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Steven Fawkes

Dear Steven

As a valued supporter of the Asset Languages initiative, we recognise your keen interest in the review of the qualification range that we are currently undertaking. We appreciate all the communications we have received since announcing our review and are very grateful for the offers of help.

The review is just starting and we will be in a position to update you further in September. No final decision has been made about the breadth of the languages. However we needed to remind all those involved in Asset that the accreditation of the existing language qualifications would run out at the end of December 2013 and a review was inevitable.

The withdrawal of Advanced Stage Asset qualifications across all languages after 2013 however is a decision that we have regrettably had to make outside the scope of the review and is due to very low demand for assessment at this level.

We remain committed to supporting community languages and are involved in on-going discussions with organisations representing different language groups about ways of sustaining new language qualifications. Our GCSEs in community languages such as Dutch, Gujarati, Persian, Portuguese and Turkish form an important part of our portfolio.

The difficult economic climate and a number of changes in government policy, including confirmation from the DfE earlier this year that Asset languages will not count in school headline performance indicators, force us to examine the range of languages available through Asset.

The portfolio has always been based on a delicate balance between the more popular modern foreign languages taught in schools and the less commonly-taught languages. In some community languages, uptake has been very low and stubbornly resistant to change. For example, fewer than 120 candidates in total took Asset exams across four of the current languages last year. Despite our not-for-profit status, OCR has a very broad portfolio of over 1300 qualifications to support and we strive to keep our costs as low as possible for everyone.

We have to ask for your forbearance therefore until September 2012 when we will bring you further news of the review and an opportunity to contribute your views. You can be assured that we are considering all options to find a future for Asset Languages.

Yours sincerely

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