

4 October 2013

Prof. Julia Buckingham
Chair
SCORE
6-9 Carlton House Terrace
London
SW1Y 5AG

Office of Qualifications
and Examinations Regulation
Spring Place
Coventry Business Park
Herald Avenue
Coventry CV5 6UB

Telephone 0300 303 3344
Textphone 0300 303 3345
info@ofqual.gov.uk
www.ofqual.gov.uk

Dear Professor Buckingham

A-Level Reform

Thank you for your letter of 16 September outlining your concerns regarding Professor Smith's recent report on A-level content which was published on Friday 6 September.

On Friday 14 June my colleagues, Janet Holloway (Head of Reform) and Cath Jadhav (Acting Director of Research and Evaluation) met with senior representatives from some of your constituent bodies, namely the Institute of Physics, Society of Biology and Royal Society of Chemistry. I know that we found the meeting helpful and that, subsequently, your colleagues wrote to Professor Smith outlining their concerns.

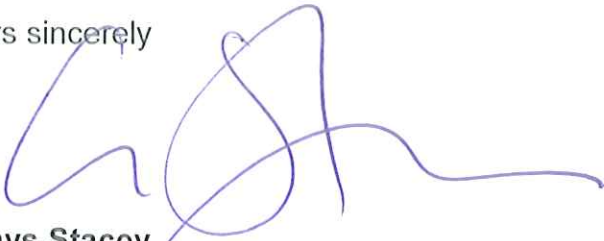
Janet and a colleague will also be attending your meeting with representatives from the Department for Education (DfE) on Monday 7 October. This will offer the opportunity for us to clarify the different and discrete areas of responsibility between ourselves and DfE, our forthcoming consultations, and to explore the issues you identify in the sciences. For our part, we will be particularly keen to hear more details about your concerns over the quality of assessment although I do understand that these issues were also raised at the meeting on 14 June.

We will be moving to a period of further consultation on the proposals for assessment and content requirements for new A level qualifications. Therefore, there will be further opportunities for you and other professional bodies to contribute your views beyond the meeting on Monday. I know that Cath and Janet had some preliminary discussion with your colleagues about involvement in the review of qualification proposals when they met on the 14th June, and this could be explored further on Monday. In turn it will be very helpful for her to hear more about your curriculum committees and the contribution they could make.

I welcome your letter and your offer to contribute to the reform of these A level subjects. Whilst our research identified that the current qualifications are generally regarded as being fit for purpose we are all concerned that any new qualifications

should represent a clear and substantial improvement. I appreciate your willingness to participate in bringing this about.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'G' followed by a series of loops and a long horizontal tail.

Glenys Stacey
Chief Regulator