

Notes on a meeting of the Young People's Campaign for Recognised Qualifications in a Wider Range of Languages with Mark Dawe, CEO of OCR.

Together with Citizens UK, around 100 young people and adults from several community groups from East London (representing Albanian, Somali and Amharic-speaking Ethiopian communities) attended the meeting. A youth panel presented testimonies regarding the importance of learning their mother tongue, and questions regarding recognition of qualifications, to Mark Dawe. It was quite an event, including a display of Albanian dancing from a children's group!

Mark Dawe replied to all the questions and stayed for a long discussion afterwards with a smaller group. Mark had received a letter from the Language Alliance and had it with him.

What emerged was as follows:

- the most urgent and significant issue is to campaign for Asset to be included again in league performance tables (currently it's been removed), since schools are particularly affected by the tables and are much more likely to support community language learning if it gets them points!
- this would have to be as a GCSE-size qualification, ie a combination of the 4 skills, since nothing less than a GCSE is being accepted for the league tables now (previously there was a system that gave points for each individual Asset exam)
- Mark Dawe is already arguing for this with the DfE and considered that the young people's campaign had a strong argument to meet with Michael Gove and discuss the issue, backed by all the evidence
- schools are more concerned with the league tables than the EBacc.

The young people and community leaders at the meeting agreed to:

- campaign for greater recognition of Asset, including in league tables
- raise the profile of Asset in the Somali community, since there's already an Asset exam for Somali, and explain to the community that if Asset is well-subscribed this strengthens the case for Somali GCSE
- gather community support for Asset in Albanian with the aim of setting this in motion by November 2012
- continue to widen the campaign and support future Asset qualifications for other languages including Amharic.