



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.



If your enquiry is related to the DfE e-consultation website or the consultation process in general, you can contact the Consultation Unit by e-mail: [consultation.unit@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:consultation.unit@education.gsi.gov.uk) or by telephone: 0370 000 2288 or via the Department's ['Contact Us'](#) page.

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

<input type="checkbox"/> School	<input type="checkbox"/> College	<input type="checkbox"/> Academy
<input type="checkbox"/> Higher Education Institute	<input type="checkbox"/> Further Education Institute	<input type="checkbox"/> Local Authority
<input type="checkbox"/> Subject Association	<input type="checkbox"/> Parent	<input type="checkbox"/> Student
<input type="checkbox"/> Union	<input type="checkbox"/> Employer-Business Sector	<input type="checkbox"/> Governor
<input type="checkbox"/> HT/Teacher	<input type="checkbox"/> Awarding Organisations	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other

Please Specify:

Credit Action is a national financial capability charity (registered Charity in England & Wales No. 1106941) established in 1994.

Credit Action empowers people across the UK to build the skills, knowledge, attitudes and behaviours, to make the most of their money throughout their lives. It develops and delivers products and services which provide education, information and advice on money matters, in an appropriate way for young people and adults. Through its work Credit Action reaches over 500,000 UK citizens every year.

In responding to this consultation, our main area of concern is with the provision of financial education in the curriculum. In order to address this issue, we have focused our response on answering Question 13.

**Title**

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

Agree

Disagree

Not sure

Comments:

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

Agree

Disagree

Not sure

Comments:

2 b) If not, what alternative title should be adopted?

Comments:

**High expectation of performance and accurate grading**

3 Do you agree with our expectations for grading structures, set out in paragraphs 5.4 to 5.5?

Agree       Disagree       Not sure

Comments:

4 Do you believe that we should insist on a common grading structure for all English Bacculaureate Certificates or should we allow Awarding Organisations the freedom to innovate?

Common Grading Structure

Freedom to innovate

Other

Comments:

### No tiering

5 Do you agree that it will be possible to end tiering for the full range of subjects that we will be creating new qualifications for?

Yes

No

Not Sure

Comments:

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 Bacculaureate Certificates should be assessed 100% by externally marked examinations. Do you agree?

All

English

mathematics

sciences

history

geography

languages

None

Comments:

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?

Same amount of curriculum time       Greater curriculum emphasis       Other

Comments:

### Examination aids

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

Comments:

### Subject suites

10 Do you agree that these are appropriate subject suites? If not, what would you change?

Yes

No

Not Sure

Comments:

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

Yes

No

Not Sure

Comments:

### Track Record

12 What qualities should we look for in English Baccalaureate Certificates that will provide evidence that they will support students to be able to compete internationally?

Comments:

## 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:

With respect to mathematics, we would agree that a focus on core numeracy skills will be a crucial aspect of any new Key Stage 4 qualification. However, we strongly believe that such qualifications should encompass “financial numeracy” skills, to help ensure young people are equipped with the capabilities necessary to manage their money effectively in later life.

We recognise that in reforming Key Stage 4 qualifications, the Department for Education wishes to establish a world-class regime that supports young people and offers them the best possible opportunity to progress to further and higher education and into employment. With this in mind, we note that one of the findings of the August 2011 review of mathematics led by Carol Vorderman, entitled *A world-class mathematics education for all our young people*, was that “Financial numeracy is important for both individuals and for the economy”, adding that financial numeracy “should be addressed within the curriculum” (p. 7). As we outline below, a vital aspect of achieving this is ensuring that Key Stage 4 qualifications assess financial numeracy skills effectively.

In 2011, the All Party Parliamentary Group on Financial Education for Young People undertook an inquiry which examined the need for personal finance education, and ways of delivering it in primary and secondary schools. The findings were published in a December 2011 report, *Financial Education and the Curriculum*. One of the most notable findings was that there was a strong desire on the part of schools to provide personal finance education to their students – as part of its inquiry, the APPG surveyed teachers across the UK in March 2011, with 94.2% of respondents agreeing that personal finance education should be taught, and 95.5% supporting the proposal that it should be compulsory in secondary schools (p.13).

However, despite the fact that schools and teachers themselves clearly see value in personal finance education, one of the key obstacles that they identified was the fact that personal finance education was not statutory, and therefore not subject to assessment. Many schools therefore felt unable to justify giving curriculum time to it at the expense of other subjects which were assessed. As a result, the report concluded definitively that “Personal finance outcomes need to be assessed in order to be given time in schools” (p. 29).

The APPG proposed that personal finance education would be most

effective if taught on a cross-curricular basis, grounded in both mathematics and PSHE education (p. 35-36). We recognise that the issue of PSHE education is beyond the scope of this consultation, and have already responded to the Department's *Review of PSHE Education* regarding this. However, with respect to mathematics, we feel that it is crucial that the new Key Stage 4 qualifications place an appropriate degree of emphasis on the assessment of financial numeracy skills, in order to support the delivery of personal finance education in the curriculum more broadly.

Ultimately, we believe that such skills are essential to young people's future prospects, and that any Government which is serious about preparing young people for further or higher education, or employment, must ensure that sufficient opportunity exists for those skills to be built and developed. Therefore, we would fully support the proposals put forward by the APPG to achieve this, and not only advocate assessing financial numeracy skills at Key Stage 4, but also echo calls for statutory underpinning for personal finance education.

### **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:

14 b) Prevented from offering?

Comments:

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

Comments:

**Qualification supports progression of lower achievers**

16 Which groups of students do you think would benefit from a "Statement of Achievement" provided by their school?

Comments:

17 How should we ensure that all students who would benefit from a "Statement of Achievement" are provided with one?

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

Positive impact

Both

No impact

Comments:

18 b) If they have potential for an adverse impact, how can we reduce this?

Comments:

## 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:

20 How best can we prepare schools for the transition to these reformed, more rigorous qualifications?

Comments:

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

Up to 12 months     12 - 18 months     More than 18 months  
 Other

Comments:

### Languages

22 Should all languages in which there is currently a GCSE be included in our competition?

Yes     No     Not Sure

Comments:

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

Yes

No

Not Sure

Comments:

24 Given the potential number of new languages qualifications to be developed, should they be introduced to a later timescale than history and geography English Baccalaureate Certificates?

Yes

No

Not Sure

Comments:

**Post-16**

25 Should we expect post-16 institutions to be ready to provide English Baccalaureate Certificates at the same time as secondary schools?

Yes

No

Not Sure

Comments:

26 How best can we support post-16 institutions to prepare to provide English Baccalaureate Certificates?

Comments:

### 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:

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:

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 X**

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



No

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.**

Completed questionnaires and other responses should be sent to the address shown below by 10 December 2012

Send by post to:

Public Communications Unit  
Level 1 Area C  
Castle View House  
East Lane Runcorn  
WA7 2GJ

Send by e-mail to: [KS4QualReform.CONULTATION@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:KS4QualReform.CONULTATION@education.gsi.gov.uk)