

Consultation Summary Paper

DfE Consultation on 2016 GCSE and GCE reform (part 2)

November 2014

Opened 25/09/2014, closed 20/11/2014, Pearson lead: Emma Whale
<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/gcse-and-a-level-reform--2>

A brief introduction to Pearson

Pearson is the world's leading learning company. Our education business combines 150 years of experience in publishing with the latest learning technology and online support. We are also part of the wider Pearson family which includes Penguin, Dorling Kindersley and the Financial Times. We provide education and assessment services in more than 70 countries. Our qualifications, courses and resources are available in print, online and through multi-lingual packages, helping people learn whatever, wherever and however they choose.

A summary of the consultation

This consultation seeks views on proposed subject content for some of the reformed qualifications that will be introduced from September 2016. The subjects are as follows:

- GCSE and GCE Drama, GCSE Citizenship Studies, Design and Technology, and Cooking and Nutrition.

A summary of the Pearson response

Pearson welcomes the opportunity to contribute to this consultation on proposed content for reformed GCSEs and A levels. We also welcome the opportunities that we as an awarding organisation have been afforded to feed in to the process of shaping these content criteria. Pearson teams worked collaboratively alongside colleagues at AQA, OCR and Eduqas, as well as DfE colleagues, to listen to the views of stakeholder groups and HEI representatives to establish new content expectations. As well as working with stakeholder groups convened by the Department, we also have a detailed base of evidence of our own to draw on, including analysis of international high-performing jurisdictions, additional stakeholder engagement, and data and qualitative analysis of our existing qualifications.

The drafting process for these subjects has inevitably required a degree of compromise. It has involved exploring an appropriate balance between ensuring that the content provides the best possible progression, ensuring that the skills, knowledge and understanding represented are the right ones for the subject in the eyes of stakeholders, ensuring that we can assess these validly and reliably over the life of the qualification, and ensuring that the qualification is deliverable in schools and accessible and appealing to students.

Following consultation with our wider stakeholder groups, we believe that further, critical revisions are required to ensure these aims are met.

- In **Design and Technology**, significant consideration needs to be given to the issue of ensuring adequate depth in relation to the Areas of Interest.
- In **Citizenship Studies**, we believe both the volume and nature of some of the proposed subject content to be inappropriate. We have significant doubts about awarding organisations' ability to set valid assessments on active citizenship without a proportion of non-examined assessment.
- We believe the purpose of the new **Cooking and Nutrition** GCSE is unclear, as is the link to KS3 and A level study. We strongly recommend revising the subject content to ensure an appropriate balance between the content areas of nutrition, food (food provenance and food choice) and cooking and food preparation.

In this response, we propose recommendations we believe will ensure the content is appropriate for study at the specified level, facilitate progression, and go some way to protect take-up of the subject in question as part of a broad and balanced curriculum offer: a concept to which Pearson remains extremely committed.