

The below is extracted from <http://comment.ofqual.gov.uk/developing-new-qualifications-for-2016-part-2/respond/respond/>

How to respond

If you have an interest in GCSE, A level and AS qualifications we hope you will respond to this consultation. You do not have to respond to all questions; you might prefer to answer those related to a specific subject only.

Please respond to this consultation in one of three ways:

- Complete the online response at <http://surveys.ofqual.gov.uk/s3/developing-new-qualifications-for-first-teaching-in-2016-part-2>
- Email your response to consultations@ofqual.gov.uk – please include 'GCSE, A level and AS Qualification Subject Requirements' in the subject line of the email and make clear who you are and in what capacity you are responding.
- Post your response to: GCSE, A level and AS Qualification Subject Requirements, Ofqual, Spring Place, Coventry Business Park, Herald Avenue, Coventry, CV5 6UB.

The closing date for responses to the consultation is **Wednesday, 19th November 2014**.

[Note that the Ofqual website has said **Monday** 19th November up until 4-11-14! We have alerted Ofqual and they have confirmed that **Wednesday, 19th November** is correct and will update their website.]

The response form below is extracted from the full response form at <http://surveys.ofqual.gov.uk/s3/developing-new-qualifications-for-first-teaching-in-2016-part-2>. Question numbers below are as in the original.

A copy of this response is available online at <http://dandtfordandt.wordpress.com/>. We hope colleagues will find the following notes useful in formulating their own responses. We are very happy, if you agree with our points, for you simply use our text, or to for you to use it as a starting point for your own comments. The important thing is that Ofqual get a lot of responses!

Developing new qualifications for first teaching in 2016 - Part 2 - September 2014

GCSE in design and technology

11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that for GCSEs in design and technology 50 per cent of the available marks should be allocated to exams, and 50 per cent to non-exam assessment?

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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Please give reasons for your answer

The opportunity for students to engage as designers and makers over an extended period of time, experiencing work with a wide range of different materials and in rich contexts, is inherent to the nature of D&T. Such engagement is demanding and is central to the development of capability in the subject. This is reflected in the proposed subject content and students cannot demonstrate such capability through an exam.

We believe the weighting of 50% for non-exam assessment is the absolute minimum that will allow students to clearly demonstrate their designing and making capability. For a long period the balance between NEA:Exam has been 60:40 and, as we are not aware of any substantive reason for this to change, we recommend that 60% NEA to 40% exam is a better balance for this subject than a 50%:50% split.

12. To what extent do you agree or disagree that GCSEs in design and technology should not be tiered?

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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Please give reasons for your answer

The lack of tiering is definitely to be welcomed. We know from other subjects, such as Science, that tiering is proving a real problem when it comes to question setting.

13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed assessment objectives are appropriate for GCSEs in design and technology?

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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Please give reasons for your answer

The AOs deal with the key features of knowledge understanding and skill required by the subject content to be learned by students as defined by the Draft GCSE Subject Content document. The overall weightings reflect an appropriate balance with regard to the AOs' significance. However the distribution of the weightings between the written paper and the NEA is unclear and this uncertainty needs to be resolved – see our comments under 14

14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed weightings of the assessment objectives are appropriate for GCSE qualifications in design and technology?

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
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Please give reasons for your answer

We think Ofqual should also prescribe to the Awarding organisations that how these AOs are weighted between the written paper and the NEA.

For example:

	Exam	NEA	Total
AO1	10%	5%	15%
AO2	0%	35%	35%
AO3	15%	5%	20%
AO4	25%	5%	30%
Total	50%	50%	100%

This is based on our clear view (detailed below) that the marks for the NEA should be awarded on the basis of candidates' ability to design and make within their Area of Interest. The marks for the written paper should be awarded on the basis of the demonstrated knowledge and understanding of the enduring ideas pertinent to design & technology and independent of their chosen Area of Interest.

15. Do you have any further comments relating to the assessment of this subject?

Yes	No
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If so, what are they?

We think the Awarding Organisations should be given much clearer guidance in relation to the nature of the NEA and the written exam.

I Starting points for the NEA:

Recommendation 1:

The NEAs should employ open starting points to ensure that students explore the context of their design challenge before developing any sort of design brief.

(Starting points refer to situations/scenarios from which students are able to create and contextualise their own design brief.)

This is important because it will prevent students deciding what they are going to make at the start of the challenge – the 'I'm going to make a coffee table for the living room at home' syndrome. Open starting points refer to situations/scenarios, which students explore in order to establish sufficient understanding of the context to be able to create their own design brief.

To ensure that this approach is embedded into the NEA we suggest that

- each awarding organisation should release starting points that students must use in order to create their own individual design brief in order to contextualise their own design and making project
- the starting points should be released by all awarding organisations to students and teachers on an agreed (e.g. 1 June) in the year prior to certification
- new starting points will be released each academic year in accordance with the timescale above

- the starting points will not directly relate to any Area of Interest
- students will be required to apply their knowledge, understanding and skills of the designing and making and the technical principles
- students must submit clear evidence of their iterative design process and produce a practical outcome in the form of a final product or prototype.

The lack guidance about the nature of the NEA is a concern. Is the implication that awarding organisations will be free to make their own proposals here? And if so, by what criteria will these proposals be judged? The journey, over the last 20 years or so from open coursework projects to much more closed projects and ultimately the (very tightly) controlled assessments has, we believe, brought a huge loss to the subject.

We do understand that a move to open projects would require a great deal of teacher support, but we think that could be provided and the subject would be richer - and more rigorous, for it.

It seems likely that, without any pressure to do otherwise, AOs will default to the current form of non-exam assessments and we'll get something very like controlled assessments offered again.

2 The importance of minimally invasive assessment

Recommendation 2:

The Awarding Organisations should be required to adopt an approach to assessment that is minimally invasive. I.e. the way that pupils' work is assessed will be such that it will not distort their educative experience in tackling their designing and making task. This will provide a much more valid form of assessment of designing and making capability than current practice does.

There is nothing in the proposals about how pupils will be required to provide evidence for non-examined assessments. We suspect that, without external push, the AOs will default to what they know; death by portfolio.

The problem always has been, and remains, that of finding efficient painless ways of generating EVIDENCE that don't stifle the creativity. So the ritualisation of designing, the conversion of the design folio into a product and the inflexible narrow interpretation of what constitutes design, represent a major problem. There needs to be scope for pupils to model and record their thinking in a variety of ways AND orders. We can't carry on letting a narrow view of what constitutes EVIDENCE-of-design dictate the NATURE of design.

We think it is important that any NEA should be minimally invasive i.e. the way the pupil's work is assessed will be such that it will not distort their educative experience in tackling their designing and making task. We suggest that one way pupils can be given appropriate freedom to decide on their own designing and making pathway is for the teacher to support them in the use of 'job bags'.

The criteria for the contents of job bags are simple. The pupil's work, be it in the form of written notes, annotated sketches, 3D models, working drawings, patterns, recipes, plans, schedules, still photos, video recordings, audio recordings, questionnaire data, calculations, must have utility. It must be present only because at the time it was produced it was done to help move the designing and making task forward. Such a miscellany would be personal to the pupil and it is likely that there would be considerable variation in content of such job bags even amongst pupils tackling identical design and make tasks. However, the job bag would not be the primary source of assessment evidence. It would be the evidence that the pupil

called upon to reveal and justify their decisions. And it is the revelation and justification of the design decisions demonstrated at three points during a designing and making task that provides the bulk of the assessment evidence for the pupil's designerly activity.

The first point is reached when a pupil has explored the context and developed his or her first ideas for a product in response to the context. A pupil will be asked to consider whether the developed proposals meet the revelations of the context and requirements of the brief and to clarify and justify the design decisions made so far. The pupil will also be required to review these decisions and consider whether what s/he is proposing is likely to be achievable in relation to resources of time, materials, equipment and personal skills.

The second point is reached when most of a pupil's design decisions have been made through sketching, 3D modelling, and experimenting. This will be at the point where making is imminent or has just started. Again, the pupil will be asked to clarify and justify the design decisions made so far and then review these decisions and consider whether the design arrived at fully meets the requirements of the brief and whether the plans for making are achievable.

The third point will be reached when the product is complete and will include an evaluation against the brief and the specification.

The emphasis of these points of reflection will be on revealing a pupil's response to the emerging demands of the task in terms of the decisions made and the extent to which they are realistic. Note that it is the contents of the pupil's job bag that is the source of the information the pupils need to make the necessary reflection and it is the contents of this reflection that provides the assessment evidence.

3 The written paper

Recommendation 3:

We believe that the written paper should be completely independent of the Area of Interest that candidates have chosen and should focus on assessing the understanding of enduring ideas that are important in the subject of design & technology and on probing candidates' technological perspective.

We note that the DfE consultation, under Subject Content, point '7' says:

"Specifications must require students to study these principles in the context of one of the areas of interest defined in paragraph 13."

Our position is this. If we limit what young people should know and understand and be able to do to that which is required to successfully tackle a major designing and making task we are selling the subject short. Not that tackling such a task is an insignificant endeavour. It is not. It requires hard investigative work to appreciate the nature of the problem the task has to address, what we might call knowledge of the problem. For an authentic task this knowledge cannot be 'taught from the front' or looked up in a textbook. It has to be sought out through a user-centred approach to design. Techniques for doing this can of course be taught. Then in responding to the problem there are all sorts of knowledge, understanding and skill needed – what we might call knowledge for the solution. Some of this a pupil may have been taught but some may well be beyond what has been taught and the pupil will need to find out for herself. But however demanding any one project might be it cannot cover the breadth of knowledge required to appreciate a whole subject. So limiting assessment of design & technology to the procedural competence, however knowledge, understanding and skill dependent, is, we believe, insufficient. We want to assess the

extent to which pupils have really grasped the enduring ideas that are important in design & technology in a way that is true to the nature of design & technology. And allied to this wider interpretation of what is worth knowing about and learning through a broad and balanced design & technology course is developing 'technological perspective'. By this we mean giving young people insight into 'how technology works' such that they develop a constructively critical view of technology, do not become alienated from the technologically based society in which they live and are able to consider how technology might be used to provide products and systems that help create the sort of society in which they wish to live.