

Number	<b>CL 08/14</b>
Subject	<b>Consultation on five revised subject benchmark statements</b>
Publication date	9 June 2014
Respond by	1 August 2014
Recipients	UK higher education providers; professional, statutory and regulatory bodies; academic subject associations; employer representative organisations; the Higher Education Academy; organisations representing higher education's interests and providing academic support; higher education funding councils; Sector Skills Councils; awarding organisations; the National Union of Students
Of interest to	Staff involved in the design, delivery and review of academic programmes; academic support staff; staff involved in education and accreditation activities of professional, statutory and regulatory bodies; employer organisations and their members; students and their representatives
Further information	<a href="mailto:benchmarking@qaa.ac.uk">benchmarking@qaa.ac.uk</a>
Related documents	<p><i>Subject benchmark statement: Archaeology - draft for consultation, available at:</i> <a href="http://www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/SBS-Archaeology.aspx">www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/SBS-Archaeology.aspx</a></p> <p><i>Subject benchmark statement: Chemistry - draft for consultation, available at:</i> <a href="http://www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/SBS-Chemistry.aspx">www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/SBS-Chemistry.aspx</a></p> <p><i>Subject benchmark statement: Classics and ancient history (including Byzantine studies and Modern Greek) - draft for consultation, available at:</i> <a href="http://www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/SBS-Classics.aspx">www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/SBS-Classics.aspx</a></p> <p><i>Subject benchmark statement: Geography - draft for consultation, available at:</i> <a href="http://www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/SBS-Geography.aspx">www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/SBS-Geography.aspx</a></p> <p><i>Subject benchmark statement: History - draft for consultation, available at:</i> <a href="http://www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/SBS-History.aspx">www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/SBS-History.aspx</a></p>

Dear colleague,

I am writing to provide your organisation with an opportunity to comment on the draft revised subject benchmark statements for:

- Archaeology
- Chemistry
- Classics and ancient history (including Byzantine studies and Modern Greek)
- Geography
- History.

Subject benchmark statements set out what a graduate in a particular subject is expected to know, do and understand at the end of their programme of study. They describe the nature of study and the academic standards expected of graduates in specific subject areas and in respect of particular qualifications.

Subject benchmark statements are an integral element of *Part A: Setting and maintaining academic standards* of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education. They are used as reference points in the design, delivery and review of academic programmes. They do not represent a national curriculum in a subject or prescribe set approaches to teaching, learning or assessment. Instead, they allow for flexibility and innovation in programme design within a framework agreed by the subject community.

In order to ensure the continuing currency of subject benchmark statements, the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) initiates regular reviews of their content. This consultation is taking place as part of a review of all subject benchmark statements which is currently underway. Further details about the review can be found at:

[www.qaa.ac.uk/AssuringStandardsAndQuality/subject-guidance/Pages/Subject-Benchmark-Review-2013-15.aspx](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/AssuringStandardsAndQuality/subject-guidance/Pages/Subject-Benchmark-Review-2013-15.aspx).

Each statement is reviewed by a group drawn from and acting on behalf of the subject community, in a process facilitated by QAA. Membership of the group includes higher education providers, professional, statutory and regulatory bodies, and employers, as appropriate to the subject area. Feedback is also collected from students. Where the group decides that revisions to the statement are required, the draft revised statement is subject to consultation, so that the views of the wider subject community, and others with an interest in higher education may be sought. All feedback received will be considered before the final version is published on QAA's website.

We welcome contributions to this consultation from anyone with an interest in higher education in the UK, including representatives from all four countries; prospective, current and past students; staff from the full range of higher education providers, including academic staff and staff with responsibilities for quality assurance; and from employers, who depend upon the abilities, skills and knowledge of graduates. We would be grateful if you would circulate this letter to your colleagues as appropriate, including heads of relevant academic schools/departments at higher education providers and those responsible for the recruitment of graduates.

Please submit feedback through the online survey, available at: [www.surveymonkey.com/s/SubjectBenchmarkreviewJune2014](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/SubjectBenchmarkreviewJune2014). The consultation will be open until 1 August 2014.

If you would like further information relating to the subject benchmark statements or the review process, please contact [benchmarking@qaa.ac.uk](mailto:benchmarking@qaa.ac.uk).

Yours sincerely



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**Chief Executive**



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