

Mr Andrew Snowden
Member of Parliament for
Fylde
House of Commons
Westminster
London
SW1A 0AA

By email only to:
andrew.snowden.mp@parliament.uk

20 January 2026

Ref: PQ100141

Dear Mr Snowden,

Re: PQ100141 To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps are being taken to ensure that modern foreign language qualifications are set and marked in line with Ofqual requirements and do not unfairly disadvantage particular groups of students.

Minister of State (Education), Georgia Gould, has asked Ofqual to respond directly to your recent Parliamentary Question. A copy of this response will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Ofqual's rules require awarding organisations to set assessments which are fit for purpose, including ensuring that they will measure attainment in a way which is valid, reliable, unbiased and comparable year-on-year and between awarding organisations offering the same qualification. As part of this, awarding organisations must design assessments in ways that enable students to demonstrate what they can do in relation to the targeted knowledge, understanding and skills. Ofqual has published specific guidance that sets out expectations for designing accessible assessments, which is published [here](#). Awarding organisations must also take all reasonable steps to ensure that the marking criteria against which Learners' performance will be differentiated are understood by Assessors and applied accurately and consistently.

For GCSE, AS and A levels, any new qualifications are subject to accreditation. This is Ofqual's standard process for scrutinising and approving any new general qualifications before they can be awarded to students. Accreditation results in a decision, at a given point in time, about an exam board's capability to meet Ofqual's requirements for that specific qualification on an ongoing basis. It marks the start of Ofqual's consideration of the lifecycle of the qualification.

Once qualifications are made available to Learners, Ofqual monitors their delivery by attending marker training and standardisation meetings, reviewing question papers once they have been sat, and responding to concerns raised by students, teachers, examiners and other stakeholders through our Complaints and Whistleblowing processes.

Where this leads us to believe that there are potential issues with the setting or marking of an assessment we will undertake further investigation, including the evaluation of exam papers, as in the case of Pearson A level Chinese.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Ian Bauckham'.

Sir Ian Bauckham CBE

Chief Regulator, Ofqual