept in mind.

### **Changes in syllabus and examination content**

In some subject areas, syllabuses and examination papers changed radically over the period of the review. For example, in assessing modern foreign languages the relative importance of the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening has changed considerably. Fundamental changes make it difficult for reviewers to make valid judgements about relative standards because they are not comparing like with like.

### **Individual opinion**

Each individual places different values on each part of a subject. Agreed definitions of standards and frameworks show reviewers the standards they should work to, but it is difficult for them to avoid applying their own values. This can lead to differences in opinion about the same syllabus or piece of candidate's work.

### **Lack of evidence**

While reviewers had syllabuses and examination papers (although not always mark schemes) for all the years in the study, they did not have all the evidence they needed to analyse standards of performance. The archiving practices of the awarding bodies vary, each keeping different amounts of evidence for any year. This applies particularly to examination scripts. What tended to be available from earlier years is work for separate components of the examination rather than the whole work of candidates. Coursework and any oral examinations were usually missing.

A national archive of essential evidence on examination standards has been established by the regulatory authorities. This should ensure that difficulties in this area are reduced in future studies.

**Table 1: Sampling framework for part of a typical A level study**

**DAY 1**

8:30	BOARD A, GRADE A	BOARD A, GRADE E	BOARD F, GRADE A	BOARD F, GRADE E	BOARD C, GRADE A	BOARD C, GRADE E
10:00	1996 1-7	1996 1-7	1996 1-7	1996 7-1	1996 1-7	1996 15-8
10:10	BOARD A, GRADE A	BOARD A, GRADE E	BOARD F, GRADE E	BOARD F, GRADE A	BOARD C, GRADE A	BOARD C, GRADE E
11:30	1991 1-3	1991 1-3	1996 8-15	1996 7-1	1991 1-7	1991 15-8
11:50	BOARD A, GRADE E	BOARD A, GRADE A	BOARD C, GRADE E	BOARD C, GRADE A	BOARD E, GRADE A	BOARD D, GRADE A
1:05	1996 1-7	1996 15-8	1996 1-7	1996 8-15	1996 1-7	1996 15-8
2:15	BOARD A, GRADE E	BOARD A, GRADE A	BOARD A, GRADE E	BOARD B, GRADE E	BOARD E, GRADE E	BOARD D, GRADE E
3:30	1991 1-3	1991 3-1	1996 15-8	1996 15-8	1996 1-7	1996 15-8
3:30	BOARD B, GRADE A	BOARD D, GRADE E	BOARD B, GRADE A	BOARD D, GRADE E	BOARD D, GRADE A	BOARD E, GRADE A
4:45	1996 1-7	1996 1-7	1996 15-8	1991 4-1	1996 7-1	1996 8-15
5:05	BOARD B, GRADE E	BOARD D, GRADE E	BOARD B, GRADE E	BOARD D, GRADE E	BOARD D, GRADE E	BOARD E, GRADE A
6:20	1996 1-7	1991 1-4	1996 8-15	1986 4-1	1996 8-15	1991 1-3

**DAY 2**

8:30	BOARD C, GRADE E	BOARD E, GRADE E	BOARD E, GRADE A	EDEC , GRADE A 1996	BOARD F, GRADE A	BOARD A, GRADE E
9:45	1996 7-1	1996 15-8	1996 1-7	7-1	1996 8-15	1996 15-8
9:45	BOARD C, GRADE E	BOARD E, GRADE E	BOARD E, GRADE A	BOARD B, GRADE E	BOARD F, GRADE E	BOARD A, GRADE E
11:00	1991 1-7	1991 3-1	1991 3-1	1996 8-15	1996 8-15	1986 7-1
11:20	BOARD C, GRADE A	BOARD E, GRADE A	BOARD E, GRADE E	BOARD E, GRADE A	BOARD C, GRADE A	BOARD A, GRADE A
12:35	1996 7-1	1996 7-1	1996 8-15	1996 8-15	1996 15-8	1996 1-7
1:45	BOARD C, GRADE A	BOARD E, GRADE A	BOARD E, GRADE E	BOARD E, GRADE A	BOARD C, GRADE A	BOARD A, GRADE A
3:00	1991 7-1	1991 1-3	1991 1-3	1991 3-1	1991 15-8	1991 3-1

# A level classical subjects: review of examination standards 1977–97

## Introduction

For the purposes of this study, classical subjects covered examinations in Latin and Classical Civilisation. The entry for Greek is too small to make valid comparisons.

Changes in examinations in the subject area between 1977 and 1997 were influenced mainly by:

- the introduction in the 1980s of a common core;
- changes in 16+ examinations from GCE O level to GCSE in 1988.

Over the period, there had also been a significant shift in entry pattern from Latin to Classical Civilisation.

## Examination demands

### *Materials available*

The Reviewers used syllabus booklets, question papers and mark schemes from syllabuses in classical subjects from 1977, 1987, 1992 and 1997, although not all materials were available from earlier years. In some cases, examiners' reports allowed reviewers further insight into the requirements of the examination. Full details of the materials used in the review are given in Annex A.

In 1997, the entry for Latin was about 1500, of whom slightly under 50 per cent were awarded an A. For Classical Civilisation, the entry in 1997 was about 3700. Approximately 15 per cent were awarded an A.

## LATIN

### *General issues*

Changes during the period covered by the review consisted more of the explicit spelling out of what had hitherto been implicit than of changes of substance.

At the beginning of the period, syllabuses did not identify aims, assessment objectives or weightings, while mark schemes were little more than short notes on the likely content of answers, with minimal guidance on the allocation of marks. By 1997, all these aspects had been fully covered. There was, however, no evidence to suggest that expectations had changed or that demands had been reduced. Instead, the clarification had given validity and greater rigour to the assessment, establishing confidence in the standard set.

### ***Structure and content***

All syllabuses involved three elements: unprepared translation, prescribed texts and prose composition (to which there was always an alternative). The relative weighting of these elements was closely comparable from awarding body to awarding body.

#### ***Unprepared translation***

Reviewers did not consider there had been a change over time in the level of difficulty of the passages set for unprepared translation by any one awarding body. Linguistic and grammatical analysis suggested, however, that the passages set by OCR tended to be slightly more demanding than those set by Edexcel. This was balanced by the fact that OCR named in advance the authors from whose works the passages would be chosen, thus enabling candidates to focus their preparation.

The main change which had implications for demand was that, from 1992, AQA/N allowed candidates to use dictionaries in this paper and revised the structure of the unprepared prose translation to make clearer to candidates what was expected of them. However, the vocabulary in the passages had not become more difficult to offset the advantage of having a dictionary, and demand had therefore been reduced. Reviewers did not judge the change of structure to have affected demand; nor was the test thought to be easier in itself than the conventional OCR paper. However, the script review showed that OCR and AQA/N took different approaches to the marking of this component. Both approaches were considered valid, but it was unclear whether the outcomes would be comparable.

#### ***Prescribed texts***

The length of the prescribed text tended to reduce over the period. There was, however, a greater uniformity of length in 1997 than there had been in earlier years, when the alternatives could be very different even in the syllabus of the same awarding body. Such differences as there were in 1997 could be justified in terms of the relative difficulty of the different authors.

Moreover, any reduction in length was fully compensated by a change in focus of the assessment. In 1977, little except translation was required; by 1997, there was heavy emphasis on literary criticism. The latter was considered more demanding and more worthwhile. Overall, reviewers considered that demand in this element had risen over the period.

By 1992, AQA/N and OCR had introduced a coursework option to replace part of the examination paper on the texts. For candidates who chose it, this had improved the validity of the assessment since work of greater substance was required than is possible within the constraints of an examination. Candidates were expected to have gained a wider contextual understanding of the text studied.

#### ***Prose composition and its alternatives***

With minor exceptions, the prose composition was remarkably consistent over the period of the review. In 1977, the OCR passage was strikingly difficult, but later examples were in line with those of the other awarding bodies. The passages set by Edexcel have become longer while still being of broadly the same difficulty.



The alternatives to prose composition were more variable. They tested different skills from composition, but in general they were judged to be a reasonable alternative. The only apparent anomaly was in the contrast between Edexcel's Paper 4 (comprehension/ literary appreciation) and Paper 5 (topics). The prescribed reading for Paper 4 was significantly longer than that for Paper 5, and the demands of the question paper were also greater in terms of the length of the passages set and number of questions on them. Paper 4, therefore, was considered a more demanding option.

### ***Depth and breadth***

The increased focus on literary criticism of the prescribed texts was considered to have produced greater depth than was the case in 1977. In terms of language levels, the demands for both breadth and depth throughout the period had been maintained. However, the structure of syllabuses had consistently failed to ensure breadth. Except in the case of AQA/N, a candidate could choose to read prose only or verse only. The level of choice also allowed candidates to study texts that were considered somewhat peripheral.

### ***Summary***

Over the period, the awarding bodies and the options within awarding bodies have come closely into line. In the one case where there had been a clear reduction in demand (the OCR prose), this was judged to have removed what had been excessive demand rather than to have reduced standards to an inappropriate level.

## **CLASSICAL CIVILISATION**

### ***General issues***

As with Latin, aims, assessment objectives and weightings, which did not exist or were only implicit in 1977, were detailed in 1997. Mark schemes, too, had become much more detailed. The assessment had gained in validity and rigour, but there was no evidence that the standard expected was lower; arguably, the reverse was true.

### ***Structure and content***

All syllabuses required the study of a number of topics, the majority rooted in prescribed literature, although the number of topics to be studied varied. Edexcel's Paper 1, on life and social topics, was equivalent to two literary topics, while CCEA offered a history option on one paper. Both these papers were regarded as undemanding, being heavily dependent upon narrative answers.

Virtually all the assessment took the form of essays, but there were structured questions in some syllabuses and two offered a coursework alternative to part of one examination paper.

There was considerable variation in the approach taken to the subject, leading to probable variations in demand. The OCR and AQA/N syllabuses were entirely topic based, incorporating the social and life contexts into the topics. That from Edexcel addressed this in a separate component. Only CCEA had a history option. The

number of topics to be studied also varied considerably: AQA/N required eight, OCR four and CCEA three.

### **Topics**

The topics became more equally balanced over the review period. This often involved some reduction in length, but in 1977 some topics were unrealistically long, and it is not likely that candidates read the full prescription then.

In general, each topic carried 25 per cent of the assessment. Where this was not so, the differences were balanced by other differences in demand. For instance, the eight topics required by AQA/N involved candidates in answering only one question, chosen from three, on each topic. Candidates were required to answer two questions, from a choice of eight, on each of the four OCR topics.

There were doubts about equality of difficulty across topics, though these doubts diminished between 1977 and 1997. Nevertheless, some topics had been eased excessively. The most striking case was the Edexcel philosophy topic which after 1987 changed from 'The Ideal State' to 'Socrates', with a reading requirement markedly less demanding than that for any other topic. Similarly, the AQA/N 'Socrates and Athens' topic was considered undemanding.

The CCEA papers were considered internally unbalanced, since the topics on Paper 2, of which candidates studied two, were each almost as heavy as the topics on Paper 1, of which candidates studied one. There was no evidence of different approaches to the topics to explain this apparent anomaly. The historical option on Paper 1 also appeared demanding in contrast with the alternative option on civilisation.

### **Options and types of assessment**

While essays remained the basis of assessment over the period, there was an increasing use of structured questions based on stimulus material. The structure of the AQA/N papers allowed candidates to choose nothing but structured questions. This not only led to potential differences in demand between awarding bodies, but also made it hard for AQA/N to ensure that demand was comparable for candidates choosing potentially very different routes through the papers.

AQA/N and OCR also offered a coursework option. Although there was no reason to doubt its rigour or validity, it was considered likely to increase depth, while reducing breadth of study. This was thought to be the case because candidates would focus upon only one aspect of the topic rather than prepare the whole topic, as they would for a written examination, in the expectation of having to answer the wider range of questions that would feature in a written examination. There were therefore doubts as to whether the options were of comparable demand.

### **Summary**

The demands across awarding bodies and across options within awarding bodies converged over the review period. Nevertheless, there remained possible variations in demand, both within and across awarding bodies.

The demands of the question papers themselves remained remarkably consistent.

The depth of study required was impressive but, throughout the period, breadth depended upon a candidate's choice of topics. The level of flexibility offered by syllabuses in Classical Civilisation permitted courses of study that could lack coherence and appropriate breadth of study. Although good teaching would ensure a balanced and coherent course, it was possible for a candidate to adopt a more limited approach, taking 'snapshots' of the ancient world that scarcely relate to one another however individually valuable, demanding and rigorously assessed each may be.

## **Standards of performance at grade A and grade E**

### ***Materials available***

Scripts in Latin were available from candidates of two awarding bodies, AQA/N and OCR, and only from the 1997 examination. Thus no comparison over time was possible. Moreover, the AQA/N scripts did not consist of the complete work of candidates, but separate papers from different candidates. This made it much harder for reviewers to see patterns of performance across components and they were not able to form a confident judgement on the overall standard expected from candidates from AQA/N.

In Classical Civilisation, materials from 1997 were available from AQA/N, Edexcel and OCR, but none from earlier examinations. CCEA supplied materials from 1992 but none from 1997. Again, no comparisons over time within the same awarding body were possible.

Full details of what was available are provided in Annex A.

The descriptions of expected performance used in this exercise were developed from published grade descriptions, adjusted to take into account the fact that the work was from borderline candidates.

## **LATIN**

### **Standards expected at grade A**

Candidates were expected to show a very good level of accuracy in manipulating Latin, with a good grasp of vocabulary and inflexions and a sound grasp of grammar. They should be able to transfer the meaning of a passage of Latin accurately and coherently through translation or comprehension.

Candidates should have a detailed knowledge of Latin texts within the historical, social and literary contexts. They should display a very good grasp of Latin literary technique and be able to evaluate evidence in some depth, drawing well argued and appropriately referenced conclusions. Personal responses show clear insight into an author's meaning.

### ***Performance at grade A***

OCR candidates at grade A were considered to be performing better than expected. Marking was harsh and a high level of understanding and evaluation was expected, higher than that expected by AQA/N.

AQA/N candidates at grade A were judged to be meeting the expected standard for grade A. Marking was positive, the mark range was fully used, and papers were user-friendly.

### **Standards expected at grade E**

Candidates were expected to show some accuracy in manipulating Latin, with a basic grasp of vocabulary and inflexions and some awareness of grammar. They should be able to transfer the outline meaning of a passage of Latin through translation or comprehension.

Candidates should have a basic knowledge of Latin texts within the historical, social and literary contexts. They should display some grasp of Latin literary technique and be able to give basic evaluation of evidence, drawing generalised conclusions which will be appropriately referenced on occasion. Personal responses show some understanding of an author's meaning.

### ***Performance at grade E***

At grade E, OCR candidates were again judged to be exceeding the expected standard.

However, candidates from AQA/N were judged to be significantly below expectation, especially in the unprepared translation, which was of very poor quality. This was partly because, although the use of dictionaries by AQA/N candidates had not obviously affected performance, weaker candidates showed signs of excessive dependence on the dictionary and of less accurate analysis.

## **CLASSICAL CIVILISATION**

### **Standards expected at grade A**

In relation to specified works of literature and other kinds of specified source material, candidates should display a good range of accurate and relevant knowledge and understanding.

Candidates construct persuasive and coherent arguments which focus on the tasks set in examination or as coursework. Prescribed primary materials are very well understood in their contemporary literary, social and historical contexts. Candidates offer informed comment and evaluation of prescribed authors and materials, displaying good understanding of concepts specific to the classical world.

Their expression will be clear and accurate, with classical names generally properly rendered.

### ***Performance at grade A***

The reviewers were broadly satisfied that a consistent and correct standard was being achieved by the awarding bodies at the grade A boundary. There was some suggestion that marking by AQA/N and OCR was slightly harsh, but that a suitable boundary had been set to allow for this.

### **Standards expected at grade E**

In relation to specified works of literature and other kinds of specified source material, candidates should display a basic level of knowledge and understanding.

Candidates deploy arguments that show some relevance to the tasks set in examination or as coursework. There is some attempt to set prescribed primary materials in their contemporary literary, social and historical contexts. Candidates offer some relevant or generalised comment and evaluation of prescribed authors and materials, displaying some understanding of concepts specific to the classical world.

Their expression will be adequate to express basic arguments, with classical names recognisable.

### ***Performance at grade E***

There was less consistency at grade E, although the significant differences in syllabus requirements made direct comparison difficult.

On balance, scripts from AQA/N were judged to be above the expected standard; those from OCR to have met expectation. The majority of those from Edexcel were also at the expected standard, although a small minority were considered to be below it. Reviewers found considerable inconsistency in the marking of the CCEA scripts and did not feel it was possible to form a clear view of the standard of performance, although some scripts were judged above expectation.

Comparability between essays and structured questions did not appear to cause a problem in operation: the awarding bodies' marking strategies had coped with any possible imbalance.

### ***Reliability of assessment***

For both subjects, reviewers noted two issues which had implications for reliability. First, there was a reluctance to use the full mark range, particularly in the case of OCR, whose use of longer questions tended further to reduce the range used. Second, there was sometimes a lack of clarity in what was expected of candidates, especially in literary questions. This was usually reflected in mark schemes, which while generally clear and full, expected material that the questions would not necessarily lead the candidates to include. As a result, some candidates were apparently penalised for omitting material they could not reasonably be expected to have included.

## Summary

In Latin, the two awarding bodies were out of line at both grades, and in particular at grade E where OCR was considered above the standard and AQA/N below it.

In Classical Civilisation, standards were appropriate at grade A. At grade E, there was greater variation, with AQA/N slightly exceeding the expected standard and a few of the Edexcel scripts slightly below it.

## Annex A: Materials used in the review of Latin.

Table A1 shows the materials available for the review of examination demand.

Awarding body	AQA/N	EDEXCEL	OCR
<b>1997</b>			
Syllabus	✓	✓	✓
Question papers	✓	✓	✓
Mark scheme	✓	✓	✓
<b>1992</b>			
Syllabus	✓	✓	
Question papers	✓	✓	
Mark scheme			
<b>1987</b>			
Syllabus	✓	✓	
Question papers	✓	✓	✓
Mark scheme		✓	✓
<b>1977</b>			
Syllabus	✓	✓	
Question papers	✓	✓	✓
Mark scheme		✓	✓

Table A1: materials available for the syllabus review

Table A2 shows the materials available for the script review.

Awarding body	AQA/N	EDEXCEL	OCR
<b>1997</b>	Grade A	15	13
	Grade E	15	13
<b>1992</b>	Grade A		
	Grade E		
<b>1987</b>	Grade A		
	Grade E		
<b>1977</b>	Grade A		
	Grade E		

Table A2: Numbers of sets of candidates' work available for the script review

## Annex A: Materials used in the review of Classical Civilisation.

Table A3 shows the materials available for the review of examination demand.

Awarding body	AQA/N	CCEA	EDEXCEL	OCR
<b>1997</b>				
Syllabus	✓	✓	✓	✓
Question papers	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mark scheme	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>1992</b>				
Syllabus	✓	✓	✓	
Question papers	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mark scheme				✓
<b>1987</b>				
Syllabus	✓		✓	
Question papers	✓		✓	✓
Mark scheme			✓	✓
<b>1977</b>				
Syllabus			✓	
Question papers			✓	✓
Mark scheme				✓

Table A3: materials available for the syllabus review

Table A4 shows the materials available for the script review.

Awarding body	AQA/N	CCEA	EDEXCEL	OCR
<b>1997</b>	Grade A	15	15	15
	Grade E	15	15	15
<b>1992</b>	Grade A		3	
	Grade E		3	
<b>1987</b>	Grade A			
	Grade E			
<b>1977</b>	Grade A			
	Grade E			

Table A4: Numbers of sets of candidates' work available for the script review



# Key to the awarding bodies

During the period of the reviews, the number of awarding bodies operating fell. There are currently five: AQA, CCEA, Edexcel, OCR and WJEC. However, the three English awarding bodies came together through a number of mergers and a government requirement for unitary awarding bodies which could offer the range of GCSE, A level and GNVQ/VCE qualifications. This means that the qualifications used in the reviews came from a number of earlier examination boards and examining groups.

For the purposes of the reports the following abbreviations will be used:

AQA/A, AQA/N, CCEA, Edexcel, OCR and WJEC.

AQA/A covers AQA legacy A level syllabuses offered by AEB; legacy GCSE syllabuses offered by SEG; and O level syllabuses offered by AEB.

AQA/N covers AQA legacy A level syllabuses offered by NEAB, NEA and JMB; legacy GCSE syllabuses offered by NEAB and NEA; and O level syllabuses offered by JMB.

CCEA covers A level and GCSE syllabuses offered by CCEA, NISEAC and NISEC; and O level syllabuses offered by NISEC and NIGCEEB.

Edexcel covers A level and GCSE syllabuses offered by Edexcel, ULEAC and ULSEB; GCSE syllabuses offered by Edexcel, ULEAC and LEAG; and O level syllabuses offered by ULSEB.

OCR covers A level syllabuses offered by OCEAC, OCSEB, UCLES and UODLE; GCSE syllabuses offered by MEG; and O level syllabuses offered by OCSEB, UCLES and UODLE.

WJEC has retained the same name throughout the period.

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