



Department for Education

Georgia Gould OBE MP
Minister for School Standards

26 February 2026

Dear Sir Ian,

I am writing regarding the requirement for students to memorise formulae and equations in GCSE mathematics, physics and combined sciences.

As the Rt Hon Bridget Phillipson MP, Secretary of State, set out [in her letter of October 2024](#), students continue to feel the effects of the pandemic, which caused disruption to earlier years of their education. In recognition of this, arrangements were put in place so that students are provided with the relevant formulae and equations in assessments. These arrangements remain in place for examinations up to and including 2027.

In November 2025, the Curriculum and Assessment Review published its final report, recommending that government evaluate whether students should be required to memorise and recall each formula and equation in these subjects, as well as being able to apply them. As we confirmed in the government response to the Review we are now considering this as we review and develop revised subject content for reformed GCSEs in these subjects.

In view of this recommendation, for the lifetime of the current GCSE specifications in these subjects, students should not be required to memorise formulae and equations for assessment purposes. Students will continue to be expected to understand and use these formulae and equations, maintaining high standards for what students must study.

I would therefore like Ofqual to put in place appropriate assessment arrangements to reflect this decision about what students must study for the lifetime of the current specifications. I understand that any changes to Ofqual's assessment rules would be subject to public consultation, as in previous years.

Thank you for your support on this matter. I look forward to continuing to work with you as the reforms to qualifications progress.

Yours sincerely,

Georgia Gould OBE MP
Minister for School Standards