



22 April 2026

Dear Chair and Members of the Education Select Committee,

We are writing on behalf of the Classical Association to thank you for your recent letter to Cambridge OCR regarding their withdrawal of selected general qualifications.

As the Subject Association for Classics, and the secretariat for the Classics APPG, we would like to share with you the concerns we have already raised with Cambridge OCR with regards to their decision to remove AS qualifications in Latin and Classical Greek. Our concerns focus on **process, learner impact, access and equality**, and the wider implications for post-16 curriculum breadth.

Process and regulatory compliance

Cambridge OCR's announcement to centres in March 2026 came **without any prior consultation with schools, colleges or subject associations**. Cambridge OCR is the sole provider of AS qualifications in Latin and Classical Greek, and thus this absence of stakeholder engagement is particularly concerning.

Ofqual conditions require awarding organisations withdrawing qualifications to take reasonable steps to protect learners' interests and to ensure clear communication and planning. Evidence from centres suggests that schools and colleges have been left without viable alternative provision, raising serious questions about whether learner protection duties have been adequately discharged.

Impact on learner access and progression

The removal of AS Level Latin and Greek will have a disproportionate and damaging impact on access, progression and equality. In many schools, particularly in the state sector, AS qualifications are essential to sustaining A level provision. AS is frequently co-taught alongside A level, used to secure viability with senior leadership, or offered as a stand-alone qualification

on reduced contact time. Its withdrawal may therefore lower A level entry numbers nationally and, in some cases, eliminate post-16 access to classical languages entirely.

Disproportionate impact on the state sector

The impact falls most heavily on the state sector. Over the past five years, 58.7% of AS Latin entries and 42.3% of AS Greek entries came from non-independent schools, while far fewer state-sector students progress to the full A level. This demonstrates that AS qualifications play a crucial role in widening participation and maintaining access where full A levels cannot be sustained. Several of these centres are sole regional providers; their loss will exacerbate existing geographical inequalities in access to Classical subjects.

Structural implications for post-16 provision

AS qualifications also provide important progression pathways. They encourage students to take a classical language alongside three full A levels, support those who later progress to the full A level, and offer a credible endpoint for students for whom the full A level is not accessible. Their removal runs counter to national ambitions to broaden subject access and participation. The Department for Education has made clear that [it supports teaching classics](#) and ancient languages as part of a broad and varied curriculum.

We believe OCR's decision undermines fairness, transparency and learner protection, and risks long-term damage to Classics education in England. We are urging Cambridge OCR to reverse their decision in respect of Latin and Greek AS levels, or at a minimum to extend the final assessment opportunity to June 2028 to protect students who have already made subject and school choices in good faith, and that assurances be sought regarding the long-term security of A level Latin and Greek.

We would very much welcome the Education Committee's continued scrutiny and can provide further evidence should you so wish.

Yours sincerely,

Gráinne Cassidy, Education Co-ordinator, Classical Association & Secretariat, Classics APPG
Henry Cullen, Co-Chair of the Classical Association Teaching Board
Professor Judith Mossman, Chair of Trustees, Classical Association