



Department  
for Education

# Reforming Key Stage 4 Qualifications

## Consultation Response Form

The closing date is: 10 December 2012  
Your comments must reach us by that date.

Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal information, may be subject to publication or disclosure in accordance with the access to information regimes, primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998.

If you want all, or any part, of your response to be treated as confidential, please explain why you consider it to be confidential.

If a request for disclosure of the information you have provided is received, your explanation about why you consider it to be confidential will be taken into account,h

Please mark the box that best describes you as a respondent.

School

College

Academy

## GENERAL STATEMENT

The London Mathematical Society welcomes the determination to maintain the concept of an almost universal qualification that allows students of all abilities to sit examinations in core subjects, and provide them with a grade which recognises the progress made.

We do however have some major concerns with this review process.

Our principal concern is that there is currently no national structure for the coherent development of an integrated curriculum and assessment policy for mathematics. We do not propose to go into a detailed blueprint here, and we are certainly not recommending the resurrection of QCA, but this consultation does once again flag up the need for some such structure. Countries with which we would like to be internationally competitive do appear to have well-developed mechanisms which are able to work over an appropriate timescale.

A further concern is that it is proposed to make the changes too quickly, with a risk of serious failure.

We also do not believe that the awarding bodies should play such a major role in the construction of a qualification, they are not bodies which can substitute for the national structure referred to above. It is also not clear that

**Title**

1 Do you agree that the new qualifications should not be called "GCSEs"?

<input type="checkbox"/> / Agree	<input type="checkbox"/> Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/> Not sure
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Comments:

2 a) Do you agree that the new qualifications should be called English Baccalaureate Certificates?

<input type="checkbox"/> Agreee	<input type="checkbox"/>
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2 b) If not, what alternative title should be adopted?

Comments:

**High expectation of performance and accurate grading**

3 Do

4 Do you believe that we should insist on a common grading structure for all English Baccala

6 Are there particular approaches to examinations which might be needed to make this possible for some subjects?

Yes

No

Not Sure

Comments:

**Assessed 100% by examination, or minimising reliance on internal assessment**

7 a) We intend that English BaccaLaureate Certificates should be assessed 100% by externally marked examinations. Do you agree?



7 b) If not, which aspects of English, mathematics, the sciences, history, geography or language do you believe absolutely require internal assessment to fully demonstrate the skills required, and why?

Comments:

**Size requirement for syllabus**

8 Should our expectation be that English Baccalaureate Certificates take the same amount of curriculum time as the current GCSEs? Or should schools be expected to place greater curriculum emphasis on teaching the core subjects?

<input type="checkbox"/> Same amount of curriculum time	/	<input type="checkbox"/> Greater curriculum emphasis	<input type="checkbox"/> Other
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## **Examination aids**

9 Which examinations aids do you consider necessary to allow students to fully demonstrate the knowledge and skills required?

11 Is there also a need for a combined science option covering elements of all three sciences?

Yes

No

Not Sure

### Assurance of literacy and numeracy

13 Do you agree that we should place a particular emphasis on the successful English language and mathematics qualifications providing the best assurance of literacy and numeracy?

Agree

Disagree

Not sure

Comments:

While it is essential that the mathematics qualifications do assure numeracy, the mathematics curriculum has many other aims which must be assured.

There need be no conflict between a qualification which assures the full range of aims of the mathematical curriculum and one which ensures numeracy, provided that assessment times are long enough.

### School and Post-16 institution Support

14 In order to allow effective teaching and administration of examinations, what support do you think Awarding Organisations should be:

a) Required to offer?

Comments:

Well constructed and clearly specified syllabuses.

Sample examinations, with a clear understanding that these indicate level of difficulty rather than a detailed, topic by topic, structure.

14 b) Prevented from offering?

Comments:

Training sessions for teachers

Textbooks and other teaching resources

(These are of course necessary, but should not be provided by the awarding bodies.)

15 How can Awarding Organisations eliminate any unnecessary burdens on schools and post-16 institutions relating to the administration of English Baccalaureate Certificates?

Comments:



## Equalities

18 a) Do you believe any of the proposals in this document have the potential to have a disproportionate impact, adverse or positive, on specific pupil groups?

/	Adverse impact	<input type="checkbox"/> P
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## Implementation

19 Should we introduce reformed qualifications in all six English Baccalaureate subjects for first teaching in secondary schools in 2015, or should we have a phased approach, with English, mathematics and sciences introduced first?

In all six subjects from 2015

Phased approach

/

Other

Comments:

For mathematics 2015 seems the earliest date possible; it may be necessary all



21 How long will schools need to prepare to teach these reformed qualifications?

<input type="checkbox"/> Up to 12 months	<input type="checkbox"/> 12 - 18 months	/	More than 18 months
<input type="checkbox"/> Other			

Comments:

Rapid change in recent years means schools have become adept at adoption. This does not mean however that anything less than the minimum 18 months promised will result in improvement.

### Languages

22 Should all langu60 TD(s)Tj /F0 10D(g)Tj 55 0 L(o)Tj 56 0 TD(u)Tj 56 0 TD(l)Tj1493 5 59349

23 Should the number of languages for which English Baccalaureate Certificates are identified be limited? If so, which languages should be included?

## Post-16

25 Should we expect post-16 institutions to ~~Q~~ TD(s)Tj 49 0 TD(t)Tj 284

## Choosing the best qualification in each subject

27 Do you agree that five years is an appropriate period for the new qualifications to feature in the performance tables before the competition is rerun?

Agree

Disagree

Not sure

Comments:

This question presumes acceptance of a proposal giving much more of the construction of qualifications to awarding bodies than we believe should be the case.

We do not believe that so much of the construction of the qualification should be carried out by individual awarding bodies. Among other things, this risks wasting the talents of those who are able to set good mathematics examinations.

The proposed cycle is a very short; given that it will take say 4 years for an awarding body to develop a new qualification. There is also the possibility of significant change every five years, which does not seem desirable.

28 Please let us have your views on responding to this call for evidence (e.g. the number and type of questions, whether it was easy to find, understand, complete etc.).

Comments:

We have had to supplement responses to individual questions with a more general statement, because some questions implied acceptance of parts of the proposed policy rather than inviting comment and not all issues can be addressed by individual questions.

Thank you for taking the time to let us have your views. We do not intend to acknowledge individual responses unless you place an 'X' in the box below.

**Please acknowledge this reply /**

Here at the Department for Education we carry out our research on many different topics and consultations. As your views are valuable to us, would it be alright if we were to contact you again from time to time either for research or to send through consultation documents?

/ Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
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All DfE public consultations are required to meet the Cabinet Office [Principles on Consultation](#)

The key Consultation Principles are:

- departments will follow a range of timescales rather than defaulting to a 12-week period, particularly where extensive engagement has occurred before
- departments will need to give more thought to how they engage with and consult with those who are affected
- consultation should be 'digital by default', but other forms should be used where these are needed to reach the groups affected by a policy; and
- the principles of the Compact between government and the voluntary and community sector will continue to be respected.

Responses should be completed and emailed to the relevant consultation email box. However, if you have any comments on how DfE consultations are conducted, please contact Carole Edge, DfE Consultation Coordinator, Tel: 0370 000 2288 / email: [carole.edge@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:carole.edge@education.gsi.gov.uk)

**Thank you for taking time to respond to this consultation. ~~at (0) 12 34 56 78 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 00~~**