



ALL Briefing No. 40

Date : September 2024

Theme: DfE Announcement of Curriculum and Assessment Review

Background: The new UK Government (July 2024) announced through the Department for Education plans for a Curriculum Review. This will go to Consultation before recommendations are brought forward. ALL Council members have read through the paper 'Curriculum and Assessment Review: Review Aims, Terms of Reference and Working Principles' and extracted the details below as being especially relevant for ALL members.

Key messages *Our notes are in italic; **bold italic** indicates words in the original text we highlight for Language teachers :*

The Curriculum and Assessment Review Group will undertake a review of the existing national curriculum and statutory assessment system, including qualification pathways.

This may be an opportunity to highlight Languages which no longer have accreditation and / or a broader perception of Careers opportunities for language learners.

Terms of reference

2. The Review Group will consider the ***broad ambition*** for what every young person should be expected to achieve by age 18.

3. To this end, the Review Group should review the curriculum and mechanisms for assessment at ***each Key Stage***.

5. e. The Review will ensure that the assessment system captures children and young people's knowledge and abilities and ***consider the overall volume of assessment***.

This may open positive discussions around the time taken from the curriculum by assessment, to the detriment of teaching and learning.

Other quotations from the announcement that may be relevant and useful to colleagues in schools, in relation to the contributions of Languages to the outcomes

described. *Our notes are in italic; **bold italic** indicates words in the original text we highlight for Language teachers.*

The Review will ensure that the curriculum appropriately balances ambition, excellence, relevance, flexibility and **inclusivity** for all our children and young people, and it will ensure **meaningful**, rigorous and high-value pathways for all at 16-19.

Inclusivity (and meaningful pathways) may open positive discussions.

The Review will work backwards through young people's educational journey, commencing with detailed consideration of the ceilings to achievement currently built into Key Stages 4 and 5, and then working backwards through the earlier Key Stages to ensure that learning is effectively sequenced and that barriers to achievement are also removed in Key Stages 3, 2 and 1.

Specifically, the Review will seek to deliver:

- An excellent foundation in core subjects of reading, writing and maths.
- A **broader** curriculum, so that children and young people do not miss out on subjects such as music, art, sport and drama, as well as vocational subjects.
- A curriculum that ensures children and young people leave compulsory education **ready for life and ready for work**, building the knowledge, skills and attributes young people need to thrive. This includes embedding digital, **oracy and life skills** in their learning.
- A curriculum that reflects the issues and **diversities** of our society, ensuring all children and young people are represented.
- An assessment system that captures the strengths of every child and young person and the breadth of curriculum, with the right balance of assessment methods whilst maintaining the important role of examinations.

The concepts in bold italic are all things that Languages bring to the learning experience in unique ways.

The Review will take place in the context of an education system facing considerable challenges and staff shortages.

The Review may therefore offer commentary on the impact of accountability on the curriculum and assessment system and may wish to recommend how changes to curriculum and assessment should interact with accountability measures. To embed the approach outlined here for the long term, the Review may also make recommendations on how future updates to the curriculum and assessment system should be approached.

Also from Terms of reference

5. The Government is looking for progress over time towards:

- a. Ensuring high and rising standards and a broad, balanced, ***aspirational and motivating*** curriculum for all which equips young people to thrive in the world and workplace of the future.
- d. Improving the ***coherence and flexibility*** of qualification pathways.

The Review will be alive to trade-offs, with attention paid to the practicalities of implementation and to the **avoidance of unintended consequences and additional workload for education staff.**

References :

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-launches-curriculum-and-assessment-review>

Points for reflection / action:

Consider how your departmental work contributes to the new Government's aims and aspirations. There may be information or arguments which you can use in internal conversations.

Look out for details of the process for consultation via ALLNet, and discuss your thoughts on implications with colleagues.

Look out for details of an ALL online event to explore the Consultation in due time.

This Briefing has been prepared by volunteers from the ALL Council and is for the benefit of ALL members.

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