

***KEEP THE MODERN GREEK LANGUAGE A-LEVEL EXAM***

This petition is initiated by *the Hellenic Education Coordinating Committee in the UK – ΕΦΕΠΕ (ΚΕΣ, ΟΕΣΕΚΑ, ΑΕΣΑ)* and the *Greek Schools of Manor Hill and Finchley* and supported by *the Cyprus Educational Mission in the UK and the Education Office at the Greek Embassy in the UK, the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Thyateira and Great Britain, the Embassy of Greece in the UK, the Cyprus High Commission in the UK, the National Federation of Cypriots in the UK and the Association of Greek Orthodox Communities in the UK.*

We strongly oppose Edexcel's initial decision to stop the GCE AS and A-level Modern Greek examinations from 2017.

The Greek language is one of the official languages of the European Union spoken in two member states, Greece and the Republic of Cyprus. The policy of the European Union on languages is to support language learning and linguistic diversity. Stopping the examination in Modern Greek is certainly not in compliance with the above policy.

The Greek language has the longest documented history of any Indo-European language, spanning 34 centuries of written records and forms the basis for a number of modern languages. Moreover, the Greek language holds an important place in the history of Europe, the Western world and Christianity. Ancient Greek literature includes works of monumental importance and influence such as Homer's epic poems of the Iliad and the Odyssey. Greek is also the language in which many of the foundational texts of Western philosophy were written, such as the Platonic dialogues and the works of Aristotle. The New Testament of the Christian Bible was also written in Greek. The study of the Greek texts is a very important discipline of Classics in many world class universities. The terms that originate from Greek can be found in abundance in all scientific fields and the humanities. Therefore the importance of the Greek language is tremendous.

Keeping the GCE AS and A-level Modern Greek examinations will secure the general familiarity with the Greek language. Furthermore, it will help not only the local Greek population but also everyone who wants to study Greek develop a lifelong appreciation for the richness of the Greek culture. This will also help to establish strong links between the Greek and the British societies.

There is a significant number of people of Greek origin living in England and Wales. Being able to obtain a qualification in the Greek language is one of the biggest motivations of young people of Greek origin to learn their "mother tongue". We believe we have every right to have our language skills recognised and accredited through the education system. Moreover, keeping the connection with the language and culture of our origin, as British residents and citizens, will ensure a more dynamic and functional role in the multicultural British society. Greek supplementary schools serve a very important role towards community cohesion, children's self-development and resilience.

Lastly but of crucial importance is the impact of maintaining and supporting a multilingual environment in the UK for social cohesion and for economic recovery of the country, as it can increase the levels of trade. Languages can bring enormous benefits in these two areas. The importance of languages is emphasised, among others, by the British Academy, the UK's national body which champions and supports the humanities and social sciences.