

# **GCSE, AS and A Level Electronics – Consultation on Conditions and guidance**

## How to respond to this consultation

The closing date for responses is **18 March 2016**.

Please respond to this consultation in one of three ways:

- Complete the online response at <https://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/2605624/GCSE-AS-and-A-level-reform-regulations-for-electronics>
- Complete these consultation questions and email your response to [consultations@ofqual.gov.uk](mailto:consultations@ofqual.gov.uk). Please include the consultation title (Electronics Consultation 2016) in the subject line of the email and make clear who you are and in what capacity you are responding
- Post your response to: Electronics Consultation 2016, Ofqual, Spring Place, Herald Avenue, Coventry, CV5 6UB, making clear who you are and in what capacity you are responding

### Evaluating the responses

To evaluate responses properly, we need to know who is responding to the consultation and in what capacity. We will therefore only consider your response if you complete the information page.

Any personal data (such as your name, address and any other identifying information) will be processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and our standard terms and conditions.

We will publish our evaluation of responses. Please note that we may publish all or part of your response unless you tell us (in your answer to the confidentiality question) that you want us to treat your response as confidential. If you tell us you wish your response to be treated as confidential, we will not include your details in any published list of respondents, although we may quote from your response anonymously.

Please respond by **18 March 2016**.

## **Responding to the consultation**

## Your details

To evaluate responses properly, we need to know who is responding to the consultation and in what capacity. We will therefore only consider your response if you complete the following information section.

We will publish our evaluation of responses. Please note that we may publish all or part of your response unless you tell us (in your answer to the confidentiality question) that you want us to treat your response as confidential. If you tell us you wish your response to be treated as confidential, we will not include your details in any published list of respondents, although we may quote from your response anonymously.

Please answer all questions marked with a star\*

Name\*

[Dr Geoff Parks](#)

Position\*

[Chair, Entry to Engineering in Higher Education: Advisory Panel](#)

Organisation name (if applicable)\*

[Engineering Professors' Council](#)

Address

Email

[gtp10@cam.ac.uk](mailto:gtp10@cam.ac.uk)

Telephone

**Would you like us to treat your response as confidential?\***

If you answer yes, we will not include your details in any list of people or organisations that responded to the consultation.

Yes  No

**Is this a personal response or an official response on behalf of your organisation?\***

Personal response (please answer the question 'If you ticked "Personal response"...')

Official response (please answer the question 'If you ticked "Official response"...')

**If you ticked "Personal response", which of the following are you?**

Student

Parent or carer

Teacher (but responding in a personal capacity)

Other, including general public (please state below)

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**If you ticked "Official response", please respond accordingly:**

**Type of responding organisation\***

Awarding organisation

Local authority

School or college (please answer the question below)

Academy chain

Private training provider

University or other higher education institution

Employer

Other representative or interest group (please answer the question below)

**School or college type**

- Comprehensive or non-selective academy
  - State selective or selective academy
  - Independent
  - Special school
  - Further education college
  - Sixth form college
  - Other (please state below)
- 

**Type of representative group or interest group**

- Group of awarding organisations
- Union
- Employer or business representative group
- Subject association or learned society
- Equality organisation or group
- School, college or teacher representative group
- Other (please state below)

The Engineering Professors' Council (EPC) is the representative body for engineering in higher education. The EPC currently has 80 member institutions encompassing c.6,000 academic staff (permanent FTE).

**Nation\***

- England
- Wales
- Northern Ireland
- Scotland
- Other EU country: \_\_\_\_\_
- Non-EU country: \_\_\_\_\_

**How did you find out about this consultation?**

Our newsletter or another one of our communications

Our website

Internet search

Other

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**May we contact you for further information?**

Yes  No

## Questions

**Question 1: To what extent do you agree or disagree that we should introduce a Condition which requires exam boards to comply with the relevant subject content and assessment objectives?**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Please explain your reasons:

It is hard to object to this in principle. The key issue will be how well compliance is 'policed' in practice.

**Question 2: To what extent do you agree or disagree that we should introduce guidance which clarifies how exam boards should interpret our assessment objectives?**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Please explain your reasons:

This seems an essential step in ensuring comparable standards are maintained across awarding bodies.

**Question 3: To what extent do you agree or disagree that we should introduce rules for exam assessment to ensure exam boards take a consistent approach to assessing mathematical skills in GCSE, AS and A level electronics?**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Please explain your reasons:

Again, this seems an essential step in ensuring comparable standards are maintained across awarding bodies.

**Question 4: To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposed approach to assessing mathematical skills in exams for GCSE, AS and A level electronics?**

Strongly agree

Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Please explain your reasons:

The proposed approach seems sensible and appropriate. What is essential (but is not explicitly stated as an objective) is that the approach to assessing mathematical skills in GCSE, AS and A level exams should be consistent across directly comparable subjects (so, in the case of Electronics, in Design & Technology) to avoid some subjects being perceived as 'softer' than others.

**Question 5: To what extent do you agree or disagree that we should introduce a Condition which permits non-exam assessment, specifies the proportion of exam- and non-exam assessment, and allows us to set more detailed rules and guidance on non-exam assessment?**

Strongly agree

Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Please explain your reasons:

This seems eminently sensible and appropriate in the case of Electronics. Indeed, given the nature of the subject, we would argue that an element of non-exam assessment should be mandatory.

**Question 6: To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposed approach to allocating non-exam assessment marks to assessment objectives in GCSE, AS and A level electronics?**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Please explain your reasons:

The proposed approach seems appropriate for AO3.

**Question 7: To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposed approach to setting non-exam assessment tasks in GCSE, AS and A level electronics?**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Please explain your reasons:

The proposed approach seems appropriate, but it is essential that the process by which the exam board demonstrates that it has identified and managed any risks needs to be rigorous.

**Question 8: To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposed approach to authenticating non-exam assessment in GCSE, AS and A level electronics?**

- Strongly agree

- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Please explain your reasons:

It is very hard to see how an approach that allows “remote supervision” of a student’s work can guarantee authentication at a suitably rigorous level.

**Question 9: To what extent do you agree or disagree with our proposed approach to marking of non-exam assessment in GCSE, AS and A level electronics?**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Please explain your reasons:

The proposed approach seems reasonable, but depends crucially on the rigour with which assessment strategies are scrutinised.

**Question 10: Do you have any comments on our proposed Conditions and requirements for GCSE electronics?**

- Yes  No

Not beyond comments already made in response to earlier questions.

**Question 11: Do you have any comments on our proposed guidance for GCSE electronics?**

- Yes  No

Not beyond comments already made in response to earlier questions.

**Question 12: Do you have any comments on our proposed Conditions and requirements for AS and A level electronics?**

Yes  No

Not beyond comments already made in response to earlier questions.

**Question 13: Do you have any comments on our proposed guidance for AS and A level electronics?**

Yes  No

Not beyond comments already made in response to earlier questions.

**Question 14: We have not identified any ways in which the proposals for GCSE, AS and A level electronics would impact (positively or negatively) on persons who share a protected characteristic.<sup>1</sup> Are there any potential impacts we have not identified?**

Yes  No

Not that we have been able to identify.

**Question 15: Are there any additional steps we could take to mitigate any negative impact resulting from these proposals on persons who share a protected characteristic?**

Yes  No

Not that we have been able to identify.

**Question 16: Do you have any other comments on the impacts of the proposals on students who share a protected characteristic?**

Yes  No

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<sup>1</sup> 'Protected characteristic' is defined in the Equality Act 2010. Here, it means disability, racial group, age, religion or belief, pregnancy or maternity, sex, sexual orientation and gender reassignment.

## Accessibility of our consultations

We are looking at how we provide accessible versions of our consultations and would appreciate it if you could spare a few moments to answer the following questions. Your answers to these questions will not be considered as part of the consultation and will not be released to any third parties.

**We want to write clearly, directly and put the reader first. Overall, do you think we have got this right in this consultation?**

Yes  No

**Do you have any comments or suggestions about the style of writing?**

Yes  No

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**Do you have any special requirements to enable you to read our consultations? (for example, screen reader, large text, and so on)**

Yes  No

**Which of the following do you currently use to access our consultation documents? (select all that apply)**

Screen reader / text-to-speech software

Braille reader

Screen magnifier

Speech-to-text software

Motor assistance (blow-suck tube, mouth stick, and so on)

Other .....

**Which of the following document formats would meet your needs for accessing our consultations? (select all that apply)**

A standard PDF

Accessible web pages

Large-type PDF (16 point text)

Large-type Word document (16 point text)

eBook (Kindle, iBooks, or similar format)

Braille document

Spoken document

Other .....

**How many of our consultations have you read in the last 12 months?**

1

2

3

4

5

More than 5