

Dear Mr Fawkes

Thank you for your email of 2 August, addressed to the Secretary of State, expressing your concerns about the proposals made by the Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations (OCR) regarding **Asset Languages**. As I am sure you can appreciate, the Secretary of State receives a vast amount of correspondence and is unable to reply to each one personally. On this occasion I have been asked to reply.

As you acknowledge, this is entirely a commercial decision by OCR over which the Department for Education has no direct influence. We congratulate you and your colleagues for thinking about possible solutions and encourage you to pursue them with OCR or embassies and cultural institutions as appropriate. We continue to believe that the choice of language or languages to teach is for schools to decide, taking into account the needs of their pupils and the supply of a suitably qualified teacher.

While we encourage schools to offer the English Baccalaureate as a core of subjects we want pupils to have the opportunity to study, it is not compulsory. Other qualifications remain valuable in their own right and we continue to encourage schools to offer opportunities to all pupils to study rigorous, non-English Baccalaureate subjects and qualifications alongside it so they benefit from a well-rounded education.

Once again thank you for writing.

As part of our commitment to improving the service we provide to our customers, we are interested in hearing your views and would welcome your comments via our website at www.education.gov.uk/pcusurvey

Yours sincerely

Val Shiels
Public Communications Unit
www.education.gov.uk