

LMS Response to Ofqual Consultation: Proposed changes to the assessment of mathematics, physics and combined science GCSEs

March 2026

Details of the consultation: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/proposed-changes-to-the-assessment-of-mathematics-physics-and-combined-science-gcse/proposed-changes-to-the-assessment-of-mathematics-physics-and-combined-science-gcse>

Question 1

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal that formulae sheets should be provided in the exams for GCSE mathematics for the lifetime of the current qualifications?

Options: Strongly agree – Agree – Neither agree nor disagree – Disagree – Strongly disagree

Response

Strongly Agree

Question 2

Do you have any comments on the proposal to provide formulae sheets in the exams for GCSE mathematics for the lifetime of the current qualifications?

Response

We strongly agree with the Department for Education's (DfE's) decision to continue providing formulae sheets in the exams for GCSE Mathematics for the lifetime of the current qualifications.

For GCSE Mathematics exams in general, we believe it is more meaningful to assess whether students can select the right formula for the problem in front of them, and whether they can use it properly. It is therefore more useful for learners to be assessed on the skills of understanding, selecting, applying, rearranging and using the formulae than on memorising them.

More generally, a view often expressed by teachers of GCSE Mathematics students, including those who are resitting, is that while higher attainers do not necessarily need or benefit from having formulae sheets, the lower attainers definitely do benefit and value this. More importantly, the provision of formulae sheets can decrease anxiety for lower attainers and increase confidence levels by knowing that these materials will be available. These lower attainers should be supported in a way that will benefit them in their future life, where they will need to make appropriate use of formulae that they can

consult. This also applies to all learners – using and applying formulae is the approach taken in further and higher education, and in employment.

Question 3

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal that equations sheets should be provided in the exams for GCSE physics and combined science for the lifetime of the current qualifications?

Options: Strongly agree – Agree – Neither agree nor disagree – Disagree – Strongly disagree

Response

Neither agree nor disagree

Question 4

Do you have any comments on the proposal to provide equations sheets in the exams for GCSE physics and combined science for the lifetime of the current qualifications?

Question 5

Are there other potential equality impacts Ofqual has not identified? [Yes/No]

Response

No

Question 6

If yes, what are they and do you have any suggestions for how any potential negative impacts on particular groups of students could be mitigated?

Question 7

Are there additional activities associated with providing students with formulae and equations sheets in their GCSE mathematics, physics and combined science exams that Ofqual has not identified above? [Yes/No]

Response

No

Question 8

If yes, what are they and do you have any suggestions for alternative approaches that could reduce burden and costs, if identified?