



House of Commons
Education Committee

The English Baccalaureate

Fifth Report of Session 2010–12

Volume II

Additional written evidence

*Ordered by the House of Commons
to be published 19 July 2011*

The Education Committee

The Education Committee is appointed by the House of Commons to examine the expenditure, administration and policy of the Department for Education and its associated public bodies.

Membership at time Report agreed:

Mr Graham Stuart MP (*Conservative, Beverley & Holderness*) (Chair)
Neil Carmichael MP (*Conservative, Stroud*)
Nic Dakin MP (*Labour, Scunthorpe*)
Bill Esterson MP, (*Labour, Sefton Central*)
Pat Glass MP (*Labour, North West Durham*)
Damian Hinds MP (*Conservative, East Hampshire*)
Charlotte Leslie MP (*Conservative, Bristol North West*)
Ian Mearns MP (*Labour, Gateshead*)
Tessa Munt MP (*Liberal Democrat, Wells*)
Lisa Nandy MP (*Labour, Wigan*)
Craig Whittaker MP (*Conservative, Calder Valley*)

Powers

The Committee is one of the departmental select committees, the powers of which are set out in House of Commons Standing Orders, principally in SO No 152. These are available on the Internet via www.parliament.uk

Publications

The Reports and evidence of the Committee are published by The Stationery Office by Order of the House. All publications of the Committee (including press notices) are on the Internet at www.parliament.uk/education-committee

Committee staff

The current staff of the Committee are Kenneth Fox (Clerk), Elisabeth Bates (Second Clerk), Penny Crouzet (Committee Specialist), Benjamin Nicholls (Committee Specialist), Ameet Chudasama (Senior Committee Assistant), Kathryn Smith (Committee Assistant), Paul Hampson (Committee Support Assistant), and Brendan Greene (Office Support Assistant)

Contacts

All correspondence should be addressed to the Clerk of the Education Committee, House of Commons, 7 Millbank, London SW1P 3JA. The telephone number for general enquiries is 020 7219 6181; the Committee's e-mail address is educom@parliament.uk

List of additional written evidence

(published in Volume II on the Committee's website www.parliament.uk/education-committee)

1	Michael Tidd	Ev w1
2	Geoff Lucas, HMC	Ev w1
3	Independent Schools Religious Studies Association	Ev w2
4	Jonathan Morris, Headteacher, St Wilfrid's Catholic School	Ev w2
5	The Oratory School	Ev w3
6	Cllr Mrs K M Roche	Ev w4
7	Paul Allen	Ev w4
8	Andrew Strachan	Ev w5
9	Mr S G Bell, Headteacher, Paisley Catholic College	Ev w6
10	Cath Brookes, Deputy Principal, Burntwood School	Ev w7
11	Vincent Everett	Ev w7
12	Mr Brendan Hickey, Headteacher, St Thomas More Catholic School. Buxton, Derbyshire	Ev w8
13	John Keller, Principal, Guthlaxton College	Ev w9
14	Diocese of Nottingham Education Service and Tony Downey	Ev w9
15	Michael Wright, Headteacher, Leyland St Mary's Catholic High School	Ev w10
16	Richard Curtis, Headteacher, St Bede's School	Ev w10
17	James Reeve	Ev w11
18	Danny Brierley	Ev w12
19	Nick Taunt, Headteacher, Bishop Luffa, Chichester	Ev w13
20	Andrew R Middleton	Ev w14
21	Mervyn Apthorpe, Assistant Headteacher and Head of Technology, St Thomas More Science College	Ev w15
22	Miss Moira Kent, Head of RE, PSHCE, Careers, Stanley High School	Ev w15
23	Richard Wilkin, Headteacher, S Bede's Inter-Church School	Ev w16
24	Barnaby Lenon, Headteacher, Harrow School	Ev w16
25	Sharon Gladman, Head of Religious Studies, Religious Education at Dr Challoners High School	Ev w17
26	Damien Graham, Deputy Headteacher, All Saints' Catholic High School	Ev w17
27	Bernadette Mimmagh, Vice Principal, Mount Carmel RC Technology College for Girls	Ev w17
28	La Retraite Roman Catholic School	Ev w18
29	Philip Wood	Ev w19
30	Music Education Council	Ev w21
31	Miss Doreen Cronin	Ev w22
32	Martin Lapworth, former MFL Teacher	Ev w22
33	George Grainger	Ev w24
34	Professor John F Healey	Ev w25
35	David Sheppard, Headteacher, The Charter School	Ev w25; 26
36	Holte Visual and Performing Arts College	Ev w26
37	Council of University Classical Departments	Ev w27

38	Judith Mossman, Professor of Classics, University of Nottingham	Ev w27
39	Jonathan Kerr	Ev w28
40	Jane Crow, Headteacher, Cardinal Newman School, Luton	Ev w29
41	Chris Lord, Head of Classics, Chigwell School, Essex	Ev w29
42	Mrs Barbara Roden	Ev w30
43	Anna Karsten	Ev w31
44	ASDAN	Ev w31
45	Mrs Aston	Ev w35
46	Classics Department, Hereford Cathedral School	Ev w35
47	Mrs Susan Rutherford	Ev w36
48	Better History Group	Ev w37
49	Richard Vaughan	Ev w38
50	David Boothroyd	Ev w39
51	Andrea Lea	Ev w40
52	Dr Iain W Farrell, Director of Studies, Harrow School	Ev w41
53	The Royal Academy of Engineering	Ev w41
54	Jolyon English	Ev w42
55	Andrew Hampton	Ev w42
56	Denise Davies	Ev w43
57	Elizabeth Wolverson on behalf of the London Diocesan Board for Schools	Ev w43
58	T Hammond, Headteacher, Hagley Catholic High School	Ev w44
59	Cath Taylor	Ev w45
60	S A Kurt, Head of Classics, Dartford Grammar School	Ev w46
61	Rowan Stephenson	Ev w47; 48
62	Dominic Hodgkinson, Brentwood School	Ev w48
63	Ms E A Hayden, Christleton High School	Ev w49
64	Sheila Oviatt Ham	Ev w50
65	The Learning Machine	Ev w53
66	Sue Warrington, Headteacher, Chace Community School	Ev w55
67	Miriam Fairclough	Ev w56
68	Professor Judith Lieu, Chair of the Faculty Board, Faculty of Divinity, University of Cambridge	Ev w56
69	Ian Bangay, Head of North Yorkshire Music Service	Ev w57
70	Kevin Harley, Deputy Head, The Piggott School	Ev w58
71	NATRE	Ev w58
72	Geographical Association	Ev w62
73	AmiE	Ev w65
74	J M Kenny, Thomas Alleyne's High School	Ev w66
75	Ifs School of Finance	Ev w67
76	Barnardo's	Ev w68
77	John Connor	Ev w70
78	Fiona Hopkinson	Ev w71
79	National Society for Education in Art and Design	Ev w72
80	NASUWT	Ev w77
81	Felicity L Gibbons	Ev w82

82	New Visions for Education Group	Ev w83
83	Mr Afshar, Head of Business Studies, Wimbledon College	Ev w85
84	Mrs Marion Gibbs, Headmistress, James Allen's Girls' School	Ev w85
85	Staffordshire County Council	Ev w86
86	Peter Davies, University of Birmingham	Ev w89
87	Linda Cadier	Ev w90
88	All Hallows RC Business, Enterprise and Sports College	Ev w91
89	National Union of Teachers	Ev w92
90	Brian Murphy	Ev w94
91	Steve Jewell, The Littlehampton Academy	Ev w94
92	Little Ilford School	Ev w95
93	Danielle Fairey	Ev w95
94	Cardinal Newham Catholic School, Coventry	Ev w95
95	Mrs G A Byron	Ev w96
96	Mr A J Glover, Head Teacher, The Becket School	Ev w96
97	Association of University Professors and Heads of French	Ev w97
98	Department of Theology and Religious Studies, University of Bristol	Ev w98
99	Anne Teasdale	Ev w99
100	St John Fisher Catholic College	Ev w99
101	Dr Elizabeth Swinbank	Ev w100
102	Jill Taylor	Ev w101
103	Joe Hughes, Director of the Education Service, Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle Education Service	Ev w101
104	Dr Cain, School of Education, University of Southampton	Ev w102
105	Alderman Colin Cradock, Chair of the South Gloucestershire Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education; Margaret Murphy, South Gloucestershire Advisory Teacher for Religious Education; and Antony Evans, South Gloucestershire Adviser for Personal, Social, Health and Moral Education and Citizenship	Ev w103
106	The Field Studies Council	Ev w105
107	Senior Leadership Team at Sacred Heart of Mary Girls' School	Ev w107
108	Incorporated Society of Musicians in conjunction with Conservatoires UK	Ev w109
109	The Stockport Secondary Headteachers Consortium	Ev w112
110	School of Education, Birmingham City University	Ev w113
111	Democratic Life	Ev w115
112	Girls' Day School Trust	Ev w116
113	Cornwall Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE)	Ev w118
114	National Association of Music Educators (NAME)	Ev w120
115	Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA)	Ev w123
116	West Sussex SACRE	Ev w125
117	Humanities Association	Ev w125
118	Robert Benzie, Headteacher, Ansford School and Chair of the Somerset Association of Secondary Headteachers (SASH)	Ev w126
119	CILT, the National Centre for Languages	Ev w128
120	National Committee for 14–19 Engineering Education	Ev w134
121	Isabelle Jones, Head of Languages and Teacher of French and Spanish	Ev w136

122	Frances Hudson	Ev w137
123	Clare Stanhope	Ev w137
124	Tom Manly	Ev w138
125	University Council of Modern Languages (UCML)	Ev w139
126	Governing Body of St Joseph's RC High School	Ev w140
127	ConstructionSkills	Ev w141
128	Department of Theology and Religion, Durham University	Ev w144
129	Alice Charnley, PGCE student	Ev w144
130	The Girls' Schools Association (GSA)	Ev w145
131	Catherine Hynes, Head of Religious Education, The Champion School	Ev w146
132	Michael Loveland	Ev w147
133	The Independent School Association (ISA)	Ev w149
134	Don Henson, Council for British Archaeology	Ev w150
135	Economics, Business and Enterprise Association (EBEA)	Ev w151
136	Association for Citizenship Teaching	Ev w154
137	Park Community School	Ev w155
138	The Curriculum Foundation	Ev w156
139	BCS, The Chartered Institute for IT	Ev w161
140	The Royal Shakespeare Company	Ev w165
141	Ruth Robinson	Ev w167
142	The Joint Association of Classical Teachers Examinations Committee	Ev w168
143	Joanne Rawlings	Ev w169
144	157 Group	Ev w171
145	Ilford Ursuline High School	Ev w173
146	Education for Engineering	Ev w175
147	School of Education, University of Southampton	Ev w179
148	John Johnson, Headmaster, The Champion School	Ev w181
149	VAGA, The Visual Arts and Galleries Association	Ev w181
150	Institute of Education, University of London	Ev w182
151	Institute for Education Business Excellence	Ev w185
152	Cultural Learning Alliance (CLA)	Ev w189
153	The Chafford School RE Department	Ev w191
154	The Royal Society	Ev w191
155	Dr Angela Gallagher Brett and Liz Hudswell, Higher Education Subject Centre for Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies, University of Southampton	Ev w192
156	Paul Scarsbrook, Greg Tatton and Jason Warner	Ev w193
157	ADS	Ev w193
158	Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL)	Ev w195
159	Church of England Board of Education and the National Society	Ev w197
160	Henry Gowland, Vice Principal (Academic), The Kings Academy, Middlesbrough	Ev w199
161	Dormers Wells High School	Ev w200
162	Creative and Cultural Skills	Ev w201
163	Kent County Council	Ev w202
164	The National Association of Language Advisers (Nala)	Ev w204

165	Mr P Travis, Headmaster, St Thomas More School	Ev w205
166	The Association for Language Learning	Ev w207
167	Liberal Democrat Parliamentary Policy Committee for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport	Ev w210
168	Diploma Development Partnership for the Creative and Media Diploma by Skillset and Creative and Cultural Skills	Ev w211
169	Association of Teachers and Lecturers	Ev w213
170	Engage	Ev w217
171	Group for Education in Museums	Ev w217
172	Crafts Council	Ev w218
173	The Association of School and College Leaders, The Curriculum Foundation and Whole Education	Ev w220
174	Mr Pigott	Ev w223
175	Cardinal Wiseman Catholic Technology College, Birmingham	Ev w223
176	Rev Christopher Thomas	Ev w224
177	National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers	Ev w225
178	The British Psychological Society	Ev w227
179	University of Cambridge School Classics Project	Ev w 228
180	Mrs K Packham, Curriculum Leader for Religious Education, St Thomas More Catholic School, Crewe	Ev w232
181	Leeds SACRE	Ev w233
182	Sheffield Learning for Life Partnership	Ev w234
183	WJEC	Ev w236
184	William Musk	Ev w240
185	Arts Council England	Ev w240
186	Fr Timothy M Gardner OP, on behalf of The Catholic Education Service for England and Wales	Ev w242
187	Mr J Partridge, Curriculum Team Leader for ICT, The Minster School, Southwell	Ev w245
188	Design and Technology Association	Ev w245
189	Trinity College London	Ev w247
190	Naomi Hart	Ev w249
191	Nigel Ranson, Our Lady's Catholic High School	Ev w250
192	Don Henson, Heritage Alliance	Ev w250
193	Theatre for Young Audiences—UK Centre of ASSITEJ, the International Association of Theatre for Children and Young People	Ev w251
194	Cathrine Darnton	Ev w253
195	Links into Languages North West	Ev w254
196	Mrs J Rowell	Ev w257
197	Patricia M Slonecki, Head Teacher, St Catherine's Catholic School for Girls	Ev w257
198	Matt Buxton	Ev w258
199	Chislehurst and Sidcup Grammar School	Ev w260
200	Dr Christopher Ray, High Master, The Manchester Grammar School	Ev w261
201	Specialist Schools and Academies Trust (SSAT) National Headteacher Steering Group	Ev w262

202	Art and Design Education Team in the School of Education, Faculty of Education, Law and Social Sciences, Birmingham City University	Ev w263
203	National Secular Society	Ev w265
204	Mark Oliver	Ev w267
205	Independent Academies Association	Ev w268
206	Theresa Madden	Ev w271
207	Mr Brendan Comboy, Headteacher	Ev w273
208	Peter Robottom	Ev w273
209	Ofqual	Ev w274
210	Revd John Fellows	Ev w275
211	Steve Garlach	Ev w276
212	Gary Shilladay, Head of Latin, Dorothy Stringer School	Ev w277
213	Burntwood School for Girls	Ev w277
214	Mark Warren, Deputy Headteacher, Harrow Way Community School	Ev w278
215	Dr Irene Bishop and the Senior Leadership Team, St Saviour's and St Olave's School	Ev w278
216	Derek Jay	Ev w279
217	Penelope Summers	Ev w280
218	Cassandra Garbutt	Ev w280
219	Languages Group, University of Plymouth	Ev w281
220	Society of Italian Studies	Ev w281
221	Joan Oakes, Headmaster, Dartford Grammar School	Ev w282
222	Royal Opera House	Ev w283
223	Esri UK	Ev w284
224	Historical Association	Ev w286
225	Evidence submitted by 13 individuals from Durrington High School	Ev w289
226	Mark Billingham	Ev w290
227	Mr Flint	Ev w291
228	Laura Rutherford	Ev w292
229	Sarah Brooks	Ev w292
230	Mrs J Parker	Ev w294
231	St Marylebone Church of England School	Ev w295
232	Edge	Ev w298
233	Nower Hill High School	Ev w302
234	Sally Long	Ev w303
235	Council for Subject Associations	Ev w304
236	Association of British Orchestras	Ev w306
237	Simon Spencer	Ev w307
238	Chris Dunne, Headteacher, Langdon Park School	Ev w308
239	1994 Group	Ev w309
240	Mr Duncan Spalding, Aylsham High School	Ev w310
241	E-skills UK	Ev w313
242	Caroline O'Neill. Curriculum Leader for RE, Cardinal Heenan Catholic High School	Ev w314
243	Ron Herbert and Emma McMurrough, Garforth Academy	Ev w314
244	SLT of Albany Science College	Ev w314

245	British Humanist Association	Ev w316
246	BT	Ev w318
247	Religious Education Council of England and Wales	Ev w319
248	Association of University Lecturers in Religion and Education (AULRE)	Ev w322
249	Chatsmore Catholic High School	Ev w324
250	Graeme Smith	Ev w325
251	Paul Scutt	Ev w325
252	Letter to Michael Gove MP from Jon Wright, Chair, Lancashire Association of Secondary School Headteachers	Ev w326
253	Emily North	Ev w327
254	Mark Anstiss, Felpham Community College	Ev w328
255	The Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music	Ev w328
256	National Grid	Ev w328
257	National Association of Head Teachers	Ev w329
258	Template letter from 345 respondents as part of a campaign organised by the Incorporated Society of Musicians	Ev w331
259	Howard Goodall CBE	Ev w332
260	Adeyfield School	Ev w332
261	Jane Willis, Headteacher, Notre Dame High School	Ev w333
262	Chris Parkinson, Principal, Bosworth Community College	Ev w334
263	Mr P J Wickert, Headteacher, The Holy Trinity Church of England School	Ev w334
264	Mr A Sharpe, Headteacher, St Mary's Catholic School	Ev w335
265	Mr Stephen King, Director of Language College and MFL, Campion School and Language College	Ev w335
266	Jeannie Cohen and Peter Jones on behalf of Friends and Classics	Ev w336
267	Andrew Johnson, Deputy Head and Head of Classics, Ashville College	Ev w336
268	Trevor and Michele Pipe, Co-Principals, Hawley Place School	Ev w337
269	James Bovington, KS4 co-ordinator, Horsforth School, Leeds	Ev w337
270	Paul Shannon, Deputy Head Teacher, St Mary's School, Hereford	Ev w338
271	Robert Max	Ev w338
272	Jazz Services	Ev w338
273	Matthew Bright	Ev w339
274	United Church Schools Trust	Ev w339
275	Elizabeth Poulsen (Mrs L Bellow)	Ev w340
276	Jen Hartley	Ev w341
277	Dennis Drumm	Ev w342
278	Jane Ellison MP	Ev w342
279	SCORE	Ev w343
280	Royal Geographical Society (with IBG)	Ev w345
281	Letter to Michael Gove MP from Specialist Schools and Academies Trust, London region	Ev w349
282	OCR	Ev w350
283	Mrs S Bamforth	Ev w352
284	Hampshire Music Service	Ev w352
285	Anna Blakemore	Ev w354

286	Elisabeth Wigley, Deputy Director (Music Service), Merton Music Foundation	Ev w355
287	Fischer Family Trust	Ev w355
288	Cornwall's SACRE	Ev w359
289	Pearson	Ev w361
290	Anglo European School	Ev w 363
291	Email campaign received from 4 respondents	Ev w365
292	Email campaign received from 17 respondents	Ev w365
293	Stephen Pettitt, Director of Music, Benslow Music Trust	Ev w366
294	Email campaign received from 14 respondents	Ev w366
295	Dennis Wickens	Ev w367

List of unprinted evidence

The following written evidence has been reported to the House, but to save printing costs has not been printed and copies have been placed in the House of Commons Library, where they may be inspected by Members. Other copies are in the Parliamentary Archives (www.parliament.uk/archives), and are available to the public for inspection. Requests for inspection should be addressed to The Parliamentary Archives, Houses of Parliament, London SW1A 0PW (tel. 020 7219 3074; email archives@parliament.uk). Opening hours are from 9.30 am to 5.00 pm on Mondays to Fridays.

Paul Gardiner

Petitions from Queen Mary's High School

Susan Marsh

Stephanie Stacey

Cllr. Stan Pajak

Andrew Halls

Jane Trott

Monica Benson

Mark McGinn

Eddie Rowe

Erica Cattle

Nick Thornber

Mary-Grace Browning

Alison Henshaw

Charlotte Avery

Jude Merrill

Jean Dawes

Sarah Buckle

John Burrough

Martin Taylor

Gary Webber

Teresa Grant

Colin Nelson

Paul Saunders

Helen Hadley
Mike Seales
Samantha Styles
David Pritchard
Mr Sean Bullen
Muhammad Irshad
David Eyre
Ian Clayton
Cassie Murphy
Robyn Mann
Kate Banbridge
Tina Davies
Erica Lymer
Ian Wilkinson
Elizabeth Logan
David Dawes
Mary Apperley
Savannah Carney
Ellen Victor
Mr L Quigley
Theresa Cheetham
Zahra Akbar
Ross Purves
Elizabeth Lazarus
Mrs B J Holmes
Jessica Clough
Rob Carter

Written evidence

Written evidence submitted by Michael Tidd

THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE E-BAC

1. As a student, I attended a secondary school which offered an Integrated Humanities GCSE for all of its' students. I took the GCSE being aware that my intentions to teach at primary-school level in the future would be aided by a broader education than study of either separate History or Geography would allow. This was unquestionably the most appropriate choice and has proven as much. However, under the E-Bac rules, I would be unwilling to make such a choice and rather than being offered the broader education proposed would actually have had to narrow my options. Furthermore, I suspect that such an option may have ceased to be available to me as schools feel forced to teach to the requirements of the E-Bac rather than to the needs of their students.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE E-BAC FOR PUPILS, SCHOOLS AND EMPLOYERS

2. In my role as a Head of Year in the final year of a middle-deemed-primary school I work closely with secondary schools.

3. In early February 2011 I was contacted by the primary liaison leader at one of our receiving secondary schools, which asked for my thoughts and plans in relation to the E-Bac. Since my school is a middle school, our oldest students are only in the first year of Key Stage 3.

4. Clearly at this stage the National Curriculum requires that students study a full spectrum of subjects at an appropriate level. As such, I do not see that the E-Bac should have any effect on the curriculum offered to our students. However, it is clear that such concerns are being raised in secondary schools which raises questions about the implications of the E-Bac for students in years leading up to the study of GCSE.

RECOMMENDATIONS

5. The rapid and retrospective introduction of the E-Bac should be halted immediately until such time as it has been possible to consult on an appropriate range of subjects to be included in the E-Bac, or on the necessity for such a "qualification" at all.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Geoff Lucas, HMC

Thank you for inviting views on the English Baccalaureate (E-Bac). We have just written to the Minister for Schools about the second of your areas of interest (the choice of subjects included in the E-Bac). What follows is based on what we have said to Nick Gibb.

1. We understand the government's aspiration to encourage breadth of achievement across a range of academic subjects at GCSE. We particularly welcome the encouragement this will give to schools to offer a modern foreign language to pupils who can benefit from it's study at this level.
2. However, together with other independent Heads associations and maintained sector colleagues in ASCL, we would urge the government to allow for the inclusion of Religious Studies, Classical Civilisation and English Literature in the "humanities" category.
3. As our schools do not have to follow the current National Curriculum science programmes of study, a considerable number of our students choose to do just one or two separate sciences at GCSE. We would therefore ask for achievement in any one science GCSE to count for the science requirement.
4. We would also ask that encouragement might be given, if not through the E-Bac, then by other means, to the study of a creative arts subject (interpreted flexibly). The government's review of the National Curriculum might provide a natural context for this.
5. Without greater flexibility in the content, the real achievements of many pupils and schools (both independent and state) will not be properly recognised in this new performance measure. The exclusion, this year, of Edexcel's IGCSEs (which are not yet accredited) also meant that the true achievement of many independent sector pupils and schools was not properly recognised in this year's performance tables. We hope this particular shortcoming will be addressed in time for next year's tables.
6. Analysis of data from the summer 2010 GCSE examinations taken by pupils in HMC schools shows that, had Edexcel's IGCSE in mathematics and English and any two separate sciences been counted, 75% of these pupils would have achieved the E-Bac.

We hope you find these comments helpful.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Independent Schools Religious Studies Association

The ISRSA supports and represents the work of Religious Education/Studies teachers across the independent sector of schools.

1. We have been distressed to see that our subject is not considered comparable to History and Geography, important as those are. We are at the forefront of addressing community cohesion, spiritual and moral development and embedded critical thinking skills, and are, of course, compulsory to age 16. We are a part of the basic curriculum and for some years now have featured naturally in QCA and DCSF curriculum planning and development, as we should for our size and status—28% of Y11 students took GCSE Religious Studies last year, and a further, higher percentage took the subject at short course.

2. You say earlier in the same White Paper:

4.3 We envisage schools and teachers taking greater control over what is taught in schools, innovating in how they teach and developing new approaches to learning. We anticipate that in a school system where academy status is the norm and more and more schools are moving towards greater autonomy, there will be much greater scope for teachers to design courses of work which will inspire young minds. But there will still be a need for a national benchmark.

This paragraph indicates a right and left handed approach: to be given this greater autonomy and then to be more rigorously prescribed what counts as a Humanity is surely oxymoronic. If schools are really to be more autonomous then pupils choices cannot be as prescribed as the White Paper, and January's revised league tables, propose. Religious Studies must be given comparable treatment as a Humanity.

3. Perhaps ingenuously, Tom Goldman of the DfE, in a response to a letter we sent him in December as an early comment on the White Paper, said "it does not mean that we wish to restrict their choices or opportunities." That is exactly what the E-Bac does by pushing schools into mass entry History/Geography (noting also the absence of any arts, creative or technical subjects) and inevitably limiting choices very often to almost zero. Mr Goldman then refers to the "encourage[ment]" to study non-E-Bac subjects alongside, but in a curriculum which now must include a serious amount of science, Maths, English, a Language, a Humanity, and then PSHE/Citizenship, PE, religious education (non-examination) in KS4, what time is there for other options? Even ICT? (Goldman, 28 January).
4. Michael Gove has already referred to the E-Bac subjects as "the types of qualifications that open doors to the best universities" it is hard not to feel a strong political agenda here. Whilst the desire to ensure that education has a focus on academically rigorous qualifications is itself laudable, as is within that the desire to ensure young people are not misled into "soft" subjects that carry little clout in the big world, the real problem here is a rushed and ill-considered proposal.
5. Adding or subtracting subjects to or from this short-list cannot be the way forward. It is misguided and foolish, not fitting with educational reforms nor the practice of schools. A wiser course may be to identify the several learning areas of the curriculum, each of which may have several good subjects of study, and draw the core from these, including a practical/artistic/creative group. In this way we could recognise student potential better, give value to the hard work of teachers and to their subjects, and honour the varying abilities of young people.
6. The independent sector has mixed views on the E-Bac, and already it has not found favour amongst many schools, who realise, for example, that the IGCSE may be preferable to the GCSE, or prefer the Middle Years' programme of the IB. The E-Bac is closing doors of opportunity and limiting innovation and development: it is time to start again.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Jonathan Morris, Headteacher, St Wilfrid's Catholic School

1. The past 10 years or so has seen the imperative for student learning to be personalised. For this read "courses appropriate for a young person's skills, interests, aptitude and future aspiration".

2. In some regards this has "allowed" less stringent examination courses to be introduced and studied and whilst this presents issues in determining a school's performance it should not prejudice against ensuring the "right students" are on the "right courses".

3. Students who are not destined for Higher Education need to be able to access a "suite" of qualifications that will develop their qualities and knowledge accordingly. Schools must have flexibility and freedom to design such pathways.

4. The English Baccalaureate is currently a measure of a School's effectiveness against a regimented "one size fits all" criteria. If "Headteachers know best" it is disappointing to essentially be directed towards a narrowing of opportunity dictated by national Government. Not in keeping with "Big Society ... Small Government".

5. To study a language for examination is often an excellent choice for a young person. To study Geography and History is to suggest that all children follow such a course cannot be correct.

6. The English Baccalaureate does not force a student towards a pre-determined programme of study but it is without question that with parental choice—ascending league tables are a critical measure. I am completely supportive of such tables but would urge a different means of constructing them.

7. I accept that some courses have been accredited at commensurate levels to GCSEs where the programme of study is less exacting. This is easy to remedy by addressing the accreditation comparisons. In doing so one would be addressing also the measure of a school against the progress made by each child, ie CVA.

8. I am aware that CVA is discredited as a measure of school improvement; however again, I believe this is only because the input data is flawed. If my points in point 7 were adopted then CVA could be the measure used and preferred. Surely the progress a child makes in a school is the “true” measure of its effectiveness as an institution.

9. At the very least the English Baccalaureate must be widened to include RE. As we strive to accept and embrace people of other cultures, faiths and backgrounds and ensure they can equally access our society then understanding of other religions and the basic tenets of our Christian belief must be recognised as being valuable. “I have learnt so much in GCSE RE about Christianity, so many of your beliefs are very similar to ours” Year 10 Muslim girl.

10. The English Baccalaureate is currently too narrow. It ignores the value of the Arts, practical subjects and RE. If the weighting of particular courses were addressed we could retain a broad and dynamic curriculum and truly measure how effective a school is.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by The Oratory School

1. The use of the E-Bac measurement, in addition to the other measurements (eg 5 A-C grades, 5 A-C grades plus Maths and English), is a sensible proposal, and strengthens the hand of schools like ours in promoting Languages and Sciences. This upholds coherence of the curriculum, rather than the fragmentation which is a danger when a “free for all” on subject choices is permitted. We give it our general support.

2. It is to be hoped that the various International GCSEs, for example from Edexcel, will be recognized as valid qualifications from the point of view of these measurements. It has already been shown that private schools like ours will put the need to choose appropriate qualifications for our pupils ahead of the wish to massage the league tables. However, in the interests of transparency these qualifications should be admitted, so that our achievements clearly appear in the data.

3. The rationale for requiring a “humanity” is not entirely clear. Although these subjects are desirable, it isn’t clear that, at GCSE level, they should take precedence over the choice of a subject like music or fine art, both of which have academic challenge. The rationale for a humanity should be made clearer, if it is to be maintained.

4. Certainly, range of subjects counting as a humanity should be widened beyond History and Geography, to encompass Classical Civilization, Religious Studies, and similar subjects. A clear view of what a humanity is, and why it is sufficiently important to be required, is needed.

5. **Most importantly**, from the point of view of a faith-based school, is the position of Religious Studies. Like the majority of Catholic schools, we require our pupils to study RS to GCSE, as a core subject. Not permitting it to be counted as a humanity would be disappointing and unjust, also conveying the message that RS isn’t a proper academic subject on the same level as history—an impression that RS teachers have been working to counteract for many years. Further, given we require RS from our pupils, we would be resistant to requiring them to study a further “humanity” in all cases—although many pupils will do so—since it would excessively restrict subject choice. It is important that there should be some adequate choice, so that the curriculum takes into account the needs and aptitudes of individual pupils.

6. There is some danger that, with six subjects given priority, schools will reduce the number of courses on offer to pupils to give precedence to grades in these six. Will we see some schools only offering six GCSEs to pupils, with the consequent narrowing of the curriculum? A measure of achievement which recognized achievement in eight GCSEs, to include certain subjects but allowing freedom in the others, might be less subject to this unintentional abuse.

7. It is unclear at present what use of the data, for individual pupils, is likely to be made by universities and other destinations for school leavers. Governmental advice on this point would be welcome.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Cllr Mrs K M Roche

1. I offer thoughts on the choice of subjects to be included in the E-BAC, I find it difficult in a modern world that design and technology, specifically the study of food could be missed out of the selected subjects to be included in the E-BAC.

2. My evident pre-teaching career draws your attention to why I feel the study of design and technology is so important. The UK should be proud to list world leading food retailers as a powerful aspect of its economy. An industry which bases its success on the product and technical designers it employs in all areas.

3. So few subjects taught in school can be directly seen in action in the UK every day, food can be.

4. Not just a subject for the future, DT is a powerful platform to support literacy and numeracy teaching, students see the importance of these skills in real life situations.

5. Certainly in my school which has a high level of students whom English is a second language, the platform of Food is an equalising place where command of a single language is not always the primary indicator of success.

6. Please do not mix up the best intensions of a successful education with the narrow minded belief that traditional academic subjects are the only way to a successful life. One shoe really doesn't fit all. I am state educated in a non-selective comprehensive, I am dyslexic, I have a degree and have successfully conducted myself in a highly pressured commercial world. I changed course after my children and re-educated myself as a DT teacher. It has been food that has been the passion and drive to all my success both in education, in my career and now again back in education. I hope I can encourage another generation to follow this exciting pathway.

7. If it is real jobs for life and successful outcomes for all students. The shaping of the future employees of the food industry, Tesco as an example, being the largest private employer in the UK, sorely out way the ridiculing notion held by universities that Food and related subjects are an easy option.

8. I would encourage you to experience DT in action before you complete you deliberations. I would welcome future opportunity to discuss this matter with you.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Paul Allen

I have a few short comments on the proposed changes to education in this country. The white paper seems to suggest that subjects that are not included in the national curriculum may nevertheless remain as compulsory subjects; they will simply be taken out of the straight jacket control of the national curriculum. I refer to the following sections of the review:

THE REVIEW OF THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM. REMIT FOR THE REVIEW. CONTEXT:

2. It is important to distinguish between the National Curriculum and the wider school curriculum. The National Curriculum was originally envisaged as a guide to study in key subjects, which would give parents and teachers confidence that students were acquiring the knowledge necessary at every level of study to make appropriate progress. As it has developed, the National Curriculum has come to cover more subjects, prescribe more outcomes and take up more school time than originally intended. It is the Government's intention that the National Curriculum be slimmed down so that it properly reflects the body of essential knowledge all children should learn and does not absorb the overwhelming majority of teaching time in schools. Individual schools should have greater freedom to construct their own programmes of study in subjects outside the National Curriculum and develop approaches to learning and study that complement it.

- beyond that core, to allow teachers the freedom to use their professionalism and expertise to help all children realise their potential.

The National Curriculum should set out only the essential knowledge all children should acquire and leave teachers to decide how to teach this most effectively and to design a wider school curriculum that best meets the needs of their pupils.

It should embody our cultural and scientific inheritance; the best our past and present generations have to pass on to the next.

For any subjects that are not recommended to be National Curriculum subjects in the future, the review will advise on whether there should be non-statutory programmes of study available at particular key stages, and/or whether those subjects—or any aspects of them—should nevertheless be compulsory but with what is taught being decided at local level.

The Guardian published alarming details of how some schools have reacted to this; reacting by cutting subjects such as music, art and other subjects from next September. I don't think that this is the intention of the government or of the Education Minister; the text above suggests that I am correct. There is a vast amount

that could be written on why so many well qualified and academic individuals would react in this way, but here is not the place for that. I would however urge you to consider the quality of communication that you are using. The text of the national curriculum review suggests an opportunity to reinvigorate many of those areas (specifically within the arts in my opinion) that this country has a world wide reputation for. Yet the reaction is to batten down the hatches for yet another assault on the standing of schools within the league tables. If you remove subjects from statute and consideration for quality of education what are schools going to do? Quite simply, if they are under pressure they will drop them in favour of more time to improve on those subjects that are measured. Doing this has very little to do with what is best for the children that we teach in reality, and therefore little to do with our economic future. There is a saying about being rich; "Look after the pennies, and the pounds will take care of themselves." Education at the moment is not about children, it is about league tables in the guise of ensuring our economic standing in the future. You and, as a consequence schools, are worrying about the pounds, whilst the pennies are squandered.

If your intentions are (or indeed are not) that the wider educational areas such as art and music (plus much more) be freed from the constraints of the national curriculum, but nevertheless preserved as important elements in a rounded education, then please speak plainly about this. If your desire is that these subjects should survive then you need to put into place with legislation that ensures that they do. Left to schools they will simply go for the league tables (so would I if I were a head teacher). In my view if that is allowed to go on challenged it will signal a sad indictment of the state of education in this country.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted from Andrew Strachan

1. I write to submit my view on the English Baccalaureate as introduced by the government. I am not in principle against some idea of core subjects that a government may seek to measure in some way, but I think the present list is inappropriate. The "5 A-C GCSE's including Maths and English" measure was very narrow but did not generate much controversy, mainly, I think because there was a reasonable spread of attainment across schools. The E-Bac however causes a chasm between Independent and Grammar schools and the others. This may shorten somewhat in years to come, but not significantly I think.

2. The reason it will not narrow significantly is not because there is a conspiracy among teachers to deny to the less privileged an academic education, but because years of underfunding have made it hard to focus on "harder" academic subjects (requiring smaller class sizes etc) and because headteachers have been encouraged to play the system, having vocational subjects as equivalents to GCSE and playing up their 5 A-C profile by diverting resources into these "softer" subjects.

3. The E-Bac has been good in that it has highlighted the unwelcome drift to vocational subjects, but in its present form it will only emphasise a wide social chasm and prompt headteachers to revolt against the whole concept (as Archbishop Sentamu Academy in Hull seem to be doing as I write).

4. Therefore I would urge the government to rethink the E-Bac and widen its frame of reference. My main contention is that it should include Religious Education as part of the list of Humanities subjects. I have been an RE teacher for almost 20 years and have experience in four different types of state schools so I feel I can speak with some authority. Mr Gove's parliamentary reply to Caroline Nokes on 7 February 2011 showed quite clearly that he believes inclusion in the E-Bac will increase numbers doing GCSE. He said History and Geography "will at last see an increase". Implicit in this statement is a recognition that RE, by being left out of the E-Bac, will at least not see an increase and will almost certainly see a decline. NATRE's recent survey of 800 secondary schools appears clearly to support this (<http://www.natre.org.uk/news.php>). Including RE as part of the Humanities section of the E-Bac would not mean that History and Geography would be in decline as a consequence. There would still be a sustained future for both.

5. Mr Gove is no fool and will know that nothing stands still in education. If something is not supported it will wither. To simply re-state the law is to fail to give support and to give the green light to a withering of RE. When asked the original question by Ms Nokes (<http://www.parliamentlive.tv/Main/Player.aspx?meetingId=7541&wfs=true> at 14:58 and 30 seconds) he clearly reads from a text, showing that he wanted to be protected by the letter of the law and not make himself vulnerable to comment by wandering from this text.

6. Religious Education will, as Ms Nokes suggested, decline if the academic basis of the subject is compromised. The great success in the past 15 years is the introduction of GCSE (short course) to give meaning in our results-obsessed world to Key Stage 4 study. Without a flourishing full GCSE nationally, the numbers doing the short course will be affected and more Headteachers will be tempted to do away with Key Stage 4 explicit RE altogether. I know of some who have done this already. The law can be catered for by arguing that RE material is covered through other subjects implicitly and even if Ofsted may comment, some Headteachers may not consider it enough of a problem to derail the intentions of management.

7. I believe the government is aware of this, is happy to let it happen, but has not thought through the consequences. I get the feeling that the ideology behind this drift is the same as that which drives the "Big Society"—to sponsor local initiatives and not have an overall national theme. So RE will be allowed to drift,

have isolated pockets of excellence, with the odd faith schools going off and doing their own thing, and in a general situation where it shrinks to being taught merely Key Stage 3 and even then probably catered for by getting specialists in other areas to stand in and help out. It's a short step from there to oblivion.

8. Mr Cameron in his recent speech on multiculturalism said the following: "I believe a genuinely liberal country does much more; it believes in certain values and actively promotes them. Freedom of speech, freedom of worship, democracy, the rule of law, equal rights regardless of race, sex or sexuality. It says to its citizens, this is what defines us as a society: to belong here is to believe in these things". A "Big Society" approach of allowing local communities to develop values, does not sit right with this positive statement. The government's National Citizen Scheme may well help to promote these things, but all I know of at present is a local football club offering a three week activity in the summer holiday costing more than pocket money—is that it? Surely he cannot ignore the role that schools have to play? Schools can affect the whole of the next generation and the role of RE in fostering the positive values he speaks of, is so crucial. Tackling issues of religious prejudice, social rights, racism and many related social, ethical and philosophical issues have been at the heart of the subject for many years. There is a great misapprehension. RE is not fundamentally unpopular with students or parents. They recognise the positive role it plays in generating positive social values.

9. Part of RE's difficulty has been in communicating its role and the answer to the question "What is RE for?" There is no doubt that things can still be improved. RE's role has evolved in the last 50 years and continues to change. I think there is a strong case for a National Curriculum for RE and to include in that a prescription for studying secular beliefs such as atheism and Humanism so that RE reflects the national picture more readily, but this is an argument for another time. What worries me is that we will lose momentum and be faced in five to 10 years with a situation where it is too late to retrieve the subject.

10. Within RE in the last 15 years, the philosophical strand has grown steadily. First at A Level and then at GCSE and more recently at Key Stage 3. Young people are interested in philosophical and ethical questions and I believe this must form that core of the subject's identity. The freedoms that David Cameron so cherishes are things that religious and philosophical tradition in this country have fought for and developed over hundreds of years of our history. Every day in the nation's classrooms, it is RE that is communicating these values to young people.

11. The world is changing fast. Not only do we have many different religions within our country that young people need to be aware of (and I notice that even the English Defence League, which you would expect to defend "Englishness", has accepted a multireligious definition, something the British National Party would run a mile from) but the rise of India and China will mean that the cultural values of these countries, including their religious and philosophical outlooks, will be much more noticeable on the world stage. If we are to take our place in this world, we must know how to read and understand these changes.

12. If the government does not include RE in the E-Bac, the subject will inevitably face decline and the country will bring up a generation that is more prone to ignorance and prejudice. Instead of ignoring the issue and hoping it will go away, the government needs to be proud of what RE does for and help it to develop into an exciting future for the subject and for the country. There is a great deal that I would commend in a recent speech by Baroness Varsi especially where she says: "*So now that we have traced the rise of religious illiteracy, and explained why this is happening, the question now is what can we do about it? ... First and foremost, we need political leadership. Government has got to show that it gets it.*" I urge the government to reconsider and include RE in the Humanities section of the English Baccalaureate.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Mr S G Bell, Headteacher, Paisley Catholic College

1. I welcome the concept of the English Bac which provides a broad and balanced curriculum of an academic standard, highlighting the importance of key subjects in a child's education. As Headteacher of a College with high academic standards, I believe that it provides a suitable benchmark to measure success against. I understand other Headteachers who express concern that the qualification may not be suitable for their setting, however, as long as it remains one of the measures of success in the league tables, I do not believe that these arguments should cause too much concern.

2. The choice of subjects is contentious and I am extremely unhappy with the omission of RE. RE is a humanity which involves the skills of analysis, synthesis and reasoning. It engages pupils in deep thinking about ethics, tolerance and social cohesion. OFSTED frequently comment about effective discipline in Catholic schools and, I believe, this reflects the teaching of RE. Having worked in a community school myself, I recognise the advantage of teaching RE and the morality that it encompasses. Unfortunately, I fear that the omission of RE in the Bac will lead to many Heads further reducing curriculum time for the subject. This is a particular concern given Mr Cameron's recent statement about the failure of Britain's multi-cultural society. Indeed, the history of this country is embedded in RE and future lessons could be learned from religious education.

3. Employers will benefit from the Bac as they will have a genuine academic benchmark to measure employees against. I sincerely hope that the Bac will remove the endless desire for vocational/academic parity.

They are different routes, both with equally commendable value, but there is no need to attempt to make vocational qualifications academically rigorous.

4. As an international comparator, I believe that the Bac provides an easy to comprehend qualification which allows benchmarking to take place whilst I also believe that it is essential that vocational qualifications continue as they are extremely valuable for some students.

5. I would suggest that there is an unequivocal case for Religious Education being included under the umbrella of Humanities and respectfully request that the government re-consider the present proposals.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Cath Brookes, Deputy Principal, Burntwood School

I am writing to express our concern, as a school committed to the importance of Religious Studies and to excellence in education in general, over the proposals for the new English baccalaureate not to include Religious Studies. Traditionally and practically Religious Studies has been accounted for under the brief of Humanities, but the present government are excluding Religious Studies from the English baccalaureate qualification, classing only Geography and History in this manner. I have already expressed my concern in writing to several Bishops and have received letters of strong support from both the Bishop of London and the Bishop of Manchester who are both most concerned about this matter and have been taking it further in areas within their purview. Our two classes of A level students discussed the matter with Professor Peter Vardy on 11 February 2011, who shares their feelings of indignation at the omission of Religious Studies from the classification as a "Humanity" subject.

There are many worrying points about RS being excluded from the proposed EB. As the new Baccalaureate will be part of a school's overall evaluation, schools will be under pressure to expend already stretched resources on subjects which will count under the baccalaureate classification and lead to positive inspection and public judgement, through channels such as OFSTED reports and League Tables. Although all schools will still be obliged by law to teach Religious Studies in some form, if it does not become a priority subject in the new English Baccalaureate, schools will not be inclined to put their increasingly limited resources into the subject as it will now not be one of the subjects upon which schools will be judged. RS has been a legal requirement since 1870, but from the 1960's this injunction was flagrantly flouted and will be again. The most recent reporting on this issue in the *Times Educational Supplement* (Friday 4 February 2011) confirms this concern as schools once again are prepared to disregard the law on teaching RE, in favour of more "academic" subjects covered by the English Baccalaureate.

There has been much publicity, recently regarding the popularity of Religious Studies within schools. It is now one of the top 10 most popular subjects at GCSE level in England and as the UK becomes increasingly multicultural and diverse, it is even more important that good Religious Studies enables young people to better understand the world in which they live and ultimately, to create a culture of understanding, tolerance and appreciation of the country's diversity. In the light of public debate on the future of multiculturalism in Britain, it is now more than ever a time for young people to be formally educated in a subject which still incites prejudice and ill-informed comment from those who ought to know better.

When I began teaching Religious Studies in 1983, it was informally known as the "Cinderella" of subjects: forgotten, undervalued, ignored and mistreated. It has been my pleasure to see that over the past 28 years, Cinderella has been allowed to go to the ball, and become an exciting, relevant and popular subject amongst students of all abilities. Short course RS has breathed new life into the academic study of religions and A level groups fill up with students both aware of and involved in the pursuit of a multi faith country that works. If Religious Studies is not classified as a Humanity for the English baccalaureate, I and many others will see Cinderella sent back to the kitchen, and we will be taking a backward step away from the goal of a united country that works together in appreciating and celebrating difference within a cohesive whole.

Please add our voices to the many that you will no doubt hear from, to ask you to review the decision on the exclusion of RS from the English Baccalaureate.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Vincent Everett

1. I was initially positive to have government support for languages. The country can cope by employing foreign nationals, but our young people lose out. In our school, Senior Management immediately took it very seriously, and started planning to increase capacity in KS4 languages over the next two to three years. Keen to make sure our pupils have a broad and balanced curriculum and are not disadvantaged compared to those in other schools.

2. The retrospective publication of the statistics changed all that. It is now seen as a political gesture that does not have sustained educational intent behind it. It is not being seen as a serious initiative that needs us to put in place planning and changes.

3. This is reflected in the response from heads in other schools, where publishing the statistics retrospectively has led to the attitude described in the TES on Friday 11 February, where the E-Bac is being ignored and rejected.

4. The choice of subjects is odd, especially the exclusion of Applied French GCSE from last year's statistics. The reason there is no new Applied French GCSE is because the new "mainstream" Edexcel GCSE in French is built to a large extent on the old Applied GCSE. The exclusion is based on prejudice against the "applied" concept rather than knowledge of the subject.

5. The government can rescue the situation if it becomes clear that there is support from employers and universities for the E-Bac. We know that even though a GCSE in a language is not a formal requirement for most universities, it is something that universities do look at when selecting applicants. Transparency in this and clear messages to pupils and parents is vital.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Mr Brendan Hickey, Headteacher: St Thomas More Catholic School, Buxton, Derbyshire

I write as a secondary Headteacher and as a parent.

I am in favour of giving young people a wide and varied curriculum and I can understand and support the principle of the new English Baccalaureate. However, I have a few concerns.

Firstly, I agree with the move to get more students studying a modern foreign language. However, it should be understood that our system of optional subjects in this country means that schools will be judged next August on decisions made by students in March 2009.

I became Headteacher in January 2009. Our last cohort of year 11 students produced some of the best results ever. 75% of them achieved 5+ A*-C grades including English and Maths which, looking at progress, puts us second out of the 47 high schools in the local authority. We also had 42% achieving three or more A* or A grades: a fantastic achievement. These students chose their optional subjects in March 2008—before I started as head at the school.

In March 2008, only two pupils chose to take a language. To accommodate the two students, they took this subject as an additional option, having lessons after school and at lunchtime during their two years at Key Stage 4. They did very well in the end both achieving grade Bs. You might say that it was a reflection of the quality of teaching that only two chose to take the subject, and I might agree with you. However, since I became headteacher, we have had a new head of department and things are looking more healthy. Ministers must realise that there is at least a two year turn around for improvements like this to have an impact. In some schools it is a three year cycle with students making decisions in year 8. I do not want to say to the current year 11 (or even the current year 10s) you now have to do GCSE French.

In addition to this, I am not convinced that "forcing" students to study a modern language is the right way to achieve the outcome we as a country want. I want more students to study a foreign language, but I want them to study it because they want to study it and value it. The English Baccalaureate has been described by Lord Hill to me directly at a recent conference as one of many measures for a school. I can live with this, although I believe that comparing schools based on optional subjects is wrong. However, I can sense from the press that Heads will feel increasingly pressurised into making a modern language compulsory. This contradicts the pseudo-freedom that Heads have supposedly been given. I am also concerned that some of the universities are considering making it a requirement for new entrants. Surely it should depend on the course being applied for. There are many world leaders, in many different fields who do not speak another language. To deny a talented mathematician, for example, from studying in one of the top universities because he/she doesn't speak another language would be a retrograde step.

I would also like to make the point that achieving a GCSE in a language does not mean they can speak fluently in the language. I would want educationalists to consider other language qualifications which recognise greater practical uses of the language. Being an engineer working in Germany, it would be useful to be able to speak fluently in German. A GCSE will not mean this is the case.

The second issue concerns the choice of subjects to be included in the English Baccalaureate. One of our biggest exports in this country is Music and Entertainment. The quality of Art in my own school is exceptional. I think of the quote attributed to Churchill when his finance minister said Britain should cut arts funding to support the war effort. His response: "Then what are we fighting for?"

Mr Gove has said that the subjects came out through discussions with some of the top universities. This is not a big enough consultation group.

I am also very unhappy that Religious Studies GCSE seems not to have been included in the initial list of qualifying humanities subjects.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by John Keller, Principal, Guthlaxton College

The purpose and benefits of the E-Bac and its value as a measure of pupil and school performance

1. For any set of choices, there are costs as well as benefits. I would ask the committee to consider the “suffering costs”¹ as described by (Hattie 2009).

2. For me the issue is not that the E-Bac is valuable or not, this issue is diversionary. So much time will be spent on the content and less on the context and the purpose. The E-Bac will not drive a more balanced curriculum—it will drive a narrower focus. The E-Bac will not encourage flexibility and many students will be driven through it rather than with it. Teachers will resent the hypocrisy of freedom within greater prescription from without. Not a representative set of students will embrace it; as such it will be a limited measure for an “elite” population.

The choice of subjects included in the E-Bac;

3. So far the choice has revealed the personality of the Secretary for Education rather than a forward looking principles based on *educare*.

4. The E-Bac is a political measure not an educational one. The subjects will not meet the needs for all of the students in England so it is not a baccalaureate nor is it “E”.

The implications of the E-Bac for pupils, schools and employers;

5. Some students will thrive—the same set of staff and students who will thrive no matter what subjects are chosen for the E-Bac.

6. School leaders that dare to challenge the premise behind the E-Bac will be more successful; they will have more “successful” staff and students.

7. When you read the last sentence ensure that you have the same definition of success that I have. My students have to live with the legacy of their experience—for them and me, it is not enough to get an E-Bac it is about their ability to reach their highest potential.

8. The E-Bac alone will not provide this and in fact, I believe, the drive towards an E-Bac ameliorates against true success. Some of the nations we envy in the PICS studies, eg Hong Kong, have moved away from such prescription to more innovative, creative and yet, more challenging, curriculum aspirations.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Diocese of Nottingham Education Service and Tony Downey

In the Catholic sector we strongly share the Government’s belief that schools “should offer all pupils a broad range of academic subjects to age 16”, and give a welcome to the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) as one of the ways in which that aspiration may be promoted.

We also further recognise that “getting good passes in rigorous GCSEs or iGCSEs” will be key in ensuring that the EBacc commands the respect enjoyed by other baccalaureate systems that deliver a broad educational curriculum. However, we are very surprised and concerned that Religious Studies GCSE seems not to have been included in the initial list of qualifying humanities subjects.

As this year’s very useful Ofsted report (*Transforming Religious Education: Religious Education in Schools 2006–09*) pointed out, the quality of RE/RS teaching in English schools varies considerably (especially where teachers are non-specialists and short-course GCSE courses are followed). However in Catholic Voluntary Aided schools teaching of RE tends to be of a high standard and almost all pupils are entered for the two-year full GCSE following the “Catholic Christianity” option offered by the examination boards. Moreover, in such schools RE is well resourced, rigorously inspected and normally taught by specialists.

In RE pupils have the opportunity to engage not only with the most profound metaphysical questions concerning human existence and the nature of reality, but also with the most pressing ethical problems of our day. RE itself is a broad based humanity, demanding knowledge and skills in history, textual criticism, anthropology, ethics, philosophy and theology. Thus it seems aptly suited to being part of any qualification

¹ Pg 255, Hattie, J, “Visible Learning” (2009) Routledge.

which seeks to ensure that our pupils receive a genuinely broad education. We therefore urge the government to ensure that RE be regarded as a humanity for the purposes of the English Baccalaureate.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Michael Wright, Headteacher, Leyland St Mary's Catholic High School

1. I would like to submit the following views to the Education Select Committee, following a request for submissions in response to the introduction of the English Baccalaureate. This would be awarded to pupils who achieved the benchmark of good GCSE grades in English, Maths, Sciences, a Modern or Ancient Language and a Humanity.

2. While I agree with the principle of offering pupils a broad education, I do take issue with the fact that at present a Humanity is so very narrowly defined as History or Geography. As a faith school, all of our students follow Religious Education (RE) to GCSE and I am surprised that this subject appears to be sidelined in comparison with History and Geography. The idea that RE is already compulsory and therefore should be excluded appears to be a flawed argument, considering the majority of the other components of the Baccalaureate are also compulsory at present (English, Mathematics and Science).

3. In RE pupils have the opportunity to engage not only with the most profound questions concerning human existence and the nature of reality, but also with the most pressing ethical problems of our day including topics such as genetic research, abortion and marriage and divorce. RE itself is a broad based humanity, demanding knowledge and skills in history, textual criticism, ethics, philosophy and theology. Thus it seems ideally suited to being part of any qualification which seeks to ensure that our pupils receive a genuinely broad education. I would therefore urge the government to ensure that RE be regarded as a humanity for the purposes of the English Baccalaureate.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Richard Curtis, Headteacher, St Bede's School

1. I am writing as the Head of a highly successful Church comprehensive secondary school, recognised as "outstanding" by OfSTED and with a high rate of achievement at GCSE (Around 80% of students gain 5 A*-C including English and Maths). We serve a relatively prosperous area where a high proportion of parents are educated at least to A level.

2. It might have been assumed that we would welcome the English Baccalaureate. In fact, we do not and are deeply concerned that it will have a damaging effect on the education we and other schools offer.

3. Firstly, it is yet another example of the harmful habit of seeking to evaluate the work of schools using a measure which is perhaps simple enough for civil servants and politicians to argue over, but which ignores most of the genuinely important questions and facts. Fairly and meaningfully evaluating the success of a school is complex and cannot be reduced to one or a small number of measures. The moment one attempts to do this, the measure becomes the point of sharp accountability and inevitably, decisions are made which will directly impact on the measure, without necessarily impacting at all on the education or well-being of the students.

4. It is argued that the English Baccalaureate is a necessary correction to previous accountability measures which have distorted the school curriculum and the quality of education. Surely, it should be realised that the issue is the simplistic measure, not what the content of the simplistic measure is. Although the EBac is different to the 5 A*-C or 5 A*-C inc English and Maths measures, it will have exactly the same effect in driving simplistic and ignorant "solutions"—the focus of the system becomes increasing the percentage reaching the measure, not whether this change is improving the quality of education.

5. Such simplistic measures also create false confidence in policy makers and even in parents. It is assumed that changes in the "outcomes" measured reflect real change in the quality of education whereas experience suggests that the change is much more likely to be superficial with schools committing to what "works best" to achieve the measure.

6. Secondly, as currently constructed, the EBac is a particularly poor measure. There is no rationale beyond a nostalgic prejudice for what has been included and therefore excluded. None of the descriptions of the reasons for choosing to measure these particular qualifications are convincing. There is nothing particularly "academic" (whatever that means) about GCSE History or Geography compared with many other possible qualifications. To give one example, some students in my school take AS in Critical Thinking during Key Stage 4—equipping them superbly for the highest level of Academic rigour: these will be deemed not to have followed a "core academic curriculum" unless they also slavishly complete GCSEs in the listed subjects. There is a strong argument that, as currently taught to GCSE, languages are decidedly "non-academic"—being almost entirely focused on gaining functional skills.

7. We are particularly incensed that the EBac gives undue weight to some subjects at the expense of other, often more challenging, ones. As a Church school, we are furious that GCSE Religious Studies is excluded.

Exactly the same academic rigour, the same need to evaluate and consider different points of view and exactly the same process of balanced and critical thought are required in RS GCSE as in History or Geography. As a music specialist, we are also furious that there is no credit for the often exceptional achievement of our students in the Arts—which are absolutely not any kind of “soft option” in this school. Why does discussing Tudor politics give “credit” for the EBac while discussing the impact of the Spanish Civil War on artistic movements in Europe does not?

8. Being cynical, the EBac looks very much like a political masterstroke, which has nothing to do with education. The new government introduces a measure, which it knows will be at a low level in many schools, allowing it to “rubbish” the changes, which followed huge investment in education by the previous government. Adding a qualification or two to the EBac every year should guarantee that the measure increases nicely during this Parliament, without the need to fund anything or having to get to grips with the embedded educational issues. I wish that this perspective was not convincing, but I am afraid it is.

9. We will fight very hard to ignore the EBac. We have worked with extreme commitment to raise the genuine achievement and increase the genuine opportunities of all our students. We will continue to do so. It is perfectly possible for any student for whom it is appropriate to do the courses required for the EBac in this school—our “EBac success rate” is well over twice the national average. Working to increase this proportion would seriously harm the education of many students by denying them opportunities to study their own areas of interest in equally rigorous and challenging ways.

10. As so often in the last 20 years or so, I find myself broadly agreeing with a government’s policy objectives for education, while despairing of the deeply ignorant and even cynical approaches taken to further those objectives. I would share the view that there are too many qualifications and courses, which “achieve” the current measures without providing sufficient challenge and rigour. I would also share the view that many young people need to follow an “academic” curriculum, which exposes them to the world of thought and the skills of critical analysis and evidence-based reasoning. I simply do not agree that making more young people take the list of “EBac” subjects will make this happen.

11. Finally, this country is behind some of its competitors in educational terms because we keep tripping up over social class and the malign influence of the private educational establishment. When state schooling developed, it took on the curriculum from the public schools because the awful mistake was made of thinking that the success of these institutions was due to the content of their curriculum instead of realising that their success was, and is, about a high degree of social training in highly controlled social environments. When the National Curriculum was introduced, the same awful mistake was made and cemented into place. The EBac as currently constructed is more of the same. We need a flexible curriculum that can find talent of all kinds and nurture it, coupled with extremely high expectations that lead to real challenge and rigour, whatever the content of the curriculum.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by James Reeve

1. The Ebac is a step in the right direction because it addresses some of the biggest issues in British education.

2. Too many working class schools have been denying children access to the qualifications which could open up social mobility for them. They have done this because their school leaders know that if they can shoe-horn children onto easier qualifications they can paper over the underachievement for which they are responsible. They can also claim to have led their school’s to remarkable improvements in results which serves their own career development very nicely too. These are the exact people who are now objecting to the EBac because it means their ruse is up and a bright light is being shone on their rather murky modus operandi. Now they will actually have to raise standards as tested by a credible measure instead of masking the true picture of what has been going on in schools.

3. The Ebac will encourage schools to reconsider forcing young people to study BTec courses. They have done this because BTecs, which are 100% coursework assessed, give schools a blank cheque to write their own results. Once a school is accredited they can write their own results for three years without any outside scrutiny. Heads tell course leaders that they must hit very ambitious targets and if they do not the course will be closed down and they will lose their jobs. Of course, this means that many teachers simply fabricate the results. As a result employers are mystified as to why they are employing people who appear to be well qualified but are neither very bright nor very hard working. There have been cases where students who have not even attended school have still passed their BTecs. This has led to incredibly high pass rates of up to 100%. With such high pass rates it is clear that these qualifications are no real measure of ability and teach students no real work ethic because to pass many units they merely need “an experience” rather than to attain any standard. The EBac pushed schools towards offering young people qualifications which are a measure of ability and work ethic and which give employers a better idea as to the quality of job applicants.

4. Under New Labour social mobility has declined. The EBac will help to address this by encouraging schools to offer the tougher qualifications and subjects which actually open the door to the professions for

working class children. Under the old 11 plus system at least a bright working class child could get access to the same education as their more affluent peers. The New Labour attempt to fix results rather than improve them has actually been putting a ceiling on working class aspiration and achievement by directing children from poorer areas towards softer qualifications which will be of little value if they want to access the better courses and jobs.

5. The EBac will help to address the problem of less talented members of staff being promoted to positions which are far more elevated than they are capable of fulfilling with distinction. This has been happening because in many schools those who have been valued most have been those who support the New Labour educational orthodoxy by conjuring up higher results through easier and more corruptible qualifications rather than those who can get students to work hardest and learn more.

6. Truly able and hard working students and truly outstanding schools have not been getting the recognition they deserve and the EBac will help to address this. It has been possible for weaker schools and weaker students to use softer options to achieve results which appear to be as good as those who really are quite brilliant. By emphasising true academic ability in subjects which are externally assessed the EBac gives the more able and more hard working the opportunity to shine and stand out from the crowd as they deserve to.

7. By including history the EBac will help to revive a sense of identity. Much has been written about the loss of white working class identity and the problems that follow, so it is more important than ever that working class students should not be steered away from the very subject which gives us our collective identity simply because it is a more demanding subject. Similarly, given the wonderfully diverse nature of our nation it is more important than ever that we are united by the story of our past. We all need to know what it is that we are a part of.

8. It is important that the EBac continues to name history and geography as discrete subjects. There are watered down “humanities” courses being offered and if the EBac acknowledged those it would lead to a further reduction in the time allocated to history and geography at Key Stage 3. Too many schools have already ditched quality geography and history at Key Stage 3.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted Danny Brierley

SUMMARY

I support the aim of raising attainment through a broad curriculum. It is proposed that, along with Maths and English, pupils select a science and a Modern Foreign Language. However, I say Religious Studies should be included in the list of “E-Bac”-recognised subjects. To restrict humanities to being simply history or geography is unnecessarily prescriptive. It would be the equivalent of requiring pupils to select either Physics or Biology, and leaving Chemistry off the list of approved sciences.

DETAILED SUBMISSION

1. *The purpose and benefits of the E-Bac and its value as a measure of pupil and school performance*

- (a) As a Secondary School teacher I welcome the commitment to raising academic attainment through a broad curriculum. Having a core curriculum, like an “E-Bac”, is generally sensible.
- (b) Consideration must also be given to lowest-ability pupils who, realistically, are never going to achieve 5+ GCSEs at A* to C. The “E-Bac” must take into account *all* students. The “E-Bac” should have *depth* as well as *breadth*. For example, Entry Level Certificates, as well as GCSEs.

2. *The choice of subjects included in the E-Bac*

- (a) The requirement for Maths, English, a Modern Foreign Language, a science, and a humanities subject seems reasonable. However, I am concerned that first drafts suggest a too narrow definition of what constitutes a humanities subject. I believe Religious Studies should be included as an applicable humanities subject.
- (b) To restrict humanities to being simply history or geography is unnecessarily prescriptive. It would be the equivalent of requiring pupils to select either Physics or Biology, and leaving Chemistry off the list of approved sciences. Just imagine the reaction from Chemists!
- (c) I should add, in my school we also offer GCSE Humanities—in some cases, to provide an academic stretch for our most able year 9 and 10 pupils. This encompasses Geography, History, and Religious Studies. It would seem curious if GCSE Humanities was excluded from the acceptable humanities list. It would ensure a broader knowledge and understanding of Geography, History and Religious Studies. Similarly, many in the scientific community will also say that, for *some* pupils, a Combined Science GCSE would provide a broader knowledge and understanding base, whereas compelling students to select one science inevitably means they reject the two others. This argument equally applies to the Humanities subjects.

3. *The implications of the E-Bac for pupils, schools and employers*

- (a) I teach Religious Studies/RE in a large inner-city school in which 98% of pupils are from ethnic minority groups (the vast majority of these are Muslim adherents), 87% have English as an additional language, 54% have Special Education Needs, and 48% receive Free School Meals. The number of pupils that achieve 5 A*-C GCSEs including English and Maths has more than trebled since 2006. GCSE Religious Studies is making an important contribution to raising pupil attainment.
- (b) As well as being academically rigorous and increasingly popular with pupils and parents (as evidenced by the increasing take-up), GCSE Religious Studies helps promotes respect and tolerance, community cohesion, helps counter religious extremism, and provides space in which to explore “big society” issues. Many of our pupils are more open to explore such issues because of the religious dimension, whereas they can be dismissive of PSHE as being simply “secular”. Given my school’s community context, Religious Studies is of particular educational and strategic importance. It would be counter-productive to exclude Religious Studies from the humanities “pillar”. It would seem bizarre to compel schools to teach RE at Key Stage 4 but not recognise when they do so at a higher GCSE level. If GCSE Religious Studies is not included in the E-Bac list, schools and their pupils will devalue RS/RE. All the progress made in recent years will be undone.
- (c) I came into teaching late, after a previous career in Executive Search/Recruitment. It was my experience that many employers liked candidates with Religious Studies qualifications. This was not so much for their religious/cultural knowledge/sensitivity; more because of the investigative, analytical, questioning, debating and communications skills developed in RE courses. Removing Religious Studies from the E-Bac list will reduce the number of candidates with such qualifications and undermine employers’ confidence in Religious Studies.

4. *International comparators for the E-Bac*

- (a) No comment.

I support the aim of raising attainment through a broad curriculum. It is proposed that, along with Maths and English, pupils select a science and a Modern Foreign Language. However, I say pupils should be given the same freedom to select from a broader range of humanities subjects. In particular, I believe Religious Studies should be recognised as a vital part of the humanities portfolio.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Nick Taunt, Headteacher, Bishop Luffa, Chichester

I write as Headteacher of a high-attaining mixed 11–18 comprehensive school of 1,400 pupils. Although our academic profile is skewed slightly towards the upper end, our young people span the whole academic and social range. Many of our pupils take an academic programme at GCSE, with around 50% of the total cohort gaining A*-C grades separately at Languages and Humanities, and 80% gaining 5A*-C including English and Maths. Our Value-Added score at GCSE in 2010 was 1,009.

The purpose and benefits of the E-Bac and its value as a measure of pupil and school performance

1. The proposed English Baccalaureate is not a measure of pupil performance. It is simply a measure of their curriculum: it records how many pupils achieved pass grades in a prescribed set of six specific GCSE subjects. It does not measure how well our pupils have done. Nor does it give parents and the public any indication how well they have done against expectation (Value-Added).
2. It does not measure school performance either. Is a school with a high academic profile in which a large proportion of pupils take the English Baccalaureate “better” than a neighbouring school with a less academically-able profile whose pupils take an appropriately wider set of courses at GCSE?
3. If the purpose of the Bac to do away with the current unreliable system which over-values some vocational courses, this seems to be a curious way of going about it. Why not simply re-align the valuation of such courses to be a more realistic measure of pupils’ ability and hard work? By the law of unintended consequences, the proposed English Bac, I believe, introduces its own peculiar unreliability.

The choice of subjects included in the E-Bac

4. I believe the English Baccalaureate is too narrowly-prescribed.
5. It is, of course, right that pupils’ curriculum at Key Stage 4 should be broad, balanced and relevant to the needs of society. For this reason, I agree that in some schools, pupils’ diet has become too overloaded with “league-table rich” but educationally poor fare. It is right to *encourage* pupils to keep Languages and Humanities going up to 16, as well as the essential skills and knowledge that they imbibe studying English, maths and science.
6. But the KS4 curriculum should also be differentiated (or in the previous government’s awkward terminology, “personalised”). Children need to be engaged in and passionate about what they learn. For some

of my pupils it would be asking for disaffection if they were forced to take geography or history rather than engineering or drama, their passion. For the more academic pupils, is an A* in economics less a measure of their (or the school's) performance than a C grade in history?

7. The English Baccalaureate makes a negative statement about the value of the Arts, or Product Design, quite apart from the vocational courses that prepare the foundation for our least academically able to acquire the skills for worthwhile employment.

8. In a society challenged by religious and moral tensions, is it sensible to relegate RE to a single compulsory hour a week? RE makes a vitally important contribution to pupils' knowledge and understanding of the religion and culture of others as well as themselves. In a society where prejudice flourishes with ignorance, it is encouraging to see the growing popularity and take-up of RE among pupils of all abilities. The restrictive nature of the proposed English Baccalaureate will do this positive move great harm. If an English Baccalaureate does become a statutory measure, I would strongly support the inclusion of RE.

The implications of the E-Bac for pupils, schools and employers

9. I am concerned that the English Baccalaureate will have the effect of restricting pupils' choices at GCSE. Schools will feel under pressure to insist that pupils take these subjects, leaving very little space for them to choose courses that are more suitable for their needs and abilities. Mr Gove has said that Headteachers know best. As Head, I work hard to determine what is best for our pupils and our community. I do not believe that they should be told precisely what subjects they should choose at KS4.

10. The pupils who will be most affected will be those of middle academic ability for whom a varied academic/vocational diet is most appropriate and who, being coerced, would strain to get A*-C in all six English Baccalaureate subjects. For these pupils in particular, this is an unwelcome straitjacket that will restrict their ability to demonstrate their skills.

11. I can see no indication of any employers or universities that say they need more applicants who have studied geography or history instead of other rigorous academic GCSEs.

12. When employers tell me what they are looking for, they mention the ability to think, to work in a team, to show initiative, to be self-motivated, to listen, to learn independently, to be articulate and to be polite. These are skills that can be taught through a range of subjects and at any level. The limiting nature of the English Baccalaureate, with its emphasis on acquired knowledge, threatens to undermine schools' real achievement in preparing pupils for the workplace. It takes us back to the world of the School Certificate, which was abolished in 1951 because it did not suit society's needs. I fear that, 100 years earlier, Mr Gradgrind may well have been delighted with Mr Gove's proposal.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Andrew R Middleton

1. I welcome the approach that has been followed by the current government to drive up standards across a range of school subjects and to reduce the number of quangos associated with education that have been adding little to front line services. I think there is a need to provide an E-Bac type certification to differentiate schools that are providing a broad and balanced education with those who are simply chasing the "easiest" combination and seeing students acquiring a raft of qualifications in the same niche of subjects. It has a real value, therefore, as both a measure of pupil and school performance (although, applying the measure retrospectively on results is a little unfair—many of our students had dropped a modern foreign language but had attained the other four and other solid GCSEs and this was not reflected in the figures).

2. I am very concerned at the choice of subjects. I concur with the need for Science, English and Mathematics. In an era of international competitiveness and the national need for small enterprise, I do not understand why we would introduce a qualification that does not include something to certificate basic competence in technology—I feel that this is a huge oversight and one that the committee ought to address. I am currently seeing an options process in this school based on the E-Bac and watching children that would succeed in ICT/Business/Technology courses that are having to drop them despite wanting to do them because of the pressure of the suite of qualifications. I do not think that the humanity ought to be restricted to history or geography and should also include Religious Studies—I know many successful Religious Studies departments who will be decimated by an options process that will have to respond to the E-Bac. While I appreciate the need for young people to understand our island's story at the same time I question the thinking behind certification that will not give them the ICT skills require to read, write, research, invent and innovate in the current world.

3. My father runs a large multinational pension fund and often bemoans the inability of new employees to read and write at a suitable standard. He has also reflected that lack of foresight in driving children away from formal ICT qualifications and questioned the need for all students to follow a modern or ancient language.

As a teacher in daily contact with youngsters, I question the wisdom of driving middle ability children into the study of a language that has no link with their own career aspirations especially at the cost of subjects that are academically rigorous and ones in which they would succeed.

4. International comparisons seem to me to be often flawed especially if they are focussed on countries with a broad mono-ethnic population and few larger cities. Many of our real competitors would not dream of excising ICT, Business and technology from the broad curriculum and this alone is likely to have a significant effect on our national competitiveness.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Mervyn Apthorpe, Assistant Headteacher and Head of Technology, St Thomas More Catholic Science College

I write as a teacher with almost 37 years of teaching experience and a good understanding of how different political initiatives have affected secondary education for better or worse and I certainly recognise those that get repeated.

The National Curriculum, introduced by the last Conservative Government, extended the core and added Modern Foreign Languages and Design and Technology as compulsory subjects. In these subjects the inclusion immediately created a shortage of competent teachers and a plethora of spurious courses as schools attempted to deliver an imposed curriculum. This National Curriculum fostered mediocrity for all, at the expense of expertise, and devalued the Arts and Humanities as less important.

In 2003 schools were allowed to “disapply” parts of the National Curriculum so that students could follow courses that better suited their needs and talents. Statutory Instrument 252, at last, recognised that every pupil was different and every pupil mattered.

The mistake of stifling potential by extending the core had been acknowledged. Schools, as well as pupils, were encouraged to develop strengths, specialise and improve.

Comparing the performance of schools by using the English Baccalaureate, as a bench mark, is a blatant and unfair attempt to re-introduce an inappropriate Extended Core National Curriculum by the back door. It is unfair that the bench mark relies on a previously undisclosed combination of subjects which automatically devalues all other subjects and any attempt by the school or pupil to excel in other areas. It is inappropriate that schools are coerced into a curriculum that, once more, fosters mediocrity for all, at the expense of expertise.

The problem is exacerbated in faith schools because the E-Bac doesn't recognise RE as a Humanities subject. Most secondary schools offer four options outside the core, but because RE is compulsory in faith schools, they only offer three. If two of the remaining three options default to being one Humanities subject and one Modern Foreign Language, then all the remaining subjects will have to compete against each other to be the remaining option. There will certainly be a shortage of Language and Humanities teachers and either tiny classes or redundant teachers, in the apparently less important subjects of Art, Music, Drama, Electronics, Geology, IT, Catering, Textiles, Graphics, Media Studies, Product Design, Philosophy, PE, Photography, Economics, Business Studies, Engineering, Construction and all the other recently developed vocational courses.

I shall be retiring soon and certainly have no need to write to you but, for the sake of the future, please don't repeat mistakes of the past. By all means keep the E-Bac for those that want it, but don't use it as a measure where it isn't appropriate. For the sake of those teaching and learning in faith schools that facilitate the E-Bac, allow RE to be counted as a Humanities subject so that there are two remaining options, not one. Please also remember that religion is studied in non-faith schools, but will be studied less, or not at all, if it isn't counted as one of the Humanities.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Miss Moira Kent, Head of RE, PSHCE, Careers, Stanley High School

1. I am writing to give my comments on the Ebac. I am completely opposed to the Ebac for many reasons. I cannot understand how this qualification can have been introduced retrospectively; my own school only achieved a 3% pass rate and this will be the case for the next two years as it is too late to change the KS4 options choices for Years 10 and 11. The entire options system has had to be altered to give our students the opportunity to achieve the Ebac. As a measure of performance it has little credibility because of its retrospective imposition and because parents look to English, Maths and Science results before anything else.

2. I am very upset about the omission of Religious Education from the Ebac. This subject is a Humanity and is one that is taken by most students as a Short or Full course qualification. In my own school, my Year 11 RE time is being removed next year and is to be given to Maths to boost their results. This not only breaks the law but denigrates the subject that I am passionate about and have devoted the last 20 years of my life to teaching. The protection of the law does not even exist in academies and free schools. It is nonsensical not to

include Religious Education in the list of Ebac subjects. The choice of subjects also leaves out all practical based subjects thus devaluing these qualifications which kinaesthetic and sometimes, the less able students opt to take.

3. I do not envisage the Ebac making any difference to employers as employers are looking for students with the core subjects of English, Maths and Science as a rule. In some schools students are going to be forced to take the Ebac subjects which will results in enormous misery, behaviour problems and poor motivation since students may well rather be taking other subjects instead.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Richard Wilkin, Headteacher, St Bede's Inter-Church School

1. The E-Bacc includes a very narrow selection of subjects, but without an explanation of why those subjects have been chosen over others. If the intention is to promote subjects that are considered by certain observers (including some universities) to be "academic", a case can be made for a wider selection that includes, for example, RE and Music.

2. There are many students for whom a vocational mix of subjects, in addition to the core of English, Maths and Science, is wholly appropriate. A rigorous measure of GCSE performance already exists in the 5+ A*-C with Maths and English percentage. It would be detrimental if the E-Bacc were to become the dominant measure of school success, relegating students and schools studying other combinations of subjects to an inferior position.

3. A greater effort should be made to raise the quality and reputation of the so-called vocational option, which will not be achieved by giving dominance to a "grammar school" curriculum that, when grammar schools existed, only catered for the needs of a small proportion of the population. There may be a strong case for a version of the E-Bacc that raises the status of subjects that lead to work, or work-related courses at the majority of universities, not just the Russell Group.

4. It is wrong to skew the curricula of schools, which is what the E-Bacc is already doing, without confirming the greater freedoms over subjects that have been promised. Once schools know that they have complete freedom outside the core of Maths, English and Science, then they can plan their provision properly. As it stands, the E-Bacc is being emphasised while there is still an expectation that students will study subjects such as ICT and Citizenship/PSHE.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Barnaby Lenon, Headmaster, Harrow School

1. The idea of rewarding pupils for achieving a good grade in a specified range of core subjects is a good one. Such pupils have achieved across a range of disciplines and this should be acknowledged.

2. The idea of publishing E-Bac results in newspaper league tables is a good one. Such league tables are influential and this is a cost-free way of putting pressure on schools and pupils to adopt the principles which lie behind the E-Bac.

3. The idea of using the E-Bac to promote modern languages, Geography and History is a good one. These subjects are languishing in many schools.

4. The Edexcel IGCSEs were not incorporated in the E-Bac this year. This is a mistake because these IGCSEs are academically demanding and many top schools take IGCSE maths particularly; having such schools score zero on the E-Bac undermines its credibility.

5. We recommend that the SCIENCE element of the E-Bac be modified to accept achievement in just one science GCSE to count for the science requirement. The reason for this is that many students at independent schools prefer to focus on modern and classical languages and on humanities; this does not always leave space for two separate sciences. We do not offer dual award science because we do not find it an adequate preparation for A-level sciences. At my school we only insist that pupils take one GCSE science. Despite this many take three sciences and many go on to do science A-levels. The minority who prefer to focus on languages/humanities should not be penalised for doing so. Taking one separate science GCSE should be seen as showing an adequate commitment to this branch of human knowledge.

6. We do NOT support the inclusion of Religious Studies in the humanities category. If RS were to be included then one objective of the E-Bac—the promotion of History and Geography—would be seriously undermined. Many schools will push students to do RS rather than History/Geography.

7. We do NOT support the inclusion of creative arts in the E-Bac because to include them will make it much harder for pupils to achieve the requirements of the 2010 version of the E-Bac. We believe that pupils who will benefit from creative arts subjects will certainly do them anyway.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Sharon Gladman, Head of Religious Studies, Religious Education at Dr Challoners High School

We would like to ask for Religious Studies to be included as at present it is not, as it is considered a Humanities subject and they are included. If we fail to address this issue for Religious Studies it could have a devastating effect on the future of the subject in schools. We are a very hard working RS/RE department at Dr Challoners High School in Bucks with high numbers entering GCSE full course year 10 and 11, about 70 girls out of a year group in a free choice out of 150 pupils. Also for AS/A level we have in next year's year 12, 32 students opting for the subject. If schools and parents see its exclusion surely this will affect choice and numbers especially if it is not rewarded as other full GCSEs in Humanities with recognition and status as our students worked extremely hard here as they all gained A*s this omission will be soul destroying. Religious Studies has been one of the examinations that has had great growth in numbers in recent years and this could damage the status and the perception of the value of good RS/RE that is going on in many schools. The future in education looks bleak enough with cuts looming and we are losing sight of the importance of our first obligation to the young people of this country, who are our future.

Please therefore include Religious Studies along with other Humanities subjects.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Damien Graham, Deputy Headteacher, All Saints' Catholic High School

I am sending this email to say that I believe introducing the English Baccalaureate is a good idea as we need to get back to promoting academic rigour as a way of measuring how well pupils are achieving at school.

I believe that the EBacc is a valuable measure of pupil performance and place all schools on a level playing field when using this measure ie school performances have been more often than not artificially inflated by encouraging pupils to follow GCSE so called "equivalences" like BTEC qualifications.

As to the choice of subjects, I strongly believe that Religious Education should be included as one of the Humanities subjects as it is an academic subject and particularly relevant in this day and age to promote religious tolerance.

The implications for pupils, schools and employers are that everybody is measured by the same academic rigour. I would also like to see an abolition of different examination boards who are clearly involved in a multi-million pound industry being replaced by one national examination board (again to promote parity between exams).

I strongly believe that as a nation we compare poorly when studying foreign languages and I believe that the study of foreign languages should be compulsory in this country. We also need to tackle relatively poor levels of literacy compare to other nations on the PISA.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Bernadette Mimmagh, Vice Principal, Mount Carmel RC Technology College for Girls

The purpose and benefits of the E-Bac and its value as a measure of pupil and school performance

This will be a worthwhile measure for some students however it will narrow the curriculum and does not value practical learning.

It will not be a valuable measure of school performance particularly for schools who have a challenging intake. It will be easier for schools with a middle/upper class intake to perform well.

The choice of subjects included in the E-Bac

Subjects should include:

- Religious Education/Religious Studies
- Sociology
- Business Studies
- ICT
- Music

Art
Economics

To not include Religious Education in the E-Bac is not only discriminatory to Faith Schools but also doesn't recognise it as a Humanities subject whereas the whole basis of the subject is to learn what it is to be human.

The implications of the E-Bac for pupils, schools and employers

The E-Bac will not produce a rounded education for students unless a wider range of subjects is included.

If a modern language is required then preparations should be put in place for students to learn these languages in primary school and for languages to be part of the curriculum rather than "taster sessions".

International comparators for the E-Bac

In other countries, a "true" baccalaureate values a more rounded course of study and a wider range of subjects together with work related learning.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted La Retraite Roman Catholic School

THE PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF E-BAC

1. We understand the wish to ensure that children experience a broad curriculum. However, we do not believe that the E-Bac provides a broad curriculum. For instance, a pupil can gain E-Bac accreditation by studying Latin and Ancient History, which must be considered a narrow curriculum (if a very worthwhile one), but not by studying Religious Education (including important aspects of Ethics and Philosophy as well as textual study of the Bible), Music, Drama, Sociology or Information and Communication Technology, the last-named of which is at the heart of so many working lives in the 21st century.

2. It has been clear that this is not primarily a qualification for pupils. Rather, it is a measurement of schools in terms of their curriculum. Essentially, it favours schools which have a selective intake and whose pupils would normally take a more traditional curriculum. Therefore, however well comprehensive schools are doing for their pupils (and in 2010, this school, for example, achieved 97% of students achieving 5+ Grades A*-C and 72% achieved 5+ Grades A*-C, including English and Maths), they are certain to fall well down in the E-Bac tables, in comparison with grammar schools and many private schools, simply because they offer a broad curriculum, whereas grammar and private schools very often offer a relatively narrow curriculum of traditional subjects.

3. Many comprehensive schools such as ours have worked extremely hard to "personalise" the curriculum. This means that we have worked hard to find exactly the right courses to enable all our students to achieve. The brightest students take Biology, Chemistry and Physics; Statistics as well as Maths; French or Spanish; History, Geography or Sociology, Business and Economics, Music, Art, Drama etc. All our students take RE GCSE which is considered very important in this Catholic school. Students who have different abilities—perhaps they are more practical and respond better to skills-based learning—are able to take subjects such as Health and Social Care and can do very well in these subjects. The vast majority of our students emerge from their 11–16 education with a sense of success, ready to go on to further study. The E-Bac will have a double negative effect: some students will feel failures because they didn't achieve this measure; others may try to follow this rather arbitrary curriculum and may fail, when they could have succeeded with something else.

4. Furthermore, comprehensive schools with a wide-ranging curriculum will almost inevitably show up as "worse" on the league tables, however successful they are for their own pupils, simply because they make appropriate provision for them. Therefore, it is not helpful as a measure of school performance.

5. A very talented student may not have his/her achievements recognised. For instance, let us imagine a student who has a future in high-level engineering (which this country needs). S/he might study high-level Maths and Physics, Design Technology, Art and Russian. This choice would be a very good one for a future in Engineering. S/he might attain A* grades in all of these, but yet not achieve E-Bac. Therefore, this is not a good measure of pupil performance either, since it is aimed at those who qualify in Arts and Humanities only.

THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS FOR THE E-BAC

6. We believe this is narrow. In particular, it makes a rather arbitrary distinction between what is and is not a Humanity. Specifically, we believe that Religious Education and Sociology must qualify as Humanities subjects, as they do in general parlance. Both are intellectually rigorous subjects and there is no reason why they should have been omitted. The choice of just History and Geography is arbitrary.

7. In Catholic schools, such as ours, Religious Education GCSE is compulsory for all. This means that students must choose one fewer "optional" subjects. Therefore, it is discriminatory against faith schools not to include RE on the list of acceptable Humanities.

8. We deplore the fact that Arts subjects such as Music, Art, and Drama are not acceptable areas of study; the arts are important to the development of young people.

9. We deplore the fact that Design Technology appears nowhere on the choice of subjects. It is so important that young people are encouraged to view the design and manufacturing industries as places where they want to work. To exclude DT from the choice of subjects gives a negative message.

10. We agree with the suggestion that the History curriculum has not been helpfully structured in schools and would be happy to see this change, with less focus on the two 20th century world wars and more emphasis on the rest of British History and on World History.

11. We deplore the fact that certain Science examinations currently used to achieve success with some pupils (e.g. BTEC) is not on the accepted list of E-Bac subjects.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE E-BAC FOR PUPILS, SCHOOLS AND EMPLOYERS

12. For pupils, the advent of the E-Bac will mean that more students leave school with a sense of failure rather than success. See paragraphs 3, 4 and 5 above.

13. For schools, the E-Bac will mean that they will inevitably try to “force” more children to follow the E-Bac curriculum because of “league-table” pressure. This will mean that the focus will be on league tables, rather than pupil achievement. It will also mean that certain types of school—generally those with less able learners—will inevitably be seen as “failing” in comparison with schools with a narrower curriculum which suits more able learners.

14. For employers, we fear that, by the process of hegemony, they will gradually come to believe that only young people who have achieved the E-Bac are “well-educated” while this may not be the case at all. See paragraph 5 above.

INTERNATIONAL COMPARATORS FOR THE E-BAC

15. We believe that simply by “grouping” a few arbitrary subjects together as an E-Bac, we are not making a true Baccalaureate examination, such as is taken on the continent. This is altogether a superior and better thought-out examination. We would welcome the re-thinking of the GCSE/BTEC/Level 2 offer into a coherent multi-skill examination, along the lines of the International Baccalaureate. We do not believe that the E-Bac is comparable.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Philip Wood

**Please note that these views are personal and professional.
They do not reflect the collective views of Lancashire County Council.**

1. GENERAL CONTEXTUAL POINTS

As a linguist with 40 years educational experience (11 years of teaching in schools, six in HE as a senior lecturer and 23 as a county adviser for MFL in Lancs), my key interest is in modern foreign languages (MFL) education in schools and therefore my comments relate mainly, but not wholly, to MFL. I have spoken about the E-Bac at four meetings to around a hundred senior leaders (Heads, Deputies, Curriculum Managers) from Lancashire secondary schools in the last three weeks, which has informed many aspects of my response. We have 80 secondary schools in the authority and the great majority have interacted with us about the subject.

- (i) The demise of MFL teaching in maintained secondary education is well documented and is, in my personal view, quite simply a national disgrace. In any international comparisons for MFL provision and attainment, the UK would be almost certainly be very close to the bottom! The fact that well under half of our pupils nationally at KS4 now study MFL means that the majority of our young people (and by implication our nation) are potentially disadvantaged personally, economically and politically, as well as in terms of their opportunities to begin to develop “real”, “deep” international understanding.
- (ii) Various attempts to repair the “damage” of the previous government’s educational decision to allow pupils to opt out of MFL at the age of 14 (eg the encouragement of schools to set MFL benchmarks, Ofsted SEF prompts etc) have proved toothless and failed miserably to have any impact on schools. I know from my daily work that Ofsted teams and schools have largely ignored them and numbers taking MFL to GCSE have continued to fall.
- (iii) In Lancashire, from 2004 to 2010, the percentage of the LA’s Year 11 cohort of pupils entering a GCSE in at least one MFL has fallen by 35%, with just under 40% of the cohort being entered in 2010. This will no doubt be very similar to the national picture. What is clear from my discussions with languages teachers is that many able (more academic) pupils, who are perfectly capable of

developing their MFL skills to a high level at GCSE, unfortunately now opt out of MFL at 14 and never return to it.

- (iv) The reasons for this are many and complex eg lack of emphasis on MFL from schools' senior leaders, lack of emphasis on MFL learning from government and the media, breadth of choice of subjects (options), many of which are perceived as "easier" or "more entertaining", personalisation and student choice, option systems which "discourage" MFL take-up through their design, sometimes without sufficient guidance and, of course, sometimes because of pupils' poor MFL learning experience in Key Stage 3.
- (v) Although many of the pupils entered for GCSE in the past did not gain a grade C+, many of them have been justifiably proud of their results and the grades they have achieved. I would not want anyone who does not gain a grade C+ or who chooses vocational language learning (eg NVQs) to have their achievements diminished or devalued by the E-Bac, if they fulfil their potential.

2. *The purpose and benefits of the E-Bac and its value as a measure of pupil and school performance*

- (i) It is already proving to be a "co-ercive" driver, obliging many schools to think again about the nature and value of the curriculum they offer to their pupils. I have spoken about the E-Bac to around a hundred of our senior school leaders over the last few weeks. The impact of the E-Bac on them has been substantial and created much discussion and significant changes already in some schools. This will largely mean that some of the more able pupils not previously obliged or appropriately guided into doing MFL (and possibly history/geog) GCSE will now do so. I view this as positive in terms of MFL but cannot comment on history/geography as they are not within my remit.
- (ii) Schools have however objected to the retrospective publication of the E-Bac results (based on last year's results) and many have found this annoying and unfair. They thought that the DfE had learnt its lesson from the adverse reaction from Headteachers/schools, when the National Challenge was first announced a few years ago, again based on retrospective targets of which they were not aware.
- (iii) A few parents to whom I have spoken, who have children in Y10 or 11 who will not gain the E-Bac at school because of options they chose in Year 9, have also been annoyed by the retrospective nature of Mr Gove's and the DfE's actions. They are concerned their children may be now disadvantaged in terms of HE choices. This is understandable, I feel.
- (iv) The publication of E-Bac "results" is arguably a valid point of information for parents about a school and what it provides. However, it is potentially misleading if it is to be used as a measure, although it will be probably be used as such by the media and "the uninformed". Therefore it will be viewed again as unfair by many schools who, for example, may do remarkably well in value added terms or in other aspects of their provision, but who do not have pupils generally suited to an E-Bac curriculum.

3. *The choice of subjects*

- (i) The selection of subjects (and subsequent publication of "results") are deemed by many schools to "favour" the more "advantaged" and academically orientated schools, particularly the grammar schools. Again, they view this as unfair.
- (ii) The selection of subjects is seen by many as rather arbitrary and, whereas most can see the point about more able pupils and MFL, there does not at this early stage seem to be the same support for inclusion of history or geography. There is also some concern that, if history and geography are included, why not RE!
- (iii) The combined humanities GCSE course (arguably broader than just history or geography) should be considered for inclusion in the E-Bac—it seems unfair not to do so!

4. *The implications of the E-Bac for pupils, schools and employers*

- (i) Pupils/parents will need to have improved guidance (IAG), particularly if the E-Bac becomes valued as a qualification by HE eg as a "golden ticket" for university entrance. Personally, I would welcome a qualification in MFL at GCSE as at least a discriminator in terms of university entrance. This (perhaps sadly) will help drive the importance of MFL home to pupils/students and therefore encourage more, particularly of the more able to continue with MFL study until at least 16.
- (ii) Some examples of changes which have already happened in some Lancs. Schools:
 - (a) Some are already reviewing their "options" guidance to parents and pupils.
 - (b) Some are advising Y9 pupils more strongly to take up MFL and history/geography as options.
 - (c) Some are moving towards a more rigid (compulsory) streaming or pathways eg an E-Bac stream/pathway for more able pupils (therefore probably reducing personal choice for some).
 - (d) Some are looking to recruit more MFL teachers (the MFL teaching force in many schools has been much diminished because of the decline in KS4 take-up and the provision of MFL teachers may become a national shortage area again).

- (e) Some are considering increasing “early entry” for MFL/Geography/History (eg end of Y9).
- (f) Some are considering better targeted support (so successful in pushing up standards in English and maths in recent years) such as boosters/intensives/better tracking etc. Most have cost implications of course!
- (iii) Employers, often already bewildered by constant educational change will need fully informing, although I suspect they may not use such a “qualification” much. I took a straw poll this week with a group of 50 senior leaders in Lancashire secondary schools and only about half of these highly educated and successful individuals would have been awarded the E-Bac if it had existed when they started their working careers!

5. *International comparators for the E-Bac*

- (i) Whilst I think there is some value in comparing individual subjects internationally, I see little value in comparing this “umbrella” of subjects as there are too many variables between education systems and across the subjects internationally.
- (ii) As I said before, I believe that in terms of MFL, we would be very close to the bottom of any international comparisons, especially if compared to similar countries to England!

6. GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

- (i) It will have a positive impact on uptake for MFL until 16; more pupils should gain C+ in MFL at GCSE; it will give MFL increased status as a subject and also lift the morale of MFL teachers, who have often felt undervalued in recent years.
- (ii) We should seek not to undervalue MFL grades below C+ otherwise more average and lower ability may drop MFL at 14+.
- (iii) Guidance to pupils and parents about E-Bac options should be “sharpened” where necessary.
- (iv) My personal view, which was generally shared by the senior leaders I have recently met is that the choice of subjects is somewhat arbitrary and if the choice is to remain unchanged, a clear educational rationale for why it includes these subjects should be provided for our schools.
- (v) E-Bac information should be just that, not used as a measure. The E-Bac curriculum may not be the best educational/curriculum provision for many schools which are extremely “worthy” on so many other fronts, but not necessarily “academic” because of the nature of their pupil intake. E-Bac results, if taken, in isolation can give a distorted view of the overall quality of a school.
- (vi) Information is needed for schools, parents, post 16 establishments, HE and employers if the E-Bac is to become valued/important to the government and the DfE. It will be difficult to explain that is not an exam as such but just a “basket of C+ grades” made up of certain subjects.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Music Education Council

We, the organisations that form the Music Education Council, are writing to you concerning the English Baccalaureate proposals recently published by the Department for Education.

Whilst we welcome the Government’s commitment to a broad range of subjects being studied at GCSE level, we are concerned that the list of subjects that currently contribute towards the English Baccalaureate does not represent this “broad range”. It is, therefore, an inappropriate lens through which to view pupil achievement.

In particular, we think that the current list of subjects may fail to deliver the important balance between discipline and creativity. With this in mind, we would favour two possible solutions:

- MEC members would like to see music included, alongside History and Geography, in the humanities category. In the view of our members, the inclusion of music in the understanding of a broad curriculum would correct the current potential imbalance between discipline and creativity.
- Alternatively, music and the arts could be included in the English Baccalaureate alongside the humanities.

We are united, as a Council, in our desire for music to be included in the English Baccalaureate, and hope that you will consider this request.

Music education in the UK is world class, and is an end in itself. Within the curriculum, it improves attainment across the board and develops children’s emotional intelligence and social understanding.

The public supports the formal place of music within our curriculum, as a rigorous and challenging GCSE: 91% of the public back the teaching of music in schools. It is key to underpinning our strong music sector and to the development of its skills, and the music sector is a key component of our cultural and creative economy.

I hope you will consider these proposals, and we shall welcome the opportunity to speak to you in the near future.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Miss Doreen Cronin

As Headteacher of a Catholic Secondary school, I would like to express my disappointment that GCSE RE has not been recognised as a Humanities subject within the English Baccalaureate.

Our pupils rise to the challenges of the academic rigour of RE, achieving a pass rate of 94% A*–C. They are expected to reflect on major ethical and philosophical issues and to think widely and creatively as well as logically and rationally. I would argue that RE is certainly more intellectually challenging than Geography, therefore I cannot understand its omission from the Humanities subject. RE itself is a broad-based humanity, demanding knowledge and skills in history, textual criticism, anthropology, ethics, philosophy and theology.

Our school achieved 44% (EBac) and was therefore in the top two secondary schools in East Sussex this year so I am not writing due to lack of success in the Humanities area. In responding to past Government initiatives, wrongly or rightly, we introduced a vocational element into the Humanities/MFL options hence why our results are not as high as we would like. We can remedy this with ease in the next year or two, so I am not trying to encourage recognition of RE because of a lack of success in either option. Most subjects in our school achieve at least 80% pass rate at A*–C with many achieving 90%+ pass rate at A*–C.

I feel that in the globalised world we live in where there is a need to understand and respect a range of views, cultures, beliefs and perspectives that it is essential that RE is encouraged as a subject in all schools. We will always teach RE whatever the outcome but I dread to think what will happen in many a school where it will no longer be seen as a priority.

Can I urge you to reconsider your decision: Religious Education needs to be included as a core subject in the English Baccalaureate for the benefit of society as a whole.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Martin Lapworth, former MFL Teacher

ON HOW THE NEW BAC SHOULD BE GRADED, AND THE IMPACT OF THIS DECISION ON HOW SCHOOLS, STUDENTS AND THE PUBLIC PERCEIVE THE VALUE OF THIS NEW AWARD

1. In Spain, the ESO certificate, which is awarded to students at age 16 (end of compulsory education), requires students to pass ALL 12 subjects. It's a black and white, all or nothing award. Pass or fail. No grades or scores are considered for individual subjects. (There is also no external exam at this stage—these don't happen until age 18, when the exams are basically required for the sake of university entrance). A large proportion of Spanish students don't pass the ESO, and leave school with nothing.

* Advantages: students have to take all subjects seriously. They can't pick and choose. They have to pass everything. Students tend, on the whole, to take responsibility for their own performance (and the lack of school league tables and the culture of teacher-bashing, as we have in the UK, means that the onus to perform is placed squarely on the shoulders of students, not teachers.)

* Disadvantages: A large proportion of Spanish students don't pass the ESO, and leave school with nothing. There is no recognition of how well they have done. 50% in everything produces the same overall result as 100% in everything.

2. In England, students can pick and choose in which subjects they wish to apply themselves. Their GCSE results reflect how good they are at a particular subject—not just a pass/fail scenario. The problem with this is that schools/govts have tried to force students to study certain subjects as part of a balanced curriculum, but they can't force them to care about how well they do. This was the situation with Modern Languages when we had the policy of "languages for all"—we could force all 14–16 year olds to embark on a language course, but we couldn't make them give a damn about it.

3. The idea of a bac appeals to me for this reason. If students begin to feel that passing the golden 5 which make up the bac is going to be of real value to them, they will be forced to take all of the subjects seriously. If universities, employers etc say that they will give preference to students with the bac, it cannot fail to have an impact on those students (and their parents) who aspire to do well.

4. Also, if the bac is used as the main measure of achievement in school league tables, schools will be forced to take it seriously, and I'm sure the uptake of MFL (which is my area of interest) will increase considerably.

5. But—and this is the crucial point—it has to be a combination of both of the above. Students have to feel that there is something in it for them (in terms of it being valued more highly once they move on beyond GCSEs), rather than just something they are forced to do by school headteachers who want to get their school higher in the league tables. It can't be all stick and no carrot. Otherwise it will just be like "languages for all"

again, with teachers bending over backwards trying to get students to learn a subject that they don't give a damn about because they don't perceive it as being important for their future.

6. The bac that you propose to introduce has some elements of the Spanish ESO (pass/fail, must pass all component parts etc), and the fact that we will still have GCSE grades means that we can see how well a student does in individual subjects. So in a way we have a good combination of the two systems. The difficulty is going to be in deciding which of these is most important. Compare for example:

- (i) a student with 11 GCSE passes of A*/A, but a D in French;
- (ii) a student with 5 C grade passes in the golden 5; and
- (iii) a student with grade C passes in En, Ma, Sci, Hi and a D in French.

Student (i) doesn't have the bac, neither does student (iii). Student (ii) does.

Is it really going to be feasible to say that student (ii) should be given preference over student (i)?

From a bac point of view, student (iii) is in the same position as student (i).

I know that student (i) can still point to his GCSE grades and say "But look at all those A*/A passes". So does that mean that the bac won't matter? If this is the case, we might as well ignore it. The ONLY thing it will be useful for is school league tables.

7. If the bac is to have any real value, it has to be worthy of it. And as we have seen from the example above, it's hard to justify the notion that student with the bac (ii) is a better student than the one without (i). It's a bit too black and white for my liking.

8. How about these possibilities?:

- (a) a point score average based on the 5 bac subjects (if all 5 are taken). [MAX = 8]
 - (i) Student (i) gets eg 2 x A* (= 8 points each) + 2 x A (= 7 points each) + 1 x D (= 4 points). Total = 34. Average = 6.8
 - (ii) Student (ii) gets 5 x C (= 5 points each). Total 25. Average = 5
 - (iii) Student (iii) gets 4 x C (= 5) + 1 x D (=4). Total = 24. Average = 4.8

Pass mark is 5/8.
This is OK. But there's no real incentive to ensure that you pass all 5, as a D grade can easily be evened out by a B grade in another subject. (and an E by an A, etc).
- (b) reassign values for GCSE grades for the sake of these calculations, so that:
 - A* = 10
 - A = 9
 - B = 8
 - C = 7
 -
 - D = 4
 - E = 3
 - F = 2
 - G = 1

This makes a clear break between pass/fail in terms of points. (But not as much as the previous binary, 1/0, pass/fail, all or nothing bac)

So a point score average based on the 5 bac subjects (if all 5 are taken). [MAX = 10]

- (i) Student (i) gets A*, A*, A, A, D. Total = 42. Average = 8.4
- (ii) Student (ii) gets C, C, C, C, C. Total 35. Average = 7
- (iii) Student (iii) gets C, C, C, C, D. Total = 32. Average = 6.4
- (iv) Student (iv) gets C, D, D, D, E. Total = 22. Average = 4.4
- (v) Student (v) gets A*, A*, A, D, E. Total = 36. Average = 7.2
- (vi) Student (vi) gets A*, C, C, C, D. Total = 35. Average = 7
- (vii) Student (vii) gets B, B, B, C, C. Total = 38. Average = 7.6
- (viii) Student (viii) gets A*, A*, A*, D, D. Total = 38. Average = 7.6
- (ix) Student (ix) gets B, B, B, B, D. Total = 36. Average = 7.2
- (x) Student (x) gets A, A, B, B, D. Total = 38. Average = 7.6

NB. Pass mark would be considered to be 7/10

This system allows students to pass the bac without passing everything, but rewards students who take the bac golden 5, even if they don't pass them all. It also makes grades for passes worth significantly more than those for fails, thus encouraging students to value the grades in all 5 subjects (the difference between a pass and a fail is 0.6 points). Another way of looking at it is that it takes an A* in one subject to even out a D in another (see student vi above).

- (c) same as (a) above, plus an extra 2 points for passing everything (0.4 per subject).
- (i) Student (i) gets eg 2 x A* (= 8 points each) + 2 x A (= 7 points each) + 1 x D (= 4 points).
Total = 34. Average = 6.8 + 1.6 = 8.4
 - (ii) Student (ii) gets 5 x C (= 5 points each). Total 25. Average = 5 + 2 = 7
 - (iii) Student (iii) gets 4 x C (= 5) + 1 x D (=4). Total = 24. Average = 4.8 + 1.6 = 6.4
- Pass mark is 7/10
Scores are exactly the same as (b) above, but can be explained in a different way. i.e. score out of 8 + 0.4 per subject passed (total 2) = total of 10

9. Basically, what I'm getting at is that we need a way of rewarding students for doing well in the golden 5 subjects, in a way that does not make a mockery of the system. If we make it a clear pass/fail situation, and then we expect people to value the student with the bac more highly than the one without, it has to be believable. And people wouldn't have faith in it if they were told that student (ii) above was to be valued more highly than student (i), just because he passed the 5 subjects which make up the bac, when student i has passed so many more and at a much higher level.

10. The benefits of a system such as the one outlined above are:

- 1. if everyone can believe in the bac as a fair award, you're more likely to see universities, employers etc valuing it;
- 2. if it is valued beyond school, this in turn will have a more positive effect on students—the carrot effect; and
- 3. if schools feel that students will get a grade even if they don't pass all 5—in fact they could pass the bac even if they don't pass all 5—they are more likely to feel it is worthwhile encouraging their students to take the 5 traditional core subjects that you would like to see all students taking. If you keep it as a pass/fail, all or nothing system, many schools will feel there is no point in even attempting the 5 subjects, as so many of their more disadvantaged students won't have a hope of passing it. You'll end up creating a two-tier system: schools which offer the bac and schools which don't—schools to which middle class aspirational parents will want to send their children, and the rest...

11. There are two ways you could work it if students didn't do one of the golden 5:

- 1. Only the golden 5 subjects would count. So if a student didn't do MFL, for instance, then only 4 grades could count.
eg if student (i) above got all those A* passes, but no MFL, the most they could get would be 8/10.
Someone who got A*, A, A, B + no MFL, would score 7.2
Someone who got A, A, A, B + no MFL, would score 7.0
- 2. Only students who took all 5 of the bac subjects would be eligible to be assessed for the bac. If they don't do the course, they can't get a bac award at all.
Option 1 would allow students to be considered for a bac award even if they didn't do all 5, but schools would encourage everyone they feel is capable of passing the bac to take the five subjects.
Option 2 would force schools to push as many students as possible to do the bac.

12. You could use the percentage of pupils scoring a 7 as the league table benchmark.

You could also use the average bac score for each school.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by George Grainger

BUSINESS STUDIES AND THE ENGLISH BAC

1. I am writing to express my considerable concern that the current proposal for the English Bac, excludes Business Studies as a Humanities option, along with History and Geography.

2. As a semi-retired Business Studies (and Economics) teacher, at GCSE and A level, with over 20 years' experience, I would like to draw your attention to the distinctive and significant contribution which study in this area can provide to students.

3. On an intellectual level, through an understanding of an extensive range of key concepts and the economic and social forces at work, students can develop the ability to understand the behaviour of businesses and their stakeholders, select information relevant to a context, examine contradictory arguments, draw valid conclusions, and make reasoned recommendations.

4. As far as skills are concerned, Business Studies offers ample opportunities for students to enhance not only their literacy skills, but also their numeracy, IT and oracy skills

5. Furthermore, on a more practical level, students will develop a more sophisticated appreciation of their roles as consumers, employees (and in some cases as entrepreneurs), and as a result, are more likely to make more positive decisions throughout their lives.

6. Finally, throughout my teaching career, I have been concerned that the curriculum offered to secondary students has reflected tradition and prejudice, reinforced by the experiences we have all had when we were in school. This is far less likely to represent the interest and priorities of current and future generations of students. Surely, we should be preparing young people for the future, not the past; school curricula should be ahead of the curve!

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Professor John F Healey

Submitted by Professor John F Healey in a private capacity

1. LATIN

1.1 The Latin GCSE (WJEC) should be included in the list of eligible subjects under the heading of “Language” for the English Baccalaureate.

1.2 Apart from the obvious fact that Latin is a language, it should also be noted that its grammatical structures are particularly illuminating for English speakers because of its inflectional system. It gives an insight into the structure of European and Middle Eastern languages which is invaluable for learners of these other languages. Arabic, for example, has a case-ending system which is similar to that of Latin and my experience as a university-level teacher is that prior understanding of the structures of Latin, even at GCSE level, is advantageous for learners of languages like Greek and Arabic.

1.3 Latin is the language of a literature which is fundamental to our civilization.

1.4 Latin is the historic language of the European Church and essential in the study of Christianity down to modern times.

1.5 I use Latin weekly at church: I assure you that it is useful to have an understanding of its grammar in this context!

2. CLASSICAL CIVILIZATION

2.1 The GCSE subject “Classical Civilization” should be included in the list of eligible subjects under the heading of “Humanities” for the English Baccalaureate.

2.2 All the material covered under this heading is historical. Indeed it is in reality more historical than the content of many history courses, since it focuses entirely on ancient texts and artefacts which come to us from the classical world. It puts students into direct personal contact with the ancient world, the sources on which ancient history is based.

2.3 So far as literature is concerned, the course includes texts such as Homer’s Iliad and Odyssey which are fundamental to the European cultural tradition and which had an enormous impact on the later development of literature and art. It is hard to think of any subject apart from religion which has had more impact on our Western human self-consciousness, our particular formation of humanity.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Both Latin and Classical Civilization should be integral to the English Baccalaureate, available under the “Language” and “Humanities” headings respectively.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by David Sheppard, Headteacher, The Charter School

We believe the purpose and benefits of the E-Bac and its value of as a measure of pupils and school performance are ill conceived and hurriedly acted on. We believe that a far more effective measure would be constructed if there were proper consultation.

We believe the measure prejudices the curriculum in favour of a narrow range of subjects and establishes an unnecessary and improper hierarchy of GCSE subjects. The comparative lack of value placed on equivalent subjects such as English Literature, RE and Music show an unnecessary political interference with the curriculum of schools.

The choice of subjects unbalances the curriculum. The poor performance in the measure of grammar and independent schools and the widespread educational criticism of the narrowness of the subjects included does

not support the Coalition Government's stated intention to remove unnecessary restraints and bureaucracy from schools.

The implications for students are to narrow their legitimate choices at 14, to undervalue their choices other than History and Geography. We think it will narrow the curriculum at 14 significantly and remove subjects of value from Key Stage 4.

All the international comparators for the E-Bac value creative and enterprise subjects equally with humanities. They value other humanities subjects such as RE and philosophy equally with History and Geography. They also value subjects which transmit cultural value such as Literature and Music equally highly. The International Baccalaureate is not examined at 16 and is broader based and more rigorous at post 16.

It is a narrow, expedient and broken backed measure.

21 March 2011

Further written evidence submitted by David Sheppard, Headteacher, The Charter School

I am writing to you as you are on the select Committee taking oral evidence on the English Baccalaureate. I would like you to be aware of views which I believe are widely held.

The English Baccalaureate creates an unnecessary hierarchy within GCSE subjects. This measure does not value creative subjects like Art and Music. It has meant that subjects like English Literature and Religious Education which also transmit profound cultural values are now seen as less important than History or Geography. The measure has undermined parity of esteem between GCSEs in the foundation subjects. Was this an unintended consequence of the policy?

The lack of success within the measure of numbers of independent and grammar schools was shocking to all of us who study these things carefully. It suggests that the policy did not reflect the curriculum of the grammar and independent schools, even though they operate without the constraints of the National Curriculum. We feel that this measure will impose significant restrictions upon curriculum choice.

We are very concerned that the measure was imposed retrospectively. The newspaper headlines such as "83% of pupils miss Government Target" contributed to the general round of press criticism that can follow pupils' published achievements. To establish a measure whereby young people's achievements can be denigrated without giving the pupils the opportunity to show how they might achieve, suggested a lack of respect for their efforts.

One of the main reasons offered for the measure is that there are schools that do not offer a broad and balanced curriculum that reflects parent concerns. The DfE is aware of those schools individually. Why has a "solution" to this problem been imposed on all schools rather than ensuring compliance amongst the small minority of schools who are not offering balance?

Our School context:

Outstanding School at OfSTED. Recently converted to Academy Status.

49% of our pupils already study History (Independent school average is 48%, Maintained school 30% and Academies 20%) 12% study Geography. 17% English Baccalaureate. We will have a significantly higher score this year as we already provide a broad and balanced curriculum.

5 April 2011

Written evidence submitted by Holte Visual & Performing Arts College

1. *Inclusion of Classical Civilisations GCSE in the English Baccalaureate*

2. *The opportunity for pupils to choose from any two "academically rigorous" choices rather than having to pick an MFL and a Humanities choice*

1. I warmly welcome the inclusion of classical subjects in the proposed new English Baccalaureate: GCSE Latin and Classical Greek under languages, and GCSE Ancient History under humanities.

2. However, I have two suggestions:

- The Humanities list should also include Classical Civilisation, which has an annual entry of some 6,000 and is in fact a longer established and more popular subject at GCSE level than Ancient History. It offers a unique combination of literature, history and archaeology.
- I also ask that you might consider the EBacc to be based on English, Maths, two Sciences and ANY TWO academic subjects so pupils who have more of an interest in Humanities over MFL (or vice versa) would still be rewarded. This could stop the worrying possibility that pupils are choosing between history and geography rather than considering both.

3. The omission of Classical Civilisation from the list of subjects counted as humanities is so far unexplained by the Department for Education. Indeed, its omission may be a simple error. No argument has been put forward that the subject is less academically demanding or rigorous than history or geography GCSE, nor has it been suggested that it should not be classed as a humanities subject. The inclusion of Ancient History within the EBacc makes any rationale for the exclusion of Classical Civilisation more difficult to determine.

4. Classical Civilisation GCSE has been steadily becoming more popular in the school I teach, an inner-city Birmingham school (49% pass rate with English and maths; CVA: 1024.1; 72% free school meals). I would hate the fact that pupils who have chosen this classical route might now miss out on the EBacc and the associated benefits.

5. I have therefore organised a petition signed by 264 people² (teachers and other professionals, as well as Classical Civilisations pupils) requesting that Classical Civilisations be included in the English Baccalaureate. I have scanned the lists and pasted them below.

6. My background is as follows: I am Head of History in an inner city Birmingham school with a six form entry, recently classed as 'Outstanding' by Ofsted. I have been teaching for 10 years in the History Department and have seen the numbers of GCSE history rise over the last four years. In 2010 we had 49 pupils entered for GCSE History with 78% of pupils reaching A*-C. Many pupils in the current year 10 have chosen both history and geography and we feel this should still be encouraged in the future. I have been trying to introduce the study of Classical subjects to pupils of all backgrounds by running a G&T Classics Club after school for the last three years. We also have one class of "Classical Civilisations" GCSE pupils in both year 10 and 11.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by the Council of University Classical Departments

The Council of University Classical Departments supports in principle the E-Bac as a way of identifying that pupils have studied a range of subjects which have given them fundamental skills in literacy, numeracy and analysis.

We believe, however, that the choice of subjects that will count towards the E-Bac needs further thought. The criterion for inclusion in the E-Bac must be the skills which study of that subject imparts. It is invidious to distinguish between different languages, between different ways of approaching (different) literatures, and between the study of the history of different places. Any move unduly to limit the range of rigorous subjects that count towards the E-Bac will have immediate and drastic effects on school curricula, and it is vital that in all marginal cases the border is drawn generously rather than meanly.

We are concerned that the initial statements about the E-bac and what will and will not be included in it and why, including the reply given to Lord Alton's question in the House of Lords, have revealed misunderstandings at the highest level about the content of GCSE courses, and an over-narrow interpretation of qualification levels. In particular, in the subject areas with which we are most familiar we deplore the exclusion of the (GCSE standard) WJEC Certificate in Latin (studied by more than 4,000 students) from what counts as a "language", and of GCSE Classical Civilisation from what counts as a humanity. Classical Civilisation is a composite subject involving the study of Greek and Latin literature, Greek and Roman history, and archaeology. We hope that no more needs to be said to illustrate its fundamentally humane, and historic, nature. It encourages the development of precisely those skills which the E-Bac is rightly keen to promote. We therefore urge the future inclusion of the WJEC Certificate in Latin and the GCSE in Classical Civilisation in the E-Bac.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Judith Mossman, Professor of Classics, University of Nottingham

1. As a former Chair of the Joint Association of Classical Teachers Classical Civilisation Committee I write to express my concern at the omission of Classical Civilisation from the list of humanities subjects which are deemed acceptable for the English Baccalaureate. It is excellent news that Ancient History does appear on the list, but if Classical Civilisation does not, then a number of schools, where it has kept classics alive over the years will drop it (up to 40% of schools have said they will have no choice but to do so), and thus close off for far too many pupils an important route to the benefits of a classical education. This is, I trust, an unintended consequence of this reform which you will be anxious to avoid.

2. You need have no fears that classical civilisation is an insufficiently rigorous subject: the syllabus as presently taught is extremely wide-ranging and provides opportunities to study substantial numbers of classical set books in detail, aspects of ancient history, and a substantial period of classical art history as well. This interdisciplinary approach is an excellent preparation for a university classics course, and promotes the development of critical thinking and the ability to call on evidence of various kinds for the understanding of classical culture.

² Have been sent to Parliamentary archives in the House of Lords, available for inspection by the public.

3. Another matter for concern is the absence of the WJEC exam from the E-Bac. This is an excellent exam which is sat by over 4,000 pupils and which has helped many schools recover Latin, an aim which I know you have been anxious to promote.

4. I therefore ask you most earnestly to add Classical Civilisation to the list of humanities subjects and add WJEC to the list of acceptable examinations.

5. Please believe that these changes, far from undermining your overall project to restore academic rigour to our schools, will materially assist in so doing, and will strengthen the other laudable measures you are taking to harness the power of classical subjects to improve educational standards.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Jonathan Kerr

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A personal reflection on the threat posed by the English Baccalaureate (E-Bac) and its limitations as a measure of pupil and school performance; concern about the choice of subjects included in the E-Bac; a (non-exhaustive) list of the implications of the E-Bac for pupils, schools and employers.

1. I hereby write to the Education Select Committee with evidence for the announced short inquiry into the English Baccalaureate (E-Bac). I make no request to give oral evidence. The committee need not treat the whole, or part, of the written evidence as confidential.

2. I am a PGCE (Drama) Student at Birmingham City University. As such I will qualify as a Secondary Teacher of Drama with Qualified Teacher Status in the coming months. I therefore write to the committee as an education professional currently involved in the English education system.

3. I am greatly concerned about the chosen subjects (English, maths, two sciences, history or geography, and a foreign language) and the awarding of English Baccalaureate certificates based on their performance on this measure. This policy represents a considerable narrowing of pupils' options during Key Stage 4 and there is a potent argument that this will resonate down the Key Stages through to Early Years schooling. Professionals and students studying important subjects of significant cultural and industrial significance, and which currently form part of the Secondary National Curriculum, are already experiencing marginalisation and anxiety. These include Art & Design, Citizenship, Design & Technology, ICT, Music, PE, PSHE and RE. Moreover, employers have no guidance as to the meaning of the E-Bac for them or how this award translates into genuine employability skills.

4. I am a specialist in a historically non-core and non-National Curriculum subject: drama. The abject lack of fundamentally creative subjects (with the exception of English) in the E-Bac is at risk of stigmatising many future pupils as failures. Pupils who, in fact, offer great talent and opportunity to our nation's culture and economy. Perhaps they would welcome an equivalent award which recognises their value to the nation? And what of the rich sporting, computing, musical or technical talent in schools who feel alienated by the scheme?

5. It has been shown over the years that school-age children have made the most of broadening curriculum and employment choices. There is no compelling argument that regression of this trend will benefit the nation's economy, job market, higher education system, health system, entertainment/arts industries, media sector, transport sector or environment. As this is also a (non-exhaustive) list of government interests I fail to see any benefit in the narrowing curriculum options to the country. It is important to re-state that the existence of the E-Bac, against which schools will be measured, will impact all stages of compulsory education.

6. There is an impracticality which the E-Bac's existence overlooks. It is a social one. The problem is that very few students from disadvantaged backgrounds actually take those subjects; and they simply won't be motivated to take them. They will have to be forced (perhaps by school leaders). This will lead to increasing social division amongst our future generations and, potentially, a more class-divided 21st century Britain than at any time during the previous century. Time and time again, education leaders, professionals and commentators have come back to the central question: "Are these core subjects right for all children?" I would advise the committee to consider evidence for this and to condemn the English Baccalaureate as proposed.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Jane Crow (Headteacher, Cardinal Newman School, Luton)

I would like to ask that the following points be considered in the forthcoming enquiry into the English Baccalaureate:

1. THE PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE E-BAC AND ITS VALUE AS A MEASURE OF PUPIL AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

- In my locality, I am aware of institutions where the GCSE results as measured by success in gaining 5A*-C grades and 5A*-CEM have increased significantly over two years but at the expense of a balanced curriculum and possible success routes for students post-16. Students have studied a very narrow curriculum consisting of Maths, English, Science (OCR which is considerably easier than the Broadbased Science Double Award and does not possess a good baseline of knowledge or skills for students to progress on to A Level), ICT BTEC and a number of Vocational Awards of very dubious merit but which carry the equivalency of four GCSE passes at Grade C+. The result has been increased parental confidence in these institutions but unfortunately the curriculum choices which are helpful in raising the status of the institution have been made at the expense of what is right for the students current and future education.
- The E-Bacc has the ability to steer institutions away from the types of choices being made above and therefore I believe it has real value in becoming a measure of school success but not necessarily of student success.

2. THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE E-BAC

- The choice of subjects as it stands at the moment appears to be flawed in that it will raise the status and participation rates of some subjects at the expense of other subjects which are just as valid and rigorous e.g. why would a student who had studied History or Geography be considered any more able than one who had studied Music, RE or Economics?

3. THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE E-BAC FOR PUPILS, SCHOOLS AND EMPLOYERS

- If the core is too large and demands specific time allowances per week for these subjects then others will get squeezed out of the curriculum and the education of the students will be diminished.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

- The government appears to be hoping that all schools return to offering appropriate courses for their students which I am sure that all the teaching profession would welcome.
- Is it possible to achieve this aim by including a larger number of academic GCSE's any three of which in addition to Maths, English and Science would lead to students being awarded a E-Bacc?
- Could the performance tables focus on the percentage of C+ grades achieved in each of these subjects so that parents can see exactly how each subject performs in a particular school rather than the percentage of students whose passes just happen to have been 'dovetailed' into passes in all the E-Bacc subjects?
- When the Wolfe Enquiry establishes which of the vocational qualifications have rigor and validity (and I believe that a number have real benefits for students) can we stop the process of offering equivalencies? This inevitably leads schools into adding qualifications to their curriculum which are "quick wins" because students get the equivalent of two, three and four passes when studying just one subject.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Chris Lord, Head of Classics, Chigwell School, Essex

SPECIFIC POINT ADDRESSED: THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE E-BAC

1. I urge the committee to reconsider the exclusion of the WJEC Certificates in Latin and of Classical Civilisation GCSE from the 2010 E-Bac list. This is urgent: students are already making option choices for entries for summer 2013, yet the list of subjects and qualifications which will count for the E-Bac of 2011 has still not been released. Schools, students and parents are therefore being asked to second-guess what decisions the Department for Education will make. This situation is, at best, unfortunate and unhelpful.

2. With regard to the WJEC Certificates in Latin:

- 2.1. The thinking behind the exclusion is unclear and illogical: the Department for Education allows what it refers to as "accredited IGCSEs", yet OfQual states that there are no such things as "accredited IGCSEs" and that such qualifications are rather Level 1 and Level 2 Certificates. The Welsh Certificates in Latin ("LATIN"!)) are such Level 1 and Level 2 Certificates and have been accredited under exactly the process and standards OfQual states it uses for accrediting so-called IGCSEs. Logic would suggest, therefore, that they ought to be included in the same way as the

- CIE Level 1/Level 2 Certificates have already been included. It would be bizarre if, in order for the Certificates in Latin to be included in an “English” Baccalaureate, WJEC would simply have to write on the syllabus cover of the Certificates “International GCSE”, when that title is entirely unregulated and undefined and is unaccepted for use by OfQual in England.
- 2.2. Inclusion of the Certificates in Latin would promote growth, exclusion will cause a reduction in the number of students studying Latin in the UK.
 - 2.3. Those schools which use the Certificates in Latin have already reported a significant rise (a doubling or tripling) in the number of students studying Latin at KS4 and intending to study Latin at KS5.
3. With regard to Classical Civilisation GCSE:
- 3.1. Classical Civilisation is a Humanity based on the historical study of literature, art and society. The Department for Education states that it wishes to encourage a wider take-up of geography and history, but has also created a category for the E-Bac which it calls “Humanities”. No argument has been put forward by the Department for Education that Classical Civilisation is not a Humanity (nor, indeed, has the Department anywhere defined what the Humanities are).
 - 3.2. The Department states that it did not judge the historical element of Classical Civilisation to be sufficient and yet no element of the content of either Classical Civilisation syllabus is less than 1,800 years old: the literature of the ancient world is historical content in its own right.
 - 3.3. I presume the Department for Education does not wish to discourage the study of the Iliad, the Odyssey or of Greek tragedy. This is life-changing stuff.
 - 3.4. The possible cost in terms of discouraging the study of history is negligible: only 2,000 state-school students took Classical Civilisation GCSE in 2010, while 198,000 students took History GCSE. Even if all students studying Classical Civilisation were to study History, it would not create a significant increase in the total History GCSE entry. Current projections based on a CSCP survey of schools (February 2011) indicate that exclusion from the E-Bac will cut Classical Civilisation entries from state schools by 29%. The potential educational loss, therefore, is much greater than the potential gain.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Mrs Barbara Roden

I am writing to you as the Head of Classics at Diss High School, a rural non-selective comprehensive school in Norfolk. All children in Years 7 and 8 study Classical Civilisation, some (currently 60) begin Latin in Year 9 and both subjects are studied to A level. We currently have a specialism in Humanities, with Classics as a lead subject, one of the very few schools to do so. Several of our students have gone on to study Classics at University, including one each to Oxford and Cambridge (both achieved first class degrees).

Pupils in current year 9 will be choosing their GCSE subjects in March (for examination in summer 2013): already, my school is insisting that pupils choose a modern language and either History or Geography as their Humanities option. Classics is strong in my school but I am worried about the impact this will have on Latin and Classical Civilisation in other schools. It would be good to have the position of Classics reconsidered before it is too late and these are my main concerns:

1. I am very disappointed that GCSE Classical Civilisation has not been included in the list of humanities subjects under the new English Baccalaureate. There are currently more than 50 pupils studying Classical Civilisation at KS4 in the school: the topics include the *Odyssey*, *Athens and Sparta*, Euripides’ *Medea*, *Pompeii and Herculaneum* and *The Archaeology of Roman Britain*. The course is rigorous and demanding, but the variety of units available (a mix of historical and literary topics) gives pupils a wide taste of the Classical world. [Even the literary units have historical content—the role of women in the ancient world, what it is to be a hero etc.] It is an indication of how much pupils enjoy the subject that at a Year 11 Parents’ consultation evening last month, a substantial number of those who follow the GCSE course have applied to continue Classical Civilisation in the Sixth form next year: this is particularly encouraging as the classes are mixed ability.

2. I have looked at the specification for Ancient History and I am convinced it would lead to fewer students at KS4. Although I love ancient History, the course is so much narrower than the Classical Civilisation specification and I was disappointed, in particular, to see nothing on Roman Britain. Apart from the lack of appeal to students and the expense of new books, I am also concerned that OCR is the only provider of the course (see below).

3. I am also dismayed that WJEC Level 2 Latin certificates have not been accepted for the Language element of the E-BAC, whereas OCR GCSE Latin has. This WJEC qualification was developed after the sole remaining provider of GCSE Latin, OCR, changed to a specification which enabled students to study language, but not verse and prose literature and civilisation, as had been the case in the past. In spite of massive pressure from teachers in both the maintained and independent sector and a meeting with the OCR subject officer and the Cambridge School Classics Project committee (of which I am a member), OCR refused to listen to our

concerns. It was felt that their intransigence would seriously affect the take-up of Latin at GCSE, which is already one of the most difficult subjects students can choose, and for that reason, the new Level 2 Certificates have attracted a lot of interest. The WJEC Latin chief examiner has been working for OCR for many years and was also concerned at the implications for Latin in schools by the introduction of the latest OCR specification.

4. I am very disappointed that the certificates are not deemed to be an acceptable alternative to the OCR GCSE qualification. The universities are accepting the certificate as the equivalent of GCSE and I understand there are already over 4,000 entries for the WJEC certificates in Latin in summer 2011. These are certainly not a “soft option”: the WJEC route actually means that a greater percentage of marks are given for language or literature than the Latin GCSE criteria currently allow. The requirement for the Level 2 core language paper involves a detailed knowledge of complex grammatical structures, far more than is required for Modern Foreign Languages and my students have also been studying well over two hundred lines of original Latin prose and verse literature, including selections from Virgil’s Aeneid and Cicero’s letters. Because of the flexibility of the qualification, they have also followed a “Daily Life” civilisation module which includes such topics as schools, slavery and Roman houses, thus giving them the context for the language and literature. From my current Year 11 group of 17 pupils, who are by no means all “high-fliers”, at least seven have expressed an interest in doing an AS in Latin next year, even though it will be taught off timetable.

5. I understand that the DfE allows “accredited IGCSEs” but that OfQual clarifies that there is no such thing: these are in fact Level 1 and level 2 qualifications—which is what WJEC Latin certificates are.

I am absolutely passionate about the value of Classics in schools and my work with other colleagues and PGCE trainees from the Faculty of Education in Cambridge has shown me that I am far from alone. I would urge you to reconsider the position of both GCSE Classical Civilisation and WJEC Level 2 Latin and to recognise them both as acceptable qualifications for the new Baccalaureate. I feel so strongly about the future of Classics in our schools, especially the maintained sector, that I would welcome any opportunity to be part of a wider discussion of the concerns I have raised—even coming to London if need be.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Anna Karsten

I write to you as a Classics teacher, concerned about the implications of the current proposals for the English Baccalaureate. Currently the proposal encourages the study of Ancient Languages but ignores the WJEC Level 2 Certificates in Latin. What is strange about this omission is that these have been accredited by Ofqual and the QCDA as being the equivalent of a GCSE and will be counted within the league tables for schools. My understanding is that iGCSEs, which are included in the English Baccalaureate, are not accredited. If the WJEC certificates are ignored there will be many schools that may drop the teaching of Latin. The WJEC Certificates were developed to allow a greater flexibility for teachers and students, allowing pupils to study mainly Language and possibly some Civilisation or mainly studying Literature or combining all three options. These Certificates are therefore rigorous and challenging and should not be ignored in the English Baccalaureate.

I am also concerned that Classical Civilisation is the only subject in the Classics suite of subjects that is not included in the English Baccalaureate. This should be included in the Humanities section of the EBacc since it encourages the study and understanding of other civilisations. It seems to me that at this point in History anything that encourages pupils to understand another culture and to learn to appreciate it should be fully encouraged. I understand that it has been claimed that it was not included because it does not contain enough Historical content; however this seems bizarre since Humanities does not just mean History or Geography but means the understanding of human society, and surely Classical Civilisation embodies this study.

If the current proposals are verified it will have serious implications for Classics teaching in schools. Far from helping to promote Classical subjects it may well signal the decline in the study, particularly amongst comprehensive schools where Classical Civilisation and WJEC Latin are popular.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by ASDAN

“The principal goal of education in the schools is to create men and women who are capable of doing new things, not simply repeating what other generations have done.”
Jean Piaget

1. About ASDAN Education—ASDAN is a pioneering social enterprise and internationally recognised awarding organisation, offering programmes and qualifications that explicitly grow skills for learning, skills for employment and skills for life.

2. Developed and managed by practitioners, ASDAN grew out of research work at the University of the West of England in the 1980s and was formally established as an educational charity in 1991. The stated purpose of the charity is: “The advancement of education, by providing opportunities for all learners to develop

their personal and social attributes and levels of achievement through ASDAN awards and resources, and the relief of poverty, where poverty inhibits such opportunities for learners.”

3. Today ASDAN provides support to more than 6,000 registered centres (mostly schools and colleges) throughout the UK and in other countries, publishes more than 100 titles, supervises the moderation and verification procedures for all its programmes, and develops new awards, curriculum resources and qualifications in response to the needs of the profession, and latterly, the needs of employers. ASDAN is apolitical, beholden to no one, and seeks to work with the government of the day to advance education standards and achievement across learner ability and age ranges.

4. ASDAN welcomes an inquiry into the English Baccalaureate. We respect the Secretary of State for Education’s view that that a broad and balanced subject-based curriculum should be at the very heart of every secondary school student’s learning experience until the age of 16; we respect his belief that “deep learning” is only possible through a prescriptive core of essential knowledge, which is progressively built on from four to 18.

5. However, we have grave concerns regarding the use of the current E-Bac as a performance measure for the education system. We wish to propose an alternative that will not only enshrine key principles, but also acknowledges the diversity of competences, abilities and interests of young people today, and that prepare our rising generations for the intense challenges of the 21st century workplace.

6. We have to question whether giving priority to particular subjects will of itself best prepare our young people for the diverse, competitive and changing world in which they will live and work. We also are concerned that the inordinate focus on the English Baccalaureate will have a lasting negative impact on the self-esteem and self-confidence of learners who will never perform at these levels (special needs and foundation learning young people).

7. In particular, ASDAN seeks to have the importance of the personal social health and economic education of young people clearly acknowledged and celebrated within the principles of the E-Bac, and made one of the explicit priorities of the education system. Schools and colleges rightly try to ensure that young people are literate, numerate and gain academic qualifications. But the emphasis on testing and passing exams often squeezes out other skills and qualities that are just as vital in today’s world.

THE PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE E-BAC AND ITS VALUE AS A MEASURE OF PUPIL AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

8. The Secretary of State for Education has energetically laid down a really clear principle: that a broad and balanced subject-based curriculum should be at the very heart of every secondary school students’ learning experience until the age of 16. He has done this because, philosophically, he genuinely believes that “deep learning” is only possible through a prescriptive core of essential knowledge, which is progressively built on from four to 18.

9. The philosophy may be sound. But the tool used to drive change into the heart of every school is a blunt one indeed. Setting targets based on GCSE performance measures in five subjects has already created significant tensions within the education system, and has raised grave concerns regarding unanticipated collateral damage.

In particular:

10. Whilst it may be true that some schools and academies have “chased” league table positions by deploying multiple equivalency vocational/IT qualifications to artificially boost performance figures, with scant regard for the whole education of their learners, the majority have responded to the diverse and varied skills, interests and abilities of their young people in a positive and affirmative manner. In many settings, a rich traditional GCSE offer is now complemented by vocational and practical learning pathways which maximise the potential for achievement for the widest number of learners possible. The current five A*-C with English and Maths measure (which includes success in GCSE equivalent subjects as well), we believe, captures this success adequately.

11. We believe that the E-Bac, as it stands at present, does little to acknowledge the wider achievements of a diverse range of learners, and, by signalling the primacy of the E-Bac subjects, learners on other pathways will feel de-valued and unacknowledged by government. Further, it seems arbitrary that a pupil who achieves high level passes in English, Maths, Science, two modern Foreign Languages, Music, Art and Design Technology (for example) will not be awarded the E-Bac.

12. In the same manner that some schools deployed vocational qualifications to inflate their league tables, it is now common knowledge that some schools have introduced a language GCSE at Christmas in Year 11, removing learners from subjects such as DT and Expressive Arts, simply to inflate an institution’s E-Bac league table position.

13. Some schools are considering dropping all PSHE education from the curriculum altogether to create space for compulsory languages and History/Geography, preferring to deliver PSHE on suspended timetable days instead. One has to question the wisdom of such a move, and the quality of the subsequent provision.

THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE E-BAC

14. The choice of subjects (beyond English and Maths, and perhaps Science) within the E-Bac has been one of the most contentious points since the initiative was announced and implemented. What about IT? What about RE as a Humanities subject? What about the impact of not acknowledging Expressive Arts and Design Technology subjects, which bring a rich vein of creative expression and technological input to a balanced curriculum? And what about practical and vocational qualifications, that do so much to motivate and engage (aside of the multiple equivalency issues)?

15. Most critically, what about an acknowledgement that the personal social and health development and well-being of a learner are as important as academic performance and attainment? The key to social mobility, opportunity for all and access to higher education for learners from disadvantaged backgrounds is a vibrant and effective toolkit of curricular and extra-curricular activity aimed at removing barriers to learning, and opening minds to new possibilities, new skills, and higher levels of personal effectiveness in learning, in employment and for life.

16. A recent report from the Health and Education Policy Committee of the Bow Group (“Putting the Health Back in Education”, February 2011) strongly asserts the need for PSHE education to be at the heart of the school curriculum.^[1] We ignore the personal and social development of our rising generations at our peril.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE E-BAC FOR PUPILS, SCHOOLS AND EMPLOYERS

17. In the latest CBI report on what employers want (Ready to Grow: business priorities for education and skills 2010), a resounding 70% of those polled said that school leavers entering a tough labour market should have more developed employability skills needed for success in any job.

18. And what are these skills? Self-management (flexibility, resilience, time management, reflective learning); Team working (co-operating, persuading, negotiating); Problem solving (applying creative thinking to develop appropriate solutions); positive attitude; enterprise; business and customer awareness, as well as basic skills.

19. Some would argue that these skills are integral to good learning, and the growth of these skills should be an emergent property from a well-taught secondary curriculum. However, because of high stakes accountability around performance grades, it is often the case that such “deep learning” is lost to narrow and formulaic teaching and learning designed to get the highest grades possible within the subject boundaries. And even where these skills are integrated in the learning process, they may not be recognised or valued as significant to develop in their own right to assist in meeting the demands made by HE or Employment.

20. It is right and proper that high academic standards are encouraged and sustained across the system. But there appears to be a missing ingredient unrecognised by the E-Bac: the need to develop high level personal skills: skills for learning, skills for employment and skills for life, which complement and supplement traditional subject-specific teaching and learning, and which improve the personal effectiveness of every future employee, from shop floor to boardroom.

INTERNATIONAL COMPARATORS FOR THE E-BAC

21. We believe that concentrating on attaining E-Bac outcomes may actually detract from system improvement. Much is being made of the U.K. slipping down the PISA tables. Part of the reason may well lie in a narrow focussed schooling to prepare students for the test, rather than encourage, nurture and grow functionality in reading literacy and numeracy (which is the focus of PISA tests). Our students may be performing better in our tests, but not making the necessary advances in applying knowledge and skills beyond the tests. As the quotes below suggest, there are other priorities within our system that have to be addressed, rather than worry about our national ranking, or concentrating on a performance measure that few could attain:

“...This report shows clearly that education systems built around the belief that students have different pre-ordained professional destinies to be met with different expectations in different school types tend to be fraught with large social disparities. In contrast, the best-performing education systems embrace the diversity in students’ capacities, interests and social background with individualised approaches to learning...” PISA 2009 p4.^[2]

“...Differences **between** countries represent, however, only a fraction of overall variation in student performance. Addressing the educational needs of such diverse populations and narrowing the gaps in student performance that have been observed remains a formidable challenge for all countries...” PISA 2009 on Reading Literacy p 13.^[2]

It is also worth noting that some high performing systems are reconsidering the aims and objectives of their curricula, in the realisation that pursuit of narrow academic grade increases may not be delivering the outcomes that prepare their rising generations for the 21st century workplace. For example, Singapore has just developed a policy structure (“Nurturing our Young for the Future: Competencies for the 21st Century”) which puts values, social and emotional competencies (such as self-awareness, self-management and relationship management) and 21st Century competencies (such as civic literacy, critical and inventive thinking and information and communication skills) to the fore.^[3]

A COMPROMISE SOLUTION

22. Given the introduction of the E-Bac, and, for the reasons given above, the range of significant issues that have been raised as a consequence of its introduction, ASDAN would like to propose a compromise enhanced solution.

23. The E-Bac should be a principled congruence between performance and provision. Yes, a young person must achieve a minimum of five or more GCSE equivalencies at C grade or above; indeed, this must include English and Maths GCSE. Thereafter, the school a young person attends must guarantee a curriculum provision that contains Science, Geography or History, a language and, we would argue, a PSHE and citizenship dimension for all learners up to the age of 16.

24. These dimensions would not necessarily need to be linked to single standalone GCSE qualifications; the dimensions may be supported by a range of alternatives, such as ASSET Language Ladder qualifications, the ASDAN Certificate of Personal Effectiveness, PSD, Employability, and short course accreditation opportunities from a variety of awarding organisations, meeting the needs of all learners at all abilities.

25. The criteria could even be met by extended enrichment opportunities offered through suspended timetable days, residential experiences and the manner in which the ethos of the school is reflected in the emergent curriculum experience, but which may not necessarily result in a formal qualification (therefore not linked to specific allocations of curriculum time).

26. If a school or academy met the curriculum dimensions demanded by the Secretary of State for Education, then any student from that school who also meets the minimum performance requirements of five A*-C including English and Maths would be eligible for the wrap-around English Baccalaureate certificate.

27. If schools did not meet the curriculum dimension requirements, they would have to make a compelling case for not doing so. Most importantly, following the clear principles behind “localism”, schools that did not comply would be held accountable by their stakeholder groups: parents, pupils, employers and governors within their local community. Students from such schools and academies would not be eligible for E-Bac certification, whatever their personal performance.

28. Ofsted may have a role in regulation here, through the teaching and learning focus of the new inspection framework.

29. This balance between individual performance and school provision would enshrine the principles of the English Baccalaureate whilst:

- Empowering schools to creatively meet the diverse needs of their learners.
- Avoiding the “downgrading” of other GCSE subjects such as RE, Expressive Arts and Design Technology, and also avoiding complex and confusing rules of combination and lists of included and excluded subjects.
- Accommodating the exciting curriculum diversity of UTCs (who may wish to explore “technical” German or French, and the History of Engineering, for example), free schools and studio schools.
- Supporting subject specialism and encouraging local diversity of provision.
- Enabling any changes to multiple equivalency vocational qualifications to be integrated into the E-Bac without costly curriculum or provision changes.
- Preparing the ground for pathways into apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeship provision which also specify and require the development of personal learning and thinking skills.

IN SUMMARY

30. Many young people still leave education without the skills to do anything with the knowledge they have accumulated: many enter the adult world without the general employability skills to exploit the academic and vocational qualifications they have attained. In a world of change and challenge, all learners, whatever their background and whatever their ability, can benefit from a more active skills-based approach to learning.

31. Knowledge-based teaching and assessment is comparatively easy. Teaching, developing and assessing personal learning and thinking skills, and the application of knowledge to solve unfamiliar problems in unfamiliar settings, is much harder. But here are rich rewards open to learners in every setting if improvement in personal effectiveness is enabled, acknowledged and celebrated.

32. ASDAN remains committed to the advancement of education, and the debate about what is meant by success. ASDAN seeks to gain an equitable balance between the acquisition of knowledge and the development of an advanced personal skill-set to put that knowledge to good use. We need to encourage the growth of creativity, innovation, employability, and the regeneration of community, self-confidence and self-worth. Together, we have to inspire the 21st century citizen.

REFERENCES

- [1] "Putting Health Back in Education": The Bow Group 2011:
- [2] "PISA 2009 Results":
- [3] "Nurturing our Young for the Future: Competencies for the 21st Century": Ministry of Education Singapore 2011;

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Mrs Aston

E-BAC INQUIRY: CLASSICAL CIVILISATION AS A HUMANITIES OPTION

1. As a measure of pupil and school performance it is rightly proposed that the E-Bac includes a humanities subject. However, the exclusion of Classical Civilisation is flawed.
2. Classical Civilisation develops the same critical and analytical skills as any other humanities subject, but with the additional enrichment of an introduction to the Classical world, which has so often been the preserve of a privileged minority. Its exclusion from the E-Bac would perpetuate unnecessarily the class divide and contribute to the depriving of another generation of this vital introduction to a significant part of our cultural heritage.
3. At a time when films and TV documentaries have helped stimulated interest in this fascinating field and when the availability of online resources have made the study of a much wider range of primary sources in schools possible, it is foolish to throw away the opportunity to develop another generation's understanding of so many of our roots in diverse areas such as literature, politics, town—planning, politics, entertainment, sport, philosophy, art and architecture in an historical and geographical context.
4. The introduction to Classical terminology, through the study of ancient literature in translation or study of particular societies such as Athens or Sparta, knowledge of which is so often reserved for a few, fosters important insights and understanding into the language of our own culture, which should be widely available.
5. The study of Classical Civilisation consistently touches upon social, moral, cultural and spiritual issues simultaneously, as it looks at whole societies within a small timeframe. It requires students to engage with important questions about their own values and encourages sympathetic enquiry into those of others.
6. Classical Civilisation draws disciplines together, making links between them and thus exploring what it is to be human on many levels. Including Classical Civilisation in the E-Bac will make a significant contribution to our young people's education in citizenship of our country and the world.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by the Classics Department, Hereford Cathedral School

1. We in the Classics Dept at Hereford Cathedral School were overjoyed to hear recently that Latin has been awarded status alongside modern languages as a GCSE level subject in the new English Baccalaureate. After many decades out in the cold, the Classics have been on the ascendant again for a while and this seems like public confirmation on a national scale.
2. However, when we heard subsequently from JACT that the WJEC Level 2 qualifications have not been included along with the OCR GCSE, we were dismayed, this time on a very personal level. Last year, with great relief, we changed from OCR, who, as you know, previously had a monopoly on the Classical languages, to the WJEC specification, as the only manageable option for schools like ours, who work on c 100 fewer hours than the national average for schools offering GCSE Latin.
3. These new qualifications already have 4,400 entries this summer and are having a massive impact on recruitment, with schools reporting double or triple the number of students continuing into Years 10 and 11 as a result of their introduction. They are without doubt rigorous, academic qualifications in Latin with a higher percentage of their marks given for language or literature than the Latin GCSE criteria currently allow. They are accepted as equivalent to GCSE Latin by universities, including Cambridge. Excluding them from the Baccalaureate will severely disadvantage the cause of Classics in a large and fast growing number of schools.
4. I am particularly anxious, not just for ourselves, but for three local comprehensives for whom we have just this last term set up a free extra-curricular two year course aiming at the WJEC qualification. Now in its second term, we have a class of 25 volunteer pupils working on one after-school session/week. So popular has it proved that one of the schools, The Queen Elizabeth Humanities College, is planning to introduce Latin in September for all pupils in Y7/8/9 and also in KS4, working towards the WJEC qualification. They are

specifically intending this to be part of the English Baccalaureate, as so few of their pupils succeed in modern languages, and they believe this will provide a new and inspiring alternative.

5. Without WJEC, none of these pupils will be able to achieve a qualification, as none will have the luxury of the 288 hours national average guided learning hours that schools spend teaching the OCR specification.

6. Without the recognition as part of the Baccalaureate, the Head teacher at Queen Elizabeth will not be able to proceed with his planned introduction of Latin, and I shall have to tell him so at the first meeting at which they have asked me to advise them on their courageous initiative. All the work which both they and we have put into the project could go for nothing.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Mrs Susan Rutherford

1. I am a recently retired RE teacher with over 35 years experience teaching RE. My issue is the exclusion of RE from the English Baccalaureate. You will by now, surely know that one in three secondary schools are cutting their RE provision from September 2011. RE is of course, compulsory, but there is no agreement as to how much of it there should be.

2. On 13 January, on Question Time I heard Michael Gove say that he wanted students to study History or Geography so that they would “understand and empathise with other people.” How can he say that RE does not do this at least as well as history or geography? I was in an RE classroom in Birmingham, two days after the Birmingham pub bombings. Some of the students had heard the explosions. I was in similar classrooms after 9:11, Lockerbie, the Boxing day tsunami, July 7th..... Students are, on such occasions overwhelmed with the need to understand how people can cause so much suffering to others whom they do not know, and how, if there is a God, he can allow it, or how anyone can go on believing in a God after such outrages. In the case of natural disasters they want to know how God, if there is one can stand by and do, apparently, nothing. Is this work in R.E. not helping students to understand and empathise with others?

3. Even in day to day lessons, we do not deal primarily with scriptural interpretation. We deal with issues which are of real concern to young people trying to face up to what life may cast upon them. We deal with issues such as marriage, divorce, euthanasia, abortion, what it means to be free, (the Egyptians are demanding freedom—why aren't they free now Miss, most of them are not in prison?) Trying to help a teenager to understand that being free does not mean being able to do whatever you want, is an interesting and ever challenging experience. It includes the idea that people owe duty to their community, or in other words, the Big Society, or in other words, love your neighbour. And the fact that freedom involves the right to vote in a fair election, and, some would argue, the duty to vote.

4. There is, of course, a body of academic facts to be learned in RE. In order to apply Christian, or Muslim, or Sikh or any other teaching to the issues raised, it is necessary to know a good deal about the religions and their teachings and beliefs. It is also part of understanding other human beings, to come to terms with the fact that there are different ways of interpreting the teachings. Not all Christians agree about divorce, or homosexuality, or women priests for example. It is necessary to know what the various religions teach about the various issues and understand how the teachings can be interpreted and applied differently by different believers.

5. There are wrong answers of course. RE is not just about opinion. Many students will ask why Muslims are terrorists. This sort of question opens up a deep discussion in which a great deal of learning can occur.

6. I could go on. I hope however, that I have written enough to show you that RE is about learning to understand and empathise with other people. It is a Humanity—what else could it be? It is as valid a study as History or Geography, and many teenagers see it as being of more relevance to them.

7. Schools will, of necessity, try to do as well in the league tables as they can. The way to do this is to give more resources to the Baccalaureate subjects and reduce the time, money and teachers available for the rest of the curriculum. This is already happening in some schools as plans are made for academic year 2011–12 and timetables are prepared in such a way as to give the greatest advantages to the subjects which count—the baccalaureate subjects. Does this government really want to reduce RE to a subject which is less important than history and geography, a second rate subject which does not count? RE offers students so much in terms of academic challenge and opportunities for personal development. It helps them to become the sort of people mature enough to listen to an argument and admit they did not get their ideas right the first time.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by the Better History Group

A. THE PURPOSES AND BENEFITS OF THE E-BAC AND ITS VALUE AS A MEASURE OF PUPIL AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

1. The E-Bac is a timely reminder that education has a broader purpose as well as ensuring the nation is economically competitive. Education should transmit the cumulative wisdom of the ages to the next generation, who can use it to build a better society, so that individuals can lead fruitful lives and become knowledgeable and responsible citizens.

2. The E-Bac is an intelligent response to the narrowly blinkered vision of education prevalent in recent decades. As Alison Wolf wrote in 2002: “Our preoccupation with education as an engine of economic growth ... has narrowed—dismally and progressively—our vision of education itself... Contemporary writers may pay a sentence or two of lip-service to other objectives of education before passing on to their real concern about economic growth. Our forebears, living in significantly poorer times, were occupied above all by the cultural, moral, and intellectual purposes of education. We impoverish ourselves by our indifference to them.”

3. The E-Bac sensibly reaffirms the importance of subjects and of subject knowledge. Too many leading educationists in recent years have sought to belittle subject disciplines. Professor John White, for example, has argued in many articles (inaccurately) that both the subject-based National Curriculum of 1988 and the subject-based E-Bac are somehow reactionary retreats to the secondary school curriculum of 1904 and survive only because of middle class conservatism. According to his reasoning, academic subjects are obsolete.

4. These arguments have led some headteachers to encourage their pupils to opt for vocational GCSEs rather than established academic subjects. They claim that their pupils find academic subjects too difficult and irrelevant and that vocational GCSEs are more relevant, improve motivation, self-esteem and results. In reality, every headteacher knows that vocational GCSEs are easier to pass than academic subjects, which is why some encourage pupils to follow this route, even if it is not in their pupils’ interests to do so; they do it because it will lead to better overall results for the school.

5. This practice flies in the face of ample evidence that these courses all too often are inappropriate. In her 2002 study *Does Education Matter?*, in a chapter significantly entitled “A great idea for other people’s children”, Alison Wolf described the failures of successive British initiatives in vocational education over a period of 40 years. For the most part they neither helped the national economy nor provided individuals with a clear route into an appropriate job. Her analysis was largely confirmed in the 2009 *Nuffield Review of 14–19 Education and Training*. As a result of these flawed initiatives, thousands of youngsters have left the tried and tested subject-based curriculum which would have given them the vital knowledge they need in order to make, understand and benefit from the world in which they are growing up, for the illusion of “relevant” but ultimately undemanding studies which in reality have helped them little.

6. Even more seriously, many schools which have given up on recognised and established subjects are in the least advantaged areas of the country. Since academic subjects remain essential for entrance to the best universities in the country and to the professions, a form of educational apartheid has been created which is now contributing powerfully to social division and immobility.

7. The best riposte to the anti-subject lobby and its baleful consequences for our young people is Michael F D Young’s *Bringing Knowledge Back In* (2008). He reveals the flaws in John White’s arguments, showing how he has based his view on outmoded and inaccurate caricatures of academic subjects and how children learn them. Young shows how in fact subjects evolve and how “powerful” knowledge helps pupils to transcend their immediate environment and see new horizons and new possibilities for themselves and for their society: “A curriculum cannot be based on everyday practical knowledge... (We) must be extremely cautious about replacing a curriculum based on specialist research and pedagogic communities with one based on the immediate practical concerns of employers such as key skills. The curriculum of the future needs to treat knowledge as a distinct and non-reducible element in the changing resources that people need access to in order to make sense of the world.”

8. Consequently, despite the inevitable problems of adjustment it created for many schools, the E-Bac is in fact of immense benefit to pupils, to their parents and to society as a whole.

B. THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE E-BAC

9. The present E-Bac subjects—languages, literature, mathematics, science, history and geography—have been central to education from the time of the 18th century Enlightenment, when reason rather than superstition came to direct educational thought. This is no coincidence. It is these disciplines which enable pupils to make sense both of the natural and human worlds. For precisely this reason they remain, with the possible addition of the creative arts, at the core of advanced education systems in most of the developed world.

10. Our main purpose in this submission, however, is to argue for the centrality of history. It is a standing indictment that a nation with as rich and important a history as our own should be virtually alone in the world in allowing some 70% of pupils to give it up as early as 14.

11. History is vital. In the words of the philosopher A.C. Grayling, “History is one of the indispensable studies. No person can be educated or civilised without it. This is because it stands alongside literature and the arts as one of ... the best sources of understanding human experience ...and it equips us to understand ourselves, to organise our lives and our societies, and to meet the future as best we may”.

12. Alone of the major subjects, history describes and explains how individuals and societies behave, change and interact with each other and the natural world. It helps pupils gain a sense of identity and of the shared values of our society. It is essential in developing among young people an understanding of how democracy has evolved and the main principles of democratic government.

13. No topic or issue, at family, local, national or global level, is fully comprehensible without knowledge of its history.

14. The discipline of history, refined by scholars over the centuries, creates a robust critical intelligence essential in a democratic and media-dominated society. It is also, in the words of Simon Schama, “the greatest, least sentimental, least politically correct tutor of tolerance.”

15. Should the E-Bac regulations specify History and Geography rather than either the one or the other? For the reasons set out in paragraph 9, we argue for the primacy of history among the humane subjects and we believe that history on its own should be a requirement within the E-Bac. However historians also need to know their geography and just as geographers need to know their history. Major themes in modern society like urbanisation, globalisation and climate change are incomprehensible for anyone who has not studied both subjects. *There is a strong case for requiring both subjects to be taught within the E-Bac.* We are currently discussing practical proposals with the Geographical Association to show how this might be done within the constraints of the timetable.

C. THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE E-BAC FOR PUPILS, SCHOOLS AND EMPLOYERS

16. Well and flexibly taught, the E-Bac will encourage schools to provide a broad, balanced and rigorous education for ALL their pupils. In particular it should substantially improve the life chances of less socially advantaged pupils.

17. Employers are increasingly looking for young people with basic skills of literacy and numeracy. They will welcome well educated and knowledgeable young people, trained in established academic subjects, with lively intelligence and personality, well prepared to be trained in the specific skills required in the different sectors of employment.

D. INTERNATIONAL COMPARATORS FOR THE E-BAC

18. The lack of a broad curricular framework has long put England badly out of step with other countries. We currently require pupils to start specialising and narrowing their curriculum much earlier than is the case, for example, in any other European system. Other systems, like the French *baccalaureat* or the German *Abitur* recognise the importance of subject knowledge in preparing students for working within a hi-tech modern economy. The Netherlands similarly insists on Languages, Mathematics, History, Arts and Science. The International Baccalaureate also provides a well-tryed and widely respected approach to creating a broad, balanced curriculum at the 16–19 level, which offers a useful model for the 14–16 phase. The E-Bac would therefore put England in line at long last with the very best in international practice.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Richard Vaughan

I am a Parent Governor at Thomas Alleyne's High School in Uttoxeter writing in my individual capacity.

Please find below my comments in response to your invitation for written submissions. The views expressed are personal and my own, not those of the Governing Body.

THE PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE E-BAC AND ITS VALUE AS A MEASURE OF PUPIL AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

In my opinion this arbitrary grouping of subjects undermines valuable vocational subjects and sets GCSEs unhelpfully above BTECs and diplomas. Simply isolating a few GCSEs from the total range of subjects and qualifications appears at best naïve at worst political tinkering.

If our shared goal is to add value and benefit to the widest cross-section of students, then this will have the opposite effect. Schools will be tempted to narrow the curriculum and student choice with one eye on the E-Bac measure rather than both eyes on the best possible individual student outcome. I prefer a broad based curriculum that prioritises local student needs over unrepresentative central measures.

THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE E-BAC

The criteria by which subjects have been included or excluded seems grossly inconsistent. For example, to include ancient history and ancient languages such as Biblical Hebrew, but exclude Humanities such as Religious Education in a measure directed to “basics” seems bizarre. The Government must at a minimum consider the compelling case and overwhelming support for the subject of Religious Education.

The National Curriculum website informs that one of the purposes of RE is to “[offer] opportunities for personal reflection and spiritual development. It enhances awareness and understanding of religions and beliefs, teachings, practices and forms of expression, and of the influence of religion on individuals, families, communities and cultures.” In practice in RE what I see is students engaged in informed debate and making sense of the world they are inheriting. Where else do they have the stimulus and focus to form values and opinions about the ethics, philosophy and history that will help them take their place in society? It is my belief that a genuinely broad education will deliver the Big Society much more effectively than a narrow measure of academic attainment.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE E-BAC FOR PUPILS, SCHOOLS AND EMPLOYERS

I’m deeply concerned that pupils will be narrowed into an unsuitable choice of subjects in an attempt to deliver the measure.

It seems likely that schools will either submit to this arbitrary measure and as a result serve their students and communities less well, or expend effort and resources in explaining to their many stakeholders why they are ignoring the E-Bac.

Employers will be faced with yet another measure to make sense of among the existing overcomplicated qualification system without gaining any clarity or assurance of its worth.

In summary, to be credible the E-bac in my opinion needs to be based on a credible set of criteria across all subjects and qualifications, and specifically include RE. If the Government is unable to set out these basic foundations then I strongly urge the withdrawal of the E-bac as a measure of performance.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by David Boothroyd

1. I wish to submit my thoughts to the Inquiry into the E-Bac. I am the Head of History at the Minster School in Southwell, Nottinghamshire. There are a number of problems and issues with the way that the E-Bac has been introduced, but I am in favour of what I think are the principles behind it.

PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE E-BAC

2. As a method of comparing schools I think it will be far more effective than the current measures. Even with the inclusion of English and Maths in the 5A*-C measure, we are not currently comparing like with like. I know of many schools in Nottinghamshire where students are repeatedly entered for English and Maths (modular and linear courses) until they achieve a C and then study a variety of BTEC or National qualifications to achieve the five C grades. The problem here is not that there is no place for BTEC and National courses, but the “value” attributed to them. A National qualification is measured as three GCSE C grades, but the level of knowledge, understanding, skills and the time required to achieve them is nowhere near what is required to achieve one C grade in History or Geography. Although my school is towards the top of the league tables for Nottinghamshire, we still offer a range of traditional academic GCSEs with some alternative courses, and suffer in terms of Contextual Value Added and league tables as a result. However, I would argue that we are supporting our students in a far more appropriate manner and preparing them for the world of work. In other words, BTECs and National qualifications have been used to inflate the results of large numbers of schools artificially as they equivalence to GCSEs has been wildly overestimated. This has also had a massive impact on Ofsted judgements which rely on CVA data to make a judgement, but I suspect that would need a separate inquiry...

CHOICE OF SUBJECTS

3. In terms of the subjects included I am broadly in favour of the decisions made so far. The subjects chosen demonstrate a level of skill in a range of academic subjects. I would also argue that to be an indicator of a broad and balanced education an arts or practical subject should be included as well (Drama, Art, Music, Design and Technology GCSE etc).

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE E-BAC FOR PUPILS, SCHOOLS AND EMPLOYERS

4. This is an area of concern. The E-Bac has been sprung on schools, which are complex organisations who need to be able to plan for the future. It may well be that schools will need to prepare for staffing changes at a time of budget cuts and uncertainty. In addition, it seems unfair to retrospectively apply the E-Bac for last

year's results when schools were (understandably) trying to achieve the best results they could against what they thought were the criteria. There are also lots of unanswered questions, including the most important: Will the E-Bac play a part in admissions for university? Will it be required to study A levels at Sixth Form?

5. At our recent Year 9 options evening both students and their parents had a lot of concerns about the E-Bac and its future importance, but we had to admit that we simply did not know the answers to their questions. This is not very satisfactory for anybody.

6. However, overall I am in favour of the E-Bac. I am in my 10th year of teaching, I think that I am a good teacher and I believe passionately in the relevance and importance of my subject, History. This is the first time in my teaching career that I have heard anybody in government say anything positive about my subject or do anything concrete to enhance its status.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Andrea Lea

1. THE PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE E-BAC AND ITS VALUE AS A MEASURE OF PUPIL AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

The E-Bac will bring students' learning in-line with students' learning internationally so they don't lag behind in their education. It is an excellent idea for students to study Maths, English, Science, a foreign language and a humanities subject to give them a broad and balanced education. This will help schools measure pupil and school performance on real GCSE academic achievement instead of GCSE equivalents which in reality are not equivalents.

2. THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE E-BAC

I think students should study both History and Geography rather than just one. Maths, English and Science are a must but pupils should be guided and given the choice of which science to study and they should not necessarily have to study all three sciences. Studying a foreign language is a necessity in today's global society—it paves the way for improvements in economic trading, breaks down cultural barriers and makes young people more tolerant of other nationalities.

3. THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE E-BAC FOR PUPILS, SCHOOLS AND EMPLOYERS

The question needs to be asked if ALL students should study for the E-Bac or is it a qualification aimed for the more academic students? This will have implications on schools and their results and also, it needs to be remembered that some schools only accept more able students so their E-Bac results will automatically be much higher than a school whose intake is of average ability students. I am already aware of a school whose Year 9 students have taken their options and due to all the media hype about the E-Bac, the school is now oversubscribed with students choosing to do History or Geography and the school does not have the teachers or resources to teach these two subjects to so many students. Parents whose children may not be academically able have opted for the E-Bac as that is what they have heard via the media that they should study. Having said that, students in Year 9 are very young to be choosing subjects which may alienate them from certain careers. If they choose the wrong things too early this could limit their employment opportunities so an E-Bac for all may be a good idea and then students could specialise later. Other subjects have seen a dramatic fall in numbers due to this. Employers looking for a certain type of candidate would be able to cream off these candidates by advertising that the E-Bac is a pre-requisite.

4. INTERNATIONAL COMPARATORS FOR THE E-BAC

The UK needs to look at countries in the world whose education system allows young people to achieve and learn to a much higher standard than its own and take the best bits from each of these countries and implement it in the UK's education system to make it a world class system where academic achievement is of the highest standards so the UK's children (who are the future) leave school with a world class education where standards of learning and achievement are excellent. The UK is lagging behind and this will affect the country economically, politically and socially.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Dr Iain W Farrell, Director of Studies, Harrow School

Harrow School (DfE 310–6000) is not too concerned about the Ebac. Officially our pass rate was 0%.

The problems with the Ebac are that it:

- defines Humanities too narrowly (Geography, History and Class Civ only, not RS);
- is aimed at the majority of English schools that do not require a MFL at GCSE;
- recognises only CIE IGCSE not Edexcel IGCSE;
- assumes a school policy of all pupils taking all three sciences to some level at GCSE; and
- is aimed at reducing the number of soft subjects at GCSE such as commercial and vocational studies.

At Harrow we do not hit all the Ebac buttons—for reasons with which we are happy.

Most boys (80%+) take either Geography or History, some take both but some take neither in favour of more science or languages. All boys take GCSE RS in Year 10 a year early and achieve 90%+ A*/A grades, but the Ebac awards this achievement no value.

All boys at Harrow take at least one MFL at GCSE either in Year 10 or 11 (mainly French) many take two and some take three or even four MFLs. From 2011 all our MFLs will be taken as Edexcel IGCSEs. One third of pupils also take Latin GCSE.

All of our pupils pass IGCSE Edexcel Maths. We have one of the strongest Maths departments in the UK. Maths is the most popular A level and accounts for a higher proportion of A* and A grades at A2 level than any other subject in our school. Our senior Maths team has just won the national (Hans Wodya) Maths competition—but, according to the Ebac criteria, none of our pupils achieve a recognised qualification in Maths at GCSE—something is wrong here.

We rejected, over 20 years ago, a policy of making all pupils take three sciences to GCSE, but we do require all pupils to take a full science GCSE: 45% take all three separate sciences, 40% take two and 15% take one—the latter are the ones who make curriculum space for more Humanities, languages and creative subjects.

We do not offer any soft subjects at GCSE.

So for a strongly academic school such as Harrow, the Ebac does not promote a broader and more rigorous academic curriculum and it could have the reverse effect if we allowed its current criteria to influence our policies. However, it could be useful to steer the choices of pupils and parents if they are undecided.

We hope that the criteria will be adjusted next year to recognise a wider range of Humanities and that one separate Science subject at GCSE provides the same rigour, if not the knowledge, that two or three Sciences provide. Recognition of Edexcel's IGCSE Maths and other Edexcel IGCSE syllabi would remove the anomaly of a school such as Harrow apparently failing all of its pupils: but we are used to this after a decade or more of DfES league tables.

What Universities will want for the foreseeable future are three academic A levels and whatever GCSE portfolio supports that goal will be acceptable to them.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by The Royal Academy of Engineering

1. Founded in 1976, The Royal Academy of Engineering (the Academy) promotes the engineering and technological welfare of the country. Our fellowship—comprising the UK's most eminent engineers—provides the leadership and expertise for our activities, which focus on the relationships between engineering, technology, and the quality of life. As a national academy, we provide independent and impartial advice to Government; work to secure the next generation of engineers; and provide a voice for Britain's engineering community.

2. The Academy has consistently made the case for rebalancing the UK economy toward productive industry since the very start of the global economic crisis. We believe that this requires greater emphasis placed on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) subjects in schools.

3. To succeed in engineering people need a thorough grounding in both mathematics and science. Therefore we welcome the inclusion of both at the core of the English Baccalaureate. We urge Government to take steps to ensure that recent progress with the uptake of triple science at GCSE is maintained.

4. In addition, we urge Government to take steps to promote other *practical* and *technical* STEM subjects such as Engineering, ICT, Design and Technology and related qualifications such as Economics, Electronics or Computing as these too play a role in preparing young people for work in productive industry.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Jolyon English

I am currently training to be a teacher on a PGCE Secondary programme at Roehampton University.

After a fulfilling 20 year career in business I have opted to retrain as a Teacher. Since I've always enjoyed teaching and training, this has been a positive step for me.

My subject is Business Education—this was not taught when I was at school though Economics did feature at A Level. Had it have been, then I feel that the time I spent at school would have better prepared me for the life I have lived since leaving it. On returning to the school environment I have been impressed by the engagement of young people in classes where business related subjects have been taught. This has ranged from examination based classes through to mandatory Citizenship, ICT, Personal, Social, Health, Economic and Enterprise (PSHE) lessons.

Why is this? Well I think it's because young people can relate to it, get inside it, own it, become stimulated by it, frustrated by what they see and experience in the real world, then take the opportunity to challenge what they find in the classroom and beyond.

I have a huge regard for the traditional academic subjects currently grouped in the Secretary of State for Education's vision of the English Baccalaureate. Each one offers young people the chance to stretch their intellect. However very few of these offer the majority the chance to prove their ability to demonstrate analytical thinking, balancing risk against probable outcome, apply common sense with the potential to earn rewards within and outside of the school environment. I feel that a bold enhancement of E BAC would be to include Business Education—given the Department of Education's expectations of "Business" to contribute so much to the future of state education in England it seems short sighted not to recognise the study of business at the pinnacle of compulsory education within this country.

As a bank employee for many years I invested a significant proportion of my spare time to earn a professional qualification. It is currently the fashion to criticise banks. One avenue of investigation that has not been pursued is that the majority of bank employees are not qualified in their profession in the same way that is expected of lawyers, accountants or architects. In addition to an educated financial sector we must strive to deliver young consumers who are capable of assessing its products and services so that it is regulated by individuals at the point of sale rather than by government after the event. Business Education supplies the means to achieve this so its importance deserves to be validated through the English Baccalaureate.

As a trainee teacher with lessons to plan for today's school pupils I'm going to spare you a 3,000 word submission. Instead I hope this short summary of my opinion, which I hope is written in layman's terms, provides a grounded view of why Business Education deserves to be elevated from its place outside of the National Curriculum today into the mainstream of the education of England tomorrow.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Andrew Hampton

I am the Headteacher of a co-ed, non-selective Independent School.

I am fundamentally opposed to the E-Bac because:

1. It promotes the idea that there is a hierarchy of subjects at GCSE with the so-called core being more highly regarded as qualifications than other GCSEs. Whilst it is undoubtedly important that all young people focus on their literacy and number skills it is equally important that they acquire other skills as well.
2. Having fought for the last century to raise the profile and status of vocational education, this is a major backward step, placing undue emphasis on academia. As such the E-Bac is actually out of step with the Government's own system of scoring vocational qualifications equally with academic ones.
3. We already have a system of accountability in England which counts around half of our 16 year olds as failures because they do not gain five or more A* to C grades at GCSE, The E-Bac will produce yet another false benchmark by which schools and pupils will be judged. We should be moving away from such measures to celebrate and encourage young people at school to achieve in whatever way they can—be that through E-Bac type GCSEs or GNVQs in career-orientated learning.
4. The E-Bac will produce yet another league table. There is no evidence that I know of to say that league tables improve results. If the government is so committed to this sort of accountability why are there no league tables in Scotland and Wales? League tables create a sense of disappointment amongst the populace who are always ready to accuse schools of failing.
5. If the government wishes to raise standards in education they should do one thing—reduce class sizes.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Denise Davies

Could I please ask you to consider the following in your enquiry:

- The merits or otherwise of defining “the humanities” so narrowly. I cannot understand for example, why RE and classical civilisation would not be counted.
- The position of subjects that support learning across the curriculum, the best example perhaps being music, a challenging, important and difficult academic subject which incorporates creativity. It also has numerous extrinsic benefits: improving numeracy and literacy, supporting social cohesion and developing children’s emotional intelligence.
- The value of subjects such as music not only to the individual learner but for our society as a whole. Its importance is backed by public polling conducted by the ISM and YouGov, with 97% of those offering an opinion backing the provision of music in schools.³

In the UK, music education is world class and generates both the audiences of the future as well as the professional musicians who contribute so significantly to our constantly growing creative and cultural economy. The decision by the Secretary of State for Education not to include music in the English Baccalaureate is of grave concern and I hope that the Education Select Committee can urge him to reconsider.

There is no doubt that the English Baccalaureate as it is currently framed will lead to schools deciding not to offer music at GCSE level. The net result will be the loss of the very real benefits of a music education and an adverse impact on educational standards generally. It will also undermine our currently vibrant creative and cultural economy.

While I appreciate that you will inevitably have much “special pleading” to consider I would argue that music is at least as powerful as sport in building an individuals’ character and that of the society to which they belong. Including Music GCSE in the English Baccalaureate will not jeopardise the intent of the Government—pupils will still study a broad-range of subjects which remain challenging, rigorous and academic. Darren Henley, in his independent review of music education published in February, made the key finding that Music “should be included as one of the subjects that go to make up the new English Baccalaureate.” And the Government responded by saying that music is an “enriching and valuable academic subject”.

- To consider, and urge the Secretary of State to consider, schools’ likely decisions more generally not to pursue in any depth subjects not included in the E-Bac and the consequent impact on our society and economy.
- And finally I would urge you to consider that our students surely deserve a range of career and personal development options and all should have the chance to succeed. Encouraging more young people to learn French is one thing. Forcing those who have no wish to learn or intention to use another a language is wasteful of everyone’s efforts.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Elizabeth Wolverson on behalf of the London Diocesan Board for Schools

1. I make this submission on behalf of the London Diocesan Board for Schools.
2. We share with our schools the care and education of 50,000 children in Church of England schools in London. In addition, under the Diocesan measure, as part of the Established Church we are given a legal duty of care regarding Religious Education and Collective Worship for all children who live in the Diocese, of all faiths or none.
3. One of the ways that we fulfil that duty is through our work on Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education which every Local Authority is required by law to have in place. We serve on 17 such SACRE’s and we also serve on 17 Agreed Syllabus Conferences which determine the Religious Education Syllabus for Community Schools in each Authority. This puts us in a position to speak with some authority about RE in London.
4. In our Church Schools it has been relatively easy to ensure that children and young people are given the opportunity to access good quality Religious Education. As a Christian organisation we use as a guiding principle the two great commandments of Jesus, ‘To love God and to love our neighbour as ourselves’. We believe that in order to ‘love your neighbour’ it is necessary to understand something about what makes your neighbour tick; the principles and values that guide their lives. Our diocesan guidance to governors is that while children should learn about Christianity they should also learn about the other faiths and beliefs that so enrich the life of our city in the 21st century.
5. In our work for Community Schools we use much the same principles and feel strongly that all children should learn about religion and belief systems and their impact on people’s lives and on society.

³ Incorporated Society of Musicians (ISM)/YouGov poll, January 2011.

6. The last few years have shown a real growth of interest in RE as an examined subject and HMI and the late QCDA's figures will show that there has been steady growth in take up; the short course has proved very popular. We may have moved a long way from the time when theology was known as the 'Queen of the Sciences' but we still have young people who are interested and motivated by fundamental questions about life and religion and for whom the syllabus provides an academic and stimulating challenge requiring them to not only learn about religion but also to think through complex philosophical and ethical issues.

7. One of the most popular of the examined subjects is that of religion and ethics and it would seem logical that the more people learn and explore how individuals and communities respond to ethical issues the healthier and more harmonious society becomes. It seems spectacularly short-sighted to decide at this moment in time when there is an emphasis on the "big society" to cut off something that is helping young people to be thoughtful about the very issues it is seeking to address.

8. The decision not to include RE in the E-Bac has already begun to have an effect in schools. Even in church schools where RE is given prominence Head Teachers are having to think very hard about offering RE as an examined course. If realistically a student can only hope to achieve 5 A–C passes they have to be in the subjects which qualify for the E-Bac and yet these may be students who would most benefit in the long term from the content of a Religious Studies course.

9. The rather feeble response that has been sent when we have complained to the DfE about this issue was that RE remains a statutory subject for all young people in this country. That is of course a disingenuous answer because as soon as a subject ceases to be examined then it loses credibility.

10. At the same time as this has been happening there has been an attack on the subject from a new direction, it almost looks like a pincer movement to starve RE of oxygen. A subject will soon die if there are no teachers to teach it and the allocation for teacher training for this year has been slashed to the point that many training institutions have been allocated so few students that their course will not be viable. (Please see table below).

Brighton	23	13	43%
Chichester	11	7	36%
Canterbury Christ Church	19	11	42%
UEA	14	8	43%
Oxford Brookes	16	8	50%
Oxford University	19	10	47%
Roehampton—London	17	9	47%
Cambridge Homerton	20	12	40%
IofE—London	26	15	42%
Kings College—London	18	10	44%
Southampton University	16	8	50%
University of East London	14	7	50%
St Mary's Twickenham	21	9	57%
University of Winchester	10	5	50%

(The first column is the current number of places; the second column shows the allocation for the PGCE Year 2011–12; the percentage cut is in the final column.

These are for the London/SE providers which cover the diocesan area and beyond.)

11. I am sure that it will be argued that these cuts reflect the government initiative to encourage Teaching and Training Schools. However that initiative will not result in outstanding and well trained RE teachers if they cannot find Training Schools that offer the subject to be examined and therefore will have less well staffed and appropriately funded departments.

12. There appears either to be a blatant attempt to devalue and eventually starve out a subject from the curriculum or at best an inept series of disjointed decisions which will have grave implications for the survival of a fascinating and thought provoking academic subject which can also be a force for good in society.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by T Hammond, Headteacher, Hagley Catholic High School

1. I would like to start by thanking you for the opportunity to present the views of the Senior Leadership Group of Hagley Catholic High School, Worcestershire, to the Select Committee with regards to the introduction of the English Baccalaureate. I appreciate that you have asked for specific responses to identified points and I will endeavour to address these.

2. The main purpose of my letter is to raise our concerns about the status of RE as an academic subject. Here at Hagley Catholic High School and across the Catholic sector we strongly share the Government's belief that schools "should offer all pupils a broad range of academic subjects to age 16", and give a welcome to the English Baccalaureate (E-Bac) as one of the ways in which that aspiration may be promoted.

3. We also further recognise that “getting good passes in rigorous GCSEs or iGCSEs” will be key in ensuring that the E-Bac commands the respect enjoyed by other baccalaureate systems that deliver a broad educational curriculum. However, we are very surprised and concerned that Religious Studies GCSE seems not to have been included in the initial list of qualifying humanities subjects.

4. As last year’s very useful Ofsted report (Transforming Religious Education: Religious Education in Schools 2006–09) pointed out, the quality of RE/RS teaching in English schools varies considerably (especially where teachers are non-specialists and short-course GCSE courses are followed). However in Catholic Voluntary Aided schools teaching of RE tends to be of a high standard and almost all pupils are entered for the two-year full GCSE following the “Catholic Christianity” option offered by the examination boards. Moreover, in such schools RE is well resourced, rigorously inspected and normally taught by specialists.

5. In RE pupils have the opportunity to engage not only with the most profound metaphysical questions concerning human existence and the nature of reality, but also with the most pressing ethical problems of our day. RE itself is a broad based humanity, demanding knowledge and skills in history, textual criticism, anthropology, ethics, philosophy and theology. Thus it seems aptly suited to being part of any qualification which seeks to ensure that our pupils receive a genuinely broad education. We therefore urge the Select Committee to ensure that RE be regarded as a humanity for the purposes of the English Baccalaureate.

6. We are aware that a number of our colleagues in non-Faith schools share our concerns with regard to the status of RE and believe that the exclusion of the subject will have a significant impact on staffing. They would argue that they currently have well qualified teachers who deliver high quality learning and teaching to Key Stage 4 students who are subsequently very successful. If RE is not included in the E-Bac, fewer pupils are likely to follow the subject and therefore the school will have surplus staffing in RE which will have to be addressed.

7. Beyond the position of RE we also have some concerns with regard to the impact on the Arts, other Humanities and Technological subjects and Vocational alternatives. The arguments outlined in paragraph 6 for RE could also impact in the same way for other subject areas.

8. Further, in line with most schools, our pupils opt for a core and optional curriculum in Key Stage 4. At present over 90% of our pupils follow a full programme of GCSE’s and over 85% achieve at least five Grade C passes. If pupils have to study a language and humanity they will have fewer opportunities to study Technological and Arts based subjects, for some pupils these subjects contribute to a more appropriate programme of study. One way of addressing this issue would be to have a number of pathways to achieve a baccalaureate—the academic English Baccalaureate, an Arts Baccalaureate (English, Maths, two sciences a language or a humanity and an Arts subject (Drama, Art or Music) and a Technological Baccalaureate (English, Maths, two sciences, a technology subject and ICT). This would provide students with three route ways to secure a Baccalaureate standard from academic subjects but allowing some flexibility and personalisation for our students and provide employers with opportunities to understand the pathways students have followed.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Cath Taylor

I have no idea what the E-Bac is supposed to achieve other than discrimination.

It is a VERY narrow choice of subjects that do not seem to have any relevance to modern working life.

My most pressing concern in the inclusion of a foreign language. I do not have a GCSE in a language but I am fluent in British Sign Language (BSL). There is no GCSE available in BSL.

Anyone who has a speech or hearing disability is not capable of taking a GCSE in a foreign language. This includes most BSL using deaf people, some people with cerebral palsy, some people with motor neuron disease and probably many other disabilities I have no knowledge of.

It seems ridiculous to create a qualification that Stephen Hawking would be unable to achieve not through lack of intelligence but because his disability requires him to use a machine to speak.

The other choices of subjects are also quite narrow. It is compulsory for students to take RE but it is not included in the E-Bac, that seems totally illogical and can serve only to devalue the subject. There are more humanities than just History and Geography, and as only one has to be included children will be discouraged from taking both.

The use of IT is part and parcel of life for most people, employers want people with IT skills but again this is not included. The ability to touch type would be an asset to most people but it is not taught in all schools.

Why is a social science not included? Why not include an art subject or music?

The E-Bac also discriminates against children with particular talents or gifts. If a child is a gifted linguist or musician then this should be encouraged.

What is the purpose of the E-Bac? Is it to measure achievement or is it to ensure a rounded education? If the latter then it should have more subjects and a mixture of Level 1 (pre GCSE) and Level 2 qualifications, not just GCSEs.

The E-Bac should be available in a number of formats such as E-Bac (General), E-Bac (Sciences), E-Bac (Arts).

In my opinion the E-Bac should consist of 10 subjects, up to five at Level 1 and at least five at Level 2. This would allow children to drop subjects before GCSE but still obtain a qualification in that subject. English Language and Maths would have to be obtained at Level 2. For the general E-Bac the other eight subjects would be:

- 1 or more science.
- 1 or more art or practical subject (art, music, drama, music, design, BTEC blacksmithing etc).
- 1 or more humanity or social science.
- 1 or more language or subject involving the use of language (GCSE languages, BSL Level 2 certificate, history—note history can be a humanity or a language subject).
- 1 or more subject involving the use of IT (CLAIT, GCSE, Key Skills IT).
- 3 other subjects of choice.

This would allow qualifications such as BTEC or qualifications lower than GCSE to be included such as music grades and LAMDA qualifications).

The specialist E-Bacs would also include English and Maths but the choices would be from a selection of subjects in the specialist area eg to gain the E-Bac (Sciences) a student would have to take three separate sciences at GCSE (physics, chemistry and biology) and another five subjects at Level 1 or 2 of which two would be maths/science subjects such as additional maths or forensic science.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by S A Kurt, Head of Classics, Dartford Grammar School

A. CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED: LANGUAGES: LATIN

1. As a Latin teacher with 37 years' experience, I have always been convinced of the educational and intellectual value of Classical languages and have been heartened by the resilience of Latin despite direct competition in most school option schemes with Modern Languages. I totally endorse the inclusion of GCSE Latin among E-Bac languages.

2. However, I have also experienced what I see as a negative influence from within the subject: for at least 20 years, the OCR Board had the monopoly of Latin assessment in England and Wales, and students were not always well served by the limited choice of set texts, the imbalance of different assessed elements, and especially by unsatisfactory marking and grading methods. Things came to a head a few years ago when OCR revealed its new specifications for first exam 2011. The Cambridge Schools Classics Project, which produces the Cambridge Latin Course used by about 80% of schools offering Latin, felt that the faults of this new syllabus were such that they devised an alternative exam in collaboration with the Welsh Joint Examinations Committee (WJEC). Most of the examiners who had previously served OCR transferred their allegiance to WJEC and the new syllabus has been endorsed by leading subject bodies such as Friends of the Classics and the Council of University Classics Departments. There was a problem, however, in gaining for the new exams formal classification as GCSEs: because of the many levels of approval this would entail by numerous quangos (many of which are being abolished by the current government!), it would have taken about seven years for GCSE status to be granted! Therefore WJEC agreed to run the new Latin exams as "Level 2 Certificates"; Level 2 is of course the umbrella designation of all awards making equal demands at 16+, including GCSE. Ofqual, UCAS and other bodies have recognised these exams as having the same educational status as the OCR GCSE.

3. In my opinion therefore it is entirely appropriate that WJEC Level 2 Certificates in Latin/Latin with Roman Life qualify for inclusion in E-Bac on the same terms as OCR Latin.

4. I am Head of Classics at Dartford Grammar School, one of the highest achieving State Secondary schools in the country, which also happened to score outstandingly in the first round of E-Bac. In consultation with my colleagues I had already decided to transfer to the WJEC exam *on its merits*, because we believed it offered a better menu of Latin texts, paralinguistic topics and examining methods. The first cohort of Year 11s will be taking this exam this summer. It will be tragic if the government does not give its seal of approval to this excellent syllabus by not including it in E-Bac.

B. CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED: HUMANITIES: CLASSICAL CIVILISATION

5. Over the years this subject has won the respect of educationalists as a thoroughly reputable Humanity, offering as it does a deep engagement with Ancient Greece and/or Rome through close attention to primary

sources, both literary and archaeological. If a declared aim of E-Bac is to encourage the understanding and appreciation of History, Classical Civilisation is in my opinion just as valid a pathway to that aim as courses labelled “History” and “Ancient History”—both these “preferred” Humanities also place a strong emphasis on students’ response to primary evidence rather than a superficial recall of facts. *Even if E-Bac does not widen its qualifying Humanities beyond historical and geographical subjects, I strongly recommend that Classical Civilisation be included, and thereby recognised as historical!*

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Rowan Stephenson

1. I have taught Latin and Classical Civilisation in both private and state sector schools. I believe it is important that state school pupils in non selective comprehensive schools should have access to and be encouraged to study Latin to Level 2 because this is quite simply one of the best ways to raise academic standards across the curriculum. The expectations of pupils studying the Cambridge Latin Course (the one most widely followed) are high: they have to work things out for themselves, make connections between languages, learn vocabulary and how an inflected language works, study grammar at an advanced level, and consider the challenges of comprehension and translation. All this is studied through stories of life in the Roman Empire which offers endless opportunities for discovery, reflection and discussion of issues from multiculturalism in Alexandria to education, citizenship and philosophy.

2. The WJEC Level 2 Latin certificate needs to be included in the E-Bac. languages list because there are many state schools like mine where there is not enough time available either in or outside the curriculum to cover the ground needed for the current OCR Latin GCSE, which requires written papers in literature and historical studies in addition to the same standard of language work required for the WJEC Latin language certificate, and is in effect a double GCSE.

3. The WJEC certificates were developed as a direct response to the needs of such schools. This is therefore a question of widening access to Latin both as an educational end in its own right and as a route to Russell Group University courses where our students compete with candidates from the private sector who benefit from this opportunity.

4. Demand is strong—at my school on average between 20 and 30 pupils opt to learn latin each year (from a cohort of about 130). If the certificate is excluded from the EBac. it will discourage state schools from introducing Latin and give the impression that the language study involved is of less value than, for example, Italian, which is clearly not the case. In order to prepare for the Certificate my pupils study the Cambridge Latin Course in full. I recommend inspection of the complete course to see what this offers, followed by a comparison with a modern language GCSE.

5. Perhaps the best way to appreciate the added value offered by Latin to state school pupils is to read the attached statement written this week (for current pupils) by a former student who graduated last year with a first in Classics from Durham University (and is now employed at OUP).

Statement written to pupils in comprehensive school re value of Latin, February 2011

1. Choosing to learn Latin is one of the best decisions I have ever made and not just because I went on to use it as the basis of my degree. Although naturally there are misgivings about taking on extra work out of school, the skills and mentality that studying Latin develops place you at a great advantage.

2. Learning Latin provides an amazing grounding in grammar which will benefit all of your studies, enabling you to structure and express ideas more coherently in exams and essays. Since English, like many other languages, is based so heavily on Latin, a whole new level of understanding can be unlocked. The meaning of words previously unknown can be guessed and connections can be made. Latin also provides a great basis for learning all other languages because it boosts linguistic ability through an awareness of grammar and structure.

3. Studying Latin develops a problem-solving and methodical attitude. Since there is no fixed sentence order every element of the syntax has to be investigated and classified. This develops analytical skills and shows attention to detail which are attributes looked for by universities and employers.

4. Latin is widely taught in all private and grammar schools and is being promoted in state schools in a campaign championed by Boris Johnson . The benefits of studying Classics are well-known but state schools are often unable to provide the opportunity due to a lack of resources and timetable restrictions.

5. Overall studying Latin both compliments and supports the mainstream curriculum. It develops linguistic and analytical skills as well as demonstrating a student’s capacity to learn. It is an opportunity not to be missed!

21 March 2011

Further written evidence submitted by Rowan Stephenson

1. I am writing to urge you to include Classical Civilisation GCSE in the Humanities list for the E Bac. This is a great opportunity to offer access to the ancient world (which is currently not available at many comprehensive schools due to the dominance of national curriculum subjects).

2. I would argue that an understanding of the importance and influence of the Classical world on western thinking and culture offers a significant opportunity for state schools to level the playing field with good private schools and grammar schools where Classical subjects are fundamental to the education offered. Through Classics pupils are also introduced to the history of art, architecture, philosophy, politics, ancient history, and a comparative study of cultures from which we have much to learn. The breadth and depth of study required makes Classical Civilisation unique in its ability to encourage pupils to evaluate, compare, contrast, read, respond & think independently and flexibly as well as being important subject matter for all educated people to be aware of.

3. This is also an opportunity here to encourage social mobility through access to Humanities courses at the best universities. Since introducing Classical Civilisation five years ago (at A level) at the non selective comprehensive school where I teach, my students have gained places to study Classics at Cambridge (2) and Durham, Classical Studies at Exeter , Kent and Reading; another is currently applying to Royal Holloway. Others from last year's cohort are studying History of Art at Edinburgh, Architecture at Nottingham, and Philosophy at York. All have competed successfully with students from top public schools where Classics is compulsory.

4. Please be aware that one of the unintended consequences of the list of "approved" humanities subjects will be that schools currently offering Classical Civilisation will be under pressure to offer ancient history instead (a more limited and less attractive syllabus to many in state schools) and schools considering introducing Classical Civilisation will be discouraged from doing so. Those with an interest in educating the next generation should be keen to extend this opportunity for academic excellence.

5. On the point that Classical Civilisation does not contain enough 'historical' content to be classed as a humanity I would point out that my own degree is in "Litterae Humaniores" which involved study of philosophy (ancient and modern), Greek and Roman literature, languages and Greek art. Many regard it as the ultimate humanities subject. (Many would also consider that geography deals with social and physical sciences.)

6. Think tanks are currently trying to gain gravitas by adopting the names "Politeia" and "Res Publica". We owe bright state school pupils access to the same inspirational thinkers and creators their fellow at private schools have always had.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Dominic Hodgkinson, Brentwood School

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE MAIN POINTS MADE IN THIS SUBMISSION

(i) This submission addresses point 2 under examination by the Committee, namely, the choice of subjects included in the E-Bac.

(ii) Classical Civilisation is not included in the E-Bac Humanities category; this submission recommends that it be so included.

(iii) Classical Civilisation comprises History and Geography; both History and Geography are included in the Humanities category.

(iv) It is therefore illogical not to include Classical Civilisation in the Humanities category.

2. BRIEF INTRODUCTION

(i) My name is Dominic Hodgkinson. I am a Classics Teacher at Brentwood School, Brentwood, Essex. I teach Latin, Greek and, relevant to this submission, Classical Civilisation.

3. SUBMISSION AND/OR FACTUAL INFORMATION

(i) The Department for Education (the Department) has stated that it wishes to encourage a wider take-up of Geography and History (<http://services.parliament.uk/hansard/Lords/bydate/20110202/writtenanswers/part029.html>).

(ii) The Department has created a category for the E-Bac which it calls 'Humanities' in which it has placed History and Geography.

(iii) Classical Civilisation is not included in the Humanities category.

(iv) No sustained argument has been put forward by the Department that Classical Civilisation is not a Humanity, nor, indeed, has the Department anywhere defined what the Humanities are.

(v) The Department has stated that it did not judge the historical element of Classical Civilisation to be sufficient

(vi) No element of the content of the Classical Civilisation syllabus is less than 1,800 years old.

(vii) Classical Civilisation GCSE has four modules.

(viii) The first module of Classical Civilisation GCSE is the study of an ancient society and the day-to-day life of that society; such study comprises both history and human geography.

(ix) The second module is the study of a literary narrative of the ancient world; the literature of the ancient world is historical content in its own right and informs the reader of the ancient societies in which such narratives take place.

(x) The third module is, like the first module, the study of an ancient society, the day-to-day life of that society and the way in which natural geographical elements affected that society.

(xi) The fourth module is an extended essay on a Classical Civilisation topic.

(xii) Only 2,000 state school students took Classical Civilisation GCSE in 2010, while 198,000 students took History GCSE. Even if all students studying Classical Civilisation were to study History, it would not create a significant increase in the total History GCSE entry. Current projections based on a CSCP survey of schools (February 2011) indicate that exclusion from the E-Bac will cut Classical Civilisation entries from state schools by 29%. The potential educational loss, therefore, is much greater than the potential gain.

(xiii) Students are making option choices for entries for summer 2013 now. Yet the list of subjects and qualifications which will count for the E-Bac of 2011 has still not been released. Schools, students and parents are therefore being asked to second guess what decisions the Department will make.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

(i) To add Classical Civilisation to the E-Bac list of Humanities.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Ms E A Hayden, Christleton High School

1. My submission to the Education Committee is addressing the choice of subjects to be included in the E-Bac, but also to some extent, the implications of the E-Bac for pupils, schools and employers. The White Paper originally said that the award would recognise achievement across a core of academic subjects, including Humanities eg History or Geography. It is of concern that the subsequent Statement of Intent only included History or Geography qualifications, whereas the original implication was that these subjects were only examples. I recognise that the intention is to only include "rigorous GCSEs", but I would contend that Religious Studies should be included as well, as it is a recognised Humanities subject of equal academic rigour.

2. Religious Studies is accepted as an academic GCSE (and indeed A level) by the top Russell Group of universities. As such, it seems a flawed approach for it not to be accepted as a rigorous GCSE in the EBac. While there are other 'Humanities' GCSEs that might not be as demanding academically, this is not the case with the Religious Studies courses. Indeed, by definition, these courses are academic as they are the study of religion, ethics and philosophy and one of the very definitions of "academic" is *1. Belonging to the school or philosophy of Plato; as, the Academic sect or philosophy.*[1913 Webster]. How can it not be an academic GCSE if students are demonstrating understanding of philosophy or sacred texts? If you were to examine the specifications for Religious Studies GCSE, you would easily see the rigour and academic nature of the subject, with even ethics modules demanding detailed knowledge and analysis of sacred texts in order to attain grades above a C.

3. There are many cross-curricular links with History and Geography GCSEs which demonstrate how close Religious Studies is as a subject to these subjects. In the AQA Religious Studies course that our students follow, they are required to examine history (eg World War II or Martin Luther King) and geography (eg environmental ethics and LEDCs).

4. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 introduced a duty on all maintained schools in England to promote community cohesion. Religious Studies is a vital subject to encourage, if the education system is to continue to promote understanding of other religions and cultures in a challenging world. If the current statement of intent comes into effect, it will discourage students from opting for this GCSE subject, which will have a detrimental effect on the spiritual, moral and social development of children in Britain. Religious Studies has become an increasingly popular option subject, which has undoubtedly had a positive effect on thousands of young people when they encounter difficult issues, such as prejudice or terrorism (both topics on the specifications for GCSE Religious Studies).

5. 20 years ago, Religious Studies was a Cinderella subject in schools, with little relevance or popularity. It has been transformed by the huge numbers now opting to study the GCSE into a strong academic subject, which has direct relevance for a wide variety of careers, from law to medicine to journalism. If it is excluded

from the EBac, the subject, with all its importance to our future citizens, professionals and leaders, risks being plunged back into obscurity. In fact, in many schools including ours, the number of students opting for the subject has decreased alarmingly this year, since the publication of the Statement of Intent (which excluded RS from the list of Humanities subjects in the EBac). Other schools are marginalising RS even further by insisting all students choose either History or Geography as a GCSE, so that they can qualify for the EBac.

6. Nick Gibb wrote on 16 February to my MP Esther McVey, in response to her letter on my behalf. He stated that it is precisely because RE is a compulsory core subject that the Government has decided not to include RE GCSE as a humanity for the English Baccalaureate. Although obviously it is good that there will still be a statutory duty for schools to teach core Religious Education, it is not, however, sufficient, because it is only as an academic GCSE that the subject can be delivered with sufficient quality and depth to have an effective positive impact on British society. Nick Gibb also stated that the Government's plans would not affect the status of RE as an important subject, nor prevent any pupil from taking it as a GCSE. The evidence in our school is that our numbers for next year have already decreased from their normal level of approximately 70 students to just 43 and if our Governors follow the new pattern of other schools next year and insist on students opting for the EBac subjects the numbers of students studying RS GCSE will plummet further. By the time students have included all the compulsory and EBac subjects, there will be in our school only three subjects left to actually choose, as the rest of their 'option' form will be filled up with GCSE subjects, over which they have had no real 'option'. If there are certain subjects a pupil then needs for their planned career or particular talents (such as PE/Music) then there is virtually no room left at all for them to choose RS. Nick Gibb also states that "the Government is concerned that the number of pupils who currently receive a broad education in core academic subjects is far too small, particularly for pupils in disadvantaged areas". Why then decide not to include a broad academic Humanity subject (Religious Studies) in the EBac? In addition, Nick Gibb has clearly never taught in a school in a disadvantaged area, because what he fails to realise is that students in such schools will only perform and behave well if they are motivated and engaged and see the value of a subject. The evidence is that students who have been allowed a free choice of subjects in recent years have overwhelmingly chosen RS, because they can see how it relates to moral issues that they face. We need to equip students in disadvantaged areas, like all our young citizens, to deal in an informed way with issues including drugs, crime, sexual relationships, abortion, prejudice etc.

7. Religious Studies GCSE in British schools is an education model, in which we lead the world. Very few other countries have a vibrant, effective, relevant academic subject, anything like it. Visiting education professionals from other countries have often commented on being impressed at this method of teaching ethics and religion in state schools, thus promoting tolerance and the development of mature, analytical and informed citizens.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Sheila Oviatt Ham

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The E-Bac is an unnecessary addition to current performance measures. It specifies a narrow and prescriptive choice of subjects that marginalises other valuable curriculum areas. The restriction of accreditation to full GCSE qualifications fails to recognise the value of alternative forms of accreditation. The E-Bac as currently structured ignores the flexibility and lacks the value of international comparators. If retained, it should be made more flexible.

SUBMITTER

2. Education professional with five years' experience as curriculum deputy and 14 years' experience as headteacher in secondary comprehensive schools, followed by five years' experience as a school improvement professional, working to plan and support improvement through developing high quality provision, including curriculum design to meet all students' needs, in a wide range of secondary schools, from outstanding ones to those in Ofsted categories.

THE PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE E-BAC AS A MEASURE OF PUPIL AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

3. The Secretary of State for Education's declared purpose in introducing the E-Bac is to "nudge" schools to change their curriculum offer in KS4, to ensure that more pupils follow GCSE courses in what he considers to be rigorous academic subjects. Although nobody would question the value of the subjects included, they are all already available to all students. The insistence on full GCSE accreditation for six subjects favours academically selective schools and traditional approaches.

4. English schools are already subject to a wide range of performance indicators. To add an additional measure without consultation and apply it retrospectively is at best unreasonable and at worst damaging.

5. A potential benefit is to ensure that more students are prompted to consider seriously the value of following a broad "academic" curriculum.

6. A disadvantage is that the E-Bac measure will force some pupils into narrow academic courses that do not meet their needs, and they will fail to gain GCSE qualifications in all 6 subjects, consequently failing to gain the E-Bac measure and in the process denying themselves the opportunity to gain other worthwhile qualifications that they could have achieved. This could have a negative impact on motivation and engagement and leave some students with lower qualifications than they would otherwise have had. Serious disadvantages are the marginalisation of artistic and technological/vocational curriculum areas [see below] and the absence of any reference to personal development or employability/work-related skills.

THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE E-BAC

7. It is already a statutory requirement for all maintained schools to offer all KS4 students the choice of subject areas included in the E-Bac.

8. If the E-Bac measure is to be used, English, Maths and one Science subject should be included for all students. There seems little justification for insisting on two Science GCSEs. There should be greater flexibility in other subjects to be included.

9. Instead of requiring either History or Geography and a second language and ignoring the arts and technological subjects, it would be far preferable either to require two qualifications from two of the three broad areas of humanities, languages and arts/technological subjects or to provide for different types of E-Bac: General, Scientific, Humanities, Languages, Arts/Technology or vocational. These could require two subjects in the specific area and one from any other area, in addition to the core of English, Maths and one Science. So, for example:

- A general E-Bac could require English, Maths, one Science and three further subjects, taken from at least two of the curriculum areas of sciences, humanities, languages or arts/technology. Equivalent non-GCSE accreditation should be acceptable for all subjects except English and Maths.
- A Humanities E-Bac could require English, Maths, one Science, two humanities subjects and one further subject taken from sciences, languages or arts/technology. Equivalent non-GCSE accreditation should be acceptable for all subjects except English and Maths.
- A Scientific E-Bac could require English, Maths, three Sciences and two further subjects taken from two of the curriculum areas of languages, humanities or arts/technology. Equivalent non-GCSE accreditation should be acceptable for all subjects except English and Maths.
- A Languages E-Bac could require English, Maths, one Science, two languages and one further subject taken from sciences, humanities or arts/technology. Equivalent non-GCSE accreditation should be acceptable for all subjects except English and Maths.
- An Arts E-Bac could require English, Maths, one Science, two arts subjects and one further subject taken from sciences, humanities or languages. Equivalent non-GCSE accreditation should be acceptable for all subjects except English and Maths.
- A Vocational E-Bac could require English, Maths, one Science, two single or one dual award vocational subject[s] and one further subject taken from sciences, humanities, languages, or arts/technology. Equivalent non-GCSE accreditation should be acceptable for all subjects except English and Maths.

10. The choice of subjects and qualifications in the current approved list is arbitrary and unnecessarily narrow:

- To restrict humanities to only History or Geography is unreasonable. Economics, Business Studies, Religious Education, Sociology and combined humanities courses are equally valuable fields of study in the humanities.
- The list of acceptable languages includes Biblical Hebrew, which is of very limited relevance to most people, and also Latin and Classical Greek, but excludes Classical Arabic. This seems illogical. Most available GCSE language qualifications are acceptable, but not Sinhala, Swahili or Tamil. Again, this is illogical. Also excluded are applied language GCSEs that have significant relevance to the needs of commerce and industry.
- The list of acceptable science subjects excludes additional applied science, for no apparent good reason.

11. To restrict accreditation to GCSE/iGCSE qualifications is unreasonable when there is a wide range of equivalent qualifications that are judged to be of equal points value. Subject to the recommendations of the Wolf Review for points equivalences, alternative accreditation such as BTEC, OCR National and Asset Language qualifications should be included.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE E-BAC FOR PUPILS, SCHOOLS AND EMPLOYERS

12. The implications of the currently structured E-Bac for schools and pupils are:

- Pressure to focus on a narrow suite of academic subjects and a limited range of GCSE qualifications that do not meet the needs or recognise the achievements of all students.

- Marginalisation and undervaluing of arts and technological/vocational subjects, as well as academic subjects not on the approved list.
- The potential need to adjust staffing capacity to suit the new measure. This could mean that existing specialist staff of non E-Bac subjects may lose the opportunity to teach their subjects to GCSE and beyond. There is likely to be increased demand for teachers of E-Bac subjects; it may not be possible to meet this additional level of demand with high quality teachers.
- Failure to value alternative, vocational and non-GCSE accreditation, as well as failure to value some applied GCSE qualifications.
- Failure to value personal development and employability/work-related skills.
- A potential knock on effect on opportunities for study at 16–19. A level courses in non E-Bac subjects could become unviable, as able students will have had less opportunity to study them at GCSE. This could have a further impact on higher education, with fewer students qualified to take up degree courses in curriculum areas outside the E-Bac ones.

13. The implications for employers are:

- Less emphasis in schools on work-related and employability skills, which are in high demand.
- Less emphasis on practical skills, also in high demand.
- Fewer potential employees with vocational knowledge, understanding and skills.
- Fewer potential employees with high level qualifications in the arts and technological subjects, areas of strength in British industry and commerce.

INTERNATIONAL COMPARATORS FOR THE E-BAC

14. Other countries that use a baccalaureate qualification do not also measure schools against a wide range of further performance indicators, as is the case in England.

15. The E-Bac is a much narrower curriculum than international comparators, requiring only five academic subjects and ignoring the arts, technology and personal skills. It is not actually a qualification, unlike international comparators that provide genuine accreditation.

- International versions of Baccalaureates are proper accredited school leaving qualifications that provide access to university, not just a league table measure.
- They are differentiated to meet all students' needs, not just a sub-group of students. So in France, for example, there are general, technological and professional [vocational] Bacs, with multiple possibilities within each strand. The core of subjects that all students follow in the first year of a three year course is similar to the current proposals for the EBac, except that only one science is required. In years two and three of the course, students specialise, but retain some core study in French, maths, modern languages and history/geography. Study of science is not required after year one of the three year course.
- For the general Bac, students in France can choose to specialise in Economics/Social Sciences, Literature and Languages or Sciences.
- For the technological Bac, students can specialise in four main areas: medical sciences, industrial sciences, laboratory sciences or IT and business admin. There are also two agricultural streams available and specific technological Bacs for hotel management and applied arts and music.
- Vocational Bacs are available in France from further study following specific vocational or apprenticeship study.

16. The International Baccalaureate offers programmes for both 16–19 year olds [Diploma] and for 11–16 year olds [Middle Years]:

- The 16–19 diploma is a rigorous and highly regarded programme that requires study in six subject groups: mother tongue, maths/computer science, experimental sciences, second language, the arts. Crucially, it provides a rounded educational experience by also requiring all students to follow a theory of knowledge course, complete an extended essay and participate in creativity, action and service.
- The IB Middle Years programme [11–16] requires the study of mother tongue, maths, science, humanities, second language, the arts, technology and physical education. Students also engage in a personal project in the final year of the programme. Assessment is by teachers, moderated or monitored by IB examiners. It is notable that this is the closest equivalent to the 16+ English Bac, and is not assessed by external examination.

Written evidence submitted by The Learning Machine

1. This submission is from the Learning Machine Ltd an Ofqual Accredited Awarding organisation endorsed by the Sector Skills Council for Business and ICT. The Chief Assessor has experience with the International Baccalaureate, was involved in the design of a Technological Baccalaureate, and is accredited to submit new units and rules of combination to the QCF. The Principal Moderator is a trainer of Chartered Assessors.

2. The purpose of this paper is to provide solutions to issues that are likely to arise from an E-Bac.

3. The purpose of the Ebac seems to be to ensure that a core of traditional academic subjects form part of the entitlement curriculum for all children to the age of 16. There is nothing wrong with that purpose. However, it also has to be balanced against broader needs of society including business. There will be many subject pressure groups saying that their subject should be included. This paper is focused on finding a practical solution for this problem.

4. Rather than get over-focused on subjects at this point consider the overall message projected by the Ebac and its proposed subjects. It is clearly academic but also covers what most people would think is a reasonably broad academic provision for the ages it is aimed at. For balance and relevance to business, it needs a vocational dimension. It doesn't matter too much what occupational area we consider but ICT for users would be an obvious choice and ICT has some specific advantages in terms of providing a Voc dimension that is manageable in the curriculum time available with existing resources without compromising any of the central Ebac intentions.

5. If we assume that in KS4 the Ebac will be a minimum of five GCSEs, that will account for approximately 50% of the curriculum time. If a vocational dimension was specified through the ITQ (e-skills new national vocational qualification for IT Users) it could be achieved through supporting the E-bac subjects with information searches, presentations and relevant use of collaborative technologies as part of the learning process for those subjects. Even the computer programming lobby could be catered for. Schools have invested millions in e-portfolio software yet e-portfolios are poorly implemented. E-portfolios are an EU policy through the Lifelong Learning programme and the skills involved in developing them are at Level 2 in the National Occupational Standards as used to define the ITQ. A strategy for an ICT vocational dimension solves a number of problems in a single manageable rationalisation. It would also help if there was a revision to the NC ICT programme of study to make it focussed on learning outcomes rather than areas of experience. That would make it compatible with the new QCF, simplify it and solve a lot of the existing problems with KS3 and 4 ICT.

6. There are already grammar schools that have adopted the schools ITQ in KS3. This means that most of these children will achieve the ITQ at Level 2 by the age of 14. They then have the level equivalent of an A*-C GCSE (or two depending on the units completed) before the start of KS4. If the requirement was for school league table points to come from each of the Ebac and a vocational option we solve the problem of balance in terms of what schools will value. We should treat points from the Ebac and the Vocational dimension separately. One should not compensate for the other. This removes the problem of schools doing "soft option" vocational courses simply to boost league table positions. Let's say there were 1000 points for the Ebac and 500 points for a vocational dimension. A school ignoring the Ebac will forfeit the Ebac points and a school ignoring the vocational dimension will forfeit the vocational points. Since bright children could achieve the vocational dimension in KS3 it gives full scope in KS4 to do a full quota of GCSEs and indeed AS or other Level 3 courses for particularly bright children. Weaker children could do their Level 1 ITQ in KS3 and Level 2 in KS4 using it as a motivating means of supporting the Ebac subjects. That is then a win-win situation.

7. OBJECTIONS

8. *It will be too expensive.* On the contrary we can deliver the schools ITQ for as little as £5 a child using up to date and existing technologies. That is about 20% of the cost of a GCSE and a substantially bigger saving when compared to traditional vocational qualifications. We can use the same methods to certificate all the NC teacher assessed levels for 30p a certificate including external quality assurance. This uses innovative but proven open source technologies and is the focus of two transfer of innovation projects supported by EU grants for export from the UK to other EU member states.

9. *It will overload the school curriculum.* The current school curriculum makes ICT compulsory but there is no focus. VLEs/e-portfolios were part of BECTA's Harnessing Technology idea but abysmally implemented. This proposal will preserve the best practice but rationalise the curriculum so we can keep essentials like ICT skills while promoting the benefits of an Ebac. We don't even need to specify the ITQ, just say that the curriculum must have a vocational dimension leading to a full qualification in the QCF at Level 2 by the time learners leave school. Most schools will use ICT but they won't have to so we can satisfy eg the art and design or design and technology lobby by saying there is flexibility to include them.

10. *There are not enough teachers capable of supporting this approach.* While this could be true initially, it is certainly possible to make a start and the ITQ and supporting technology allow us to integrate Continuous Professional Development (CPD) in the moderation process as added value. This then solves another problem by providing affordable and manageable CPD. Again this fits the government objective to reduce costs in the public sector. All this can be supported by Open Source products and therefore is founded on the work of Open Source communities—"The Big Society" in action.

11. CHOICE OF SUBJECTS IN THE EBAC

12. English, maths and science are non-controversial as they have been core subjects pretty well without dispute since the inception of the National Curriculum. A humanities subject is perfectly reasonable too. Languages are more difficult from two points of view. The first is that whenever languages have been compulsory at KS4 demotivation of many, many learners has resulted. No matter how well-intentioned there is no point in trying to force someone to do something they have no interest in at an age when rebellion is most likely. That is very wasteful of resources because you then deploy a lot of expert language teachers to try and battle with people that really don't want to be there drawing that resource away from ones that do. The second is that there is a myth that languages are vital for international trade. We do a lot of international work currently in Bulgaria, Romania, Czech Republic, Germany, Spain, Netherlands, Malaysia and Kenya. Most people in the company learnt French at school and we have no French speaking partners. We can use Google translate to get a basic idea of the meaning of text in any language, but business is ALWAYS conducted in English. It is a massive advantage to be an English native speaker. Making an effort to learn "Please", "Thank you" etc generates more goodwill than if any of us were fluent in any one of the many languages in any case! So we just don't buy international trade arguments. There clearly is a need for linguists but they are much more likely to be the people that are motivated to carry on studying language after KS3 where they are and should remain compulsory.

13. As described in the first part, we think that ICT should be part of a vocational dimension to the E-bac but assessed through the ITQ not GCSE and constituting a clear vocational dimension. Pupils will have to do at least 5 GCSEs so we are not marginalising GCSE, its simply that GCSE is not the best way to assess ICT capability. Politically it might simply be better to specify a vocational dimension leading to a full course Level 2 qualification in the QCF. That means you can't be pinned down by any particular subject group that operates in the vocational space as excluding them. It would be up to schools to decide but it is very likely that most would choose ICT.

14. IMPLICATIONS FOR PUPILS, SCHOOLS AND EMPLOYERS

15. An Ebac that was focused on A*-C grades only in five GCSEs would only affect 50% of pupils at most (assuming standards remain as they are now). In schools where that was beyond the reach of say 80% of the pupils, they are likely to simply ignore it or at least only make it an entitlement for the minority who had some chance of achieving it. This means there is likely to be more flexibility in the curriculum than many people seem to think. As employers, we don't see much effect of an Ebac since most of the people we employ are employed not on the basis of GCSE and other Level 2 qualifications. There is a surplus of graduates so why would employers settle for people who had stopped at Level 2? Ebac A*-C grades especially will be a stepping stone to A levels and then degrees so if it is to affect employers it is more likely to have an indirect effect because it enables a higher quality progression route to academic study. At the margins, that might be true.

16. In summary, the Ebac will mainly affect pupils and schools and that will depend on how it features in league table points. If all GCSE grades in Ebac subjects are allocated points and to achieve any points you must do all the subjects and these are the main measure on which schools as organisations are judged, you can be fairly sure all schools will make the Ebac compulsory for all pupils capable of scoring some points. If MFL is a compulsory subject expect some rebellion from at least a significant minority of children and some very low grades from children otherwise capable in other subjects. Very good teachers will mitigate that but there will never be enough of those to go round. A curriculum that only seems to value a traditional set of academic subjects is not credible. There needs to be a balance by providing a separate vocational dimension assessed by vocational methods and with credit set separately from GCSE but with the same mandatory effect on league table points.

17. INTERNATIONAL COMPARATORS

18. We do a lot of international work and we have two grants for Transfer of Innovation from the EU LLL Programme. One for taking QCF IT qualifications to schools in partner countries and one for developing an assessment framework for learners with Special Needs to underpin the European Qualifications Framework. ECVET/EQARF are the two most significant changes to the international scene and the QCF referenced to the EQF gives the UK a headstart in exporting education and training services to the rest of Europe. Most member states aspire to increasing the vocational dimension in schools relating learning more directly to the work place. This is why a vocational dimension to the Ebac is vital even if only to support UK exports. This can be achieved easily without any compromise to the Secretary of State's intentions and if used intelligently, has the capacity to solve a number of other problems and reduce costs.

Written evidence submitted by Sue Warrington, Headteacher, Chace Community School

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

I believe that the Education Select Committee should consider the impact of the E-Bac on other equally important subjects.

A review of the E-Bac should be considered alongside the findings of Professor Wolf on “alternative/vocational courses”.

INTRODUCTION

I have 34 years teaching experience—22 in the inner city and since 1998 as Headteacher at Chace Community School, a popular, successful, inclusive comprehensive school where we offer a broad balanced curriculum with access and challenge for all. Most students follow GCSE courses in Key Stage 4 with some BTEC courses offered as option subjects as a more appropriate choice: Business Level 1, Engineering Health and Social Care PE, Music. A number of students follow a BTEC in Science.

ALL students regardless of background, postcode, wealth or ability should have access to the best learning opportunities appropriate for their future. At Chace at Key Stage 4 all students study English Language and Literature, Maths, Science, a Modern Foreign Language, RE, PE, Technology (currently our specialism) and one of the Humanities and an Expressive Arts subject.

INFORMATION TO BE CONSIDERED

1.1 *The purpose and benefits of the E-Bac and its value as a measure of pupil and school performance*

League table results have been skewed when, in some schools, GCSE has been replaced wholesale by other courses. While the introduction of the E Bac would address this and return us to a more level playing field, there are other ways of achieving this without restricting choices at Key Stage 4 or undervaluing equally important subjects. We must find ways of valuing the achievements of the less able.

1.2 *The choice of subjects included in the E-Bac*

An opportunity is being missed in the limited choice of subjects. As well as History or Geography the list should include an Arts subject—Art, Music or Drama—to preserve our cultural awareness/identity. English Literature is a basic entitlement of all students, which enhances and enriches their learning and experience. It should be compulsory throughout their five years of secondary education to GCSE as the springboard to unlocking students’ love of literature.

1.3 *The implications of the E-Bac for pupils, schools and employers; international comparators for the E-Bac*

The implications of the E-Bac are:

- pupils—confusion and constraint—my Year 9s have been advised that the best universities require excellent grades at GCSE, AS level and then at A level (and a UCAS application reflecting a “rounded” and interesting young person—would an EBac achieved with C grades be worth more than a broad range of nine or 10 A*/A B C grades;
- universities—will they want an E Bac awarded for six C grades or a broad range of nine or 10 A*/A B C grades?
- schools—would be measured on a more level playing field but the range of subjects should be extended.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

To reconsider the proposed prescriptive and restrictive range of E-Bac subjects.

To ensure that the achievements of ALL including the less able are valued.

To make sure we are measuring what we value.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Miriam Fairclough

1. I am a parent of two children aged 13 and 8 who are both studying at state schools. My eldest child will be making her GCSE choices next academic year.
2. I am broadly in favour of the E-Bac, which aims to promote comprehensive and balanced curriculum choices for our children at GCSE level.
3. I would like to see a wider range of subjects within the E-Bac, as the qualifying subjects proposed are very narrow.
4. Good schools already encourage their students to follow a broad curriculum whilst they are under 16. Those who made their GCSE options before the E-Bac was unveiled may not qualify under the terms of its current narrow criteria, even if they did select a balanced range of subjects.
5. Humanities should include additional subjects to history and geography. Economics, psychology and religious education are missing from the list.
6. No credit is given in the E-Bac for IT, design and technology, art, music, food technology or textiles. These are important subjects that should not be over-looked.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Professor Judith Lieu, Chair of the Faculty Board, Faculty of Divinity, University of Cambridge

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The memorandum urges the inclusion of Religious Studies as a core Humanities subject in the English Baccalaureate. It is important for society that young people are encouraged to acquire an informed understanding of and the development of critical skills in relation to religious claims, styles of argument, and texts. As an examined subject, Religious Studies provides geographical, historical and cultural understanding, and develops critical and analytical skills, analogous to other recognized core Humanities subjects.
2. This submission is being made by Professor Judith Lieu, Lady Margaret's Professor of Divinity at the University of Cambridge and Chair of the Faculty Board. It is written on behalf of the Faculty following discussion and consultation. The Faculty has specific experience in the teaching of Theology and Religious Studies at University level, and is in regular contact with schools where the subject is taught for public examination.
3. It should be noted that around 190,000 students took a full GCSE course in Religious Studies in 2010. The GCSE is designed to develop an informed understanding of a range of religious positions and judgments, and to prompt a critical engagement with religious, philosophical and ethical questions. It forms a foundation for an increasing number of students to continue with the study of Religious Studies at A level; here many students take options that further challenge them to think critically about philosophical and ethical questions, while others encounter critical analysis of core religious texts and traditions.
4. There is a statutory requirement for all students to undertake a course in Religious Education or Religious Studies at Key Stage 4, but this is often taught by non-specialists. The full GCSE course, and beyond that the A Level course, demand greater rigour and offer a higher level of attainment.
5. It is imperative in today's society that young people are encouraged to develop the skills and understanding that will enable them to respond to religious ideas and to religious diversity, critically, intelligently, and with tolerance. Equally necessary must be the stimulus for self-reflective responses to the ethical decisions society as a whole, and individuals, face. More generally, it is the nature of Religious Studies as a discipline that it nurtures historical awareness, an understanding of how texts function in society, and a sensitivity to cultural difference, all skills that are at the heart of the importance of placing a Humanities subject as a core subject in the English Baccalaureate.
6. There is a danger that if GCSE Religious Studies is not recognized as a core Humanities subject for the English Baccalaureate, schools will reduce their provision for it. This in turn will have a deleterious effect on the number of students taking the subject at A Level, and in turn, those taking related courses at University. While University courses in Theology and Religious Studies, as also in courses in Philosophy and in Ethics, do not demand an A Level in Religious Studies, many students do discover their enthusiasm for the subject at school. Graduates in these disciplines, who may go on to a range of occupations in society, bring with them further-developed skills of sensitivity to and critical thinking about the moral and religious values in society.
7. A further consideration is the need for well-qualified people to teach Religious Studies at school level. In the past the subject was sometimes treated as a "Cinderella" subject that anyone could offer in their spare time. The increasing regard that has been given it in recent years has demanded graduates who could bring a range and depth of knowledge as well as an enthusiasm to inspire young people of the value of addressing questions of religious understanding openly. In turn this has prompted revisions of the RS curriculum, sometimes through

co-operation between University Departments and Examination Bodies. It is therefore imperative that a channel of affirmative recognition run through from GCSE to A level and so to University.

8. Her Majesty's Government, through the Department of Education, is urged to include Religious Studies as a core Humanities Subject in the English Baccalaureate, and to give public support to the teaching of the subject in all schools.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Ian Bangay, Head of North Yorkshire Music Service

GCSE Music is a vital part of a quality music education and as such, it is vital that it is offered as part of the English Baccalaureate for the following reasons:

1. ACADEMIC RIGOUR

The study of music is an academic pursuit that not only develops ones creative/expressive aptitude but encompasses some of the core elements of learning including:

- Understanding of mathematics through analysis and development of musical structures and forms.
- Understanding of historical facts in relationship to the development of cultures, society and the influence of music on politics eg Beethoven's "Eroica", Wagner and the link with Nazi Germany, John Lennon and the peace movement.
- Understanding the role world music has played in popular culture eg the influence of African music and the English Hymn, on the blues.
- Learning a language eg learning musical notation, Italian, French and German musical terms.

These are just a few of the academic areas covered in GCSE music.

2. DEVELOPING CONFIDENCE, DISCIPLINE AND SELF EXPRESSION

Through the study of an instrument a young musician will learn how to be self disciplined and self motivated. The development of instrumental technique is unsurpassed in the development of specific technical skills bought about through regular practice. The GCSE exam requires a level of performance that makes acquiring these skills mandatory. The skill of self motivation and discipline is one that is transferrable to other subjects.

Performance further develops the confidence to express oneself in public. Communication skills are vital in musical performance. GCSE music plays an important role in the curriculum that other subjects cannot offer.

3. PROGRESSION TO UNIVERSITY/CONSERVATOIRE/PROFESSION

The study of GCSE music and subsequently A Level is the most important route pupils have into the study of music at university or conservatoire. There is no doubt that if GCSE is not offered as part of the English Baccalaureate, school music departments will fold and no pupils will progress to A Level. The chances of progressing into university to pursue a career in music or the arts will be denied to many pupils where music in schools has been squeezed out of the curriculum at KS4.

Finally, the recent Henley report and the Governments responses to it, indicate a commitment to the learning of a musical instrument and the positive impact it can have on a young person's life. The Government acknowledges music as an 'enriching and valuable academic subject'. Excluding it from the list of subjects available in the English Baccalaureate will inevitably lead to the marginalisation of music in the wider curriculum with most schools not offering anything at all.

Once again music will become elitist with the only examinations available being ABRSM and others that cost parents a lot of money to enter. There will be no recognition for the musical achievements of ordinary pupils in schools.

I ask you to consider these points when drawing up the final draft of the Baccalaureate.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Kevin Harley, Deputy Head, The Piggott School

1. I am appalled and dismayed at the narrowness of the subjects defined as acceptable for the Humanities subject, the fifth element, which will form part of the English Baccalaureate. I have attached the Addendum to the Statement of Intent which is published on the website this month.

2. The definitions for English, Mathematics and Science largely follow current expectations, make sense and I have no argument with these.

3. The need for a MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE is long overdue and I fully support its inclusion in the new English Baccalaureate, although given we are trying to engage pupils who are reluctant to become involved in languages, the Applied GCSEs should be included, since they are rigorous and engaging for the students who take them. Furthermore, why are the languages of Latin, Classical Greek and Biblical Hebrew acceptable as prescribed languages? They are catering for a very select group! Are they the personal preferences of one person or a small group of individuals? How does this cater for the large number of pupils taking GCSE each year?

4. However, the defined subjects for the Humanities only being Geography and History is extraordinary. Indeed, there are many subjects, which under a wider definition, could and should be considered for the 'fifth' subject of the Baccalaureate. Music is a demanding GCSE, Design and Technology subjects are not at all easy, and why should the Art, Drama, Dance, RE, Business Studies and Media Studies students be penalised because they have not chosen a "favoured" subject. Do we not value the Arts in the same way as the Humanities? Or do we have favoured Humanities? Clearly, since RE amongst others are not on the list. The argument proffered that RE is excluded because it is a compulsory subject is bizarre. For Specialist Technology colleges, Technology is compulsory, the same goes for IT at Computing Colleges and so it goes on. History or Geography will only be compulsory in Humanities colleges, why are those subjects receiving favoured treatment? I should add that I am the senior curriculum deputy, teacher of Mathematics and IT, in a specialist Languages and Humanities College, who have recently been judged outstanding, and in particular for our broad, balanced and personalised curriculum. We have a compulsory language but not a compulsory Humanities subject, because it would make the curriculum too prescriptive and non-personalised.

5. Given the coalition Government decided to impose the E-Bacc retrospectively, without consultation or testing, it is interesting to note that the national average was 16%, and I note that the schools at the top of the E-Bacc "league table" are predominantly selective schools, with many gaining 100%. So this Government is trying to relax the constraints imposed by the National Curriculum on the one hand, but clearly dictating what needs to be taught and studied to achieve the E-Bacc, namely a selective school type education for all!

6. Perhaps for the sake of breadth and balance, there should be a sixth and possibly even a seventh element by which we judge our students. Why not consider an E-Bacc (Technology), or an E-Bacc (Humanities), or an E-Bacc (Arts), with an approved list under each of those headings for the fifth element? And in the light of this technology driven society, should it not be the case that IT is a compulsory element?

7. That this list of subjects has been created without any consultation with the teaching profession or other notable and professional bodies is unbelievable, and I strongly urge you to persuade your colleagues who are responsible for this decision to think again and consider a more appropriate definition and/or range for the "fifth" component. Consultation with the professionals and specialist organisations is vital if this qualification is to become an acceptable benchmark for all.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by NATRE

1. ABOUT NATRE

1.1 The National Association of Teachers of Religious Education (NATRE) is the subject teacher association for RE professionals in primary and secondary schools and higher education. NATRE provides a focal point for teachers' concerns, a representative voice at national level, and publications and courses to promote their professional development. NATRE works through its Executive of teachers and its Executive Officer.

1.2 NATRE is a member of the Council for Subject Associations (CfSA), the European Forum for Teachers of RE (EFTRE), and the RE Council for England and Wales (REC).

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2.1 NATRE urges the Secretary of State to include Religious Education (RE) in the English Baccalaureate (E-Bac). RE is a rigorous, academic subject, widely regarded as a humanity in which students achieve considerable success in either the Full Course or Short Course GCSE. There is widespread support for its inclusion in the E-Bac.

2.2 RE refers to compulsory Religious Education which all students must study. When the subject is taken as a GCSE it is called RS (Religious Studies). Many schools accredit compulsory RE by entering students for

the GCSE RS Short Course. A significant number of students choose GCSE RS Full Course, which both meets the compulsory requirement and enables students to study an academic subject of their choice.

2.3 Including RE in the E-Bac will reinforce the Secretary of State's recent messages to schools that RE is compulsory and is to be taught to all students. If supplemented by clear statements about the consequences of non-compliance with the statutes on RE then the declared intention for the subject is more likely to be met.

2.4 NATRE conducted a survey of 790 secondary schools over ten days in January 2011 which, together with emails from large numbers of teachers, indicates the extent of the problem facing the subject. The survey reported that by 28 January, when the survey closed, 30% of schools responding to the survey were implementing curriculum changes detrimental to RE.

2.5 NATRE is extremely concerned at the negative impact on RE in a significant number of schools that are re-aligning their curriculum to deliver the E-Bac subjects. Both compulsory RE and GCSE RS are being adversely affected. Some schools have removed compulsory RE completely from the curriculum in Key Stage 4, and have also ceased to offer the subject as a GCSE option. In some schools, compulsory RE is also compromised in Key Stage 3. There will be a negative impact on the subject at A level as GCSE numbers decline. Being compulsory offers no protection whatsoever to RE, as schools are prioritising the E-Bac over legal requirements.

3. INTRODUCTION

3.1 NATRE is encouraged that the Secretary of State has expressed the Government's intention to maintain RE's statutory place in the curriculum. The remit for the recently announced review of the curriculum states: "The Government does not intend to make any changes to the statutory basis for religious education." (para 11). Letters from the DfE in January, in response to NATRE members' letters of concern, stated: "The Government will recognise, as many schools do, the benefits that religious education (RE) can bring to students. This is why the teaching of RE remains compulsory throughout a student's schooling."

3.2 NATRE agrees with the Secretary of State that the best curriculum for our young people is one that is "broad and balanced"; NATRE believes that RE has a fundamental role to play in such a curriculum, and that a curriculum which omits RE cannot be regarded as "broad and balanced".

3.3 NATRE disagrees with the Secretary of State's decision to omit RE from the E-Bac in the face of the evidence provided to the association by teachers. In an online survey of 790 secondary schools carried out between 17 and 28 January 2011, when asked about curriculum planning for the academic year 2011–12, 30% of respondents indicated that their school had already made substantial changes to the curriculum which significantly disadvantaged RE or removed it from the curriculum. The survey data was confirmed by more detailed descriptions of curriculum change provided by teachers in emails to NATRE. Headteachers are clearly making the decision that it is preferable to ignore the compulsory nature of RE than to risk their students leaving school without an E-Bac, described as the "gold standard" and the passport to a good university place and employment success.

3.4 The Secretary of State stated in email replies to teachers that "The Government has not included RE as fulfilling the humanity requirement of the English Baccalaureate because it is already a compulsory subject. One of the intentions of the English Baccalaureate is to encourage wider take up of geography and history in addition to, rather than instead of, compulsory RE". NATRE believes this is untenable in the face of the reality of what is happening in schools. Furthermore, there are currently no clearly identifiable means of enforcing the statutory position that RE is compulsory for all students.

3.5 To deliver the Secretary of State's declared intention that RE will continue to be taught to all students, positive action needs to be taken by the Government to ensure that schools make the required provision for "compulsory RE"; placing RE in the E-Bac will provide an indication of the desired message to schools but must be supplemented by clear statements about the consequences of non-compliance with the statutes on RE.

4. THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS IN THE E-BAC: RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

4.1 NATRE believes that the list of qualifying subjects for the E-Bac should be extended to include RE. If the purpose of the E-Bac is to identify those schools that are offering their students an academically rigorous curriculum that includes a humanity, then as RE is a humanity that is both rigorous and academic, it should be included. There is widespread support for the inclusion of RE in the E-Bac, as evidenced by the very large number of letters and emails received by the Secretary of State, Ministers and Members of Parliament on the matter.

4.2 NATRE recognises that some schools have manipulated the league tables by encouraging their students to take courses that are worth four GCSEs but which are not recognised as of equivalent value, and that this situation needs to be addressed.

4.3 The Department for Education has stated in email responses on behalf of the Secretary of State: "The core of subjects in the English Baccalaureate is small enough to allow students to choose other qualifications and areas of study that are of interest to them." This is quite simply untrue. In most cases the subjects that make up the E-Bac will result in students studying 8 GCSEs (English Language, English Literature,

Mathematics, Chemistry, Biology, Physics, History OR Geography and a Language). Add to this timetable time for statutory PE and PSHE, then few schools will be able to offer more than two options to complete a normal weekly timetable. This leaves GCSE Full Course RS competing with other valuable subjects such as the Arts, including Music and Fine Art, Technology, including Computing, ICT, Design and Technology, a second language for gifted linguists or those wishing to study a community language as well as a foreign or ancient language and of course all the vocational courses.

4.4 In January 2011 NATRE conducted a survey of 790 secondary schools to ascertain how schools were responding to the introduction of the E-Bac, and specifically its impact on RE. When asked about curriculum plans for the academic year 2011–12 30% of respondents said that in their school RE had been significantly adversely affected, and in some cases removed. The outcomes of this survey, together with emails received from teachers expressing despair at what was happening to RE, shows the reality of the negative impact on RE and confirms NATRE's belief that if RE is to continue as a subject in the curriculum of all schools in England, then it needs to be included as a humanity in the E-Bac. As more schools confirm their curriculum offer for September 2011, it can only be surmised that significantly more than 30% of schools have planned for a curriculum which significantly disadvantages or removes RE in Key Stage 4. The survey indicates that in some schools RE in Key Stage 3 is also adversely affected, in particular Year 9.

4.5 In 2010 468,700 students achieved a GCSE in RS (as the subject is known at GCSE level). Of the 188,704 students who took the GCSE Full Course, 73.1% achieved A*-C. Of the 279,954 students who took the GCSE Short Course, 54.6% achieved A*-C. Total GCSE entries for RS have risen steadily from 228,400 in 1999 to 468,700 in 2010. This is widely regarded as a success story; RE is a rigorous academic subject which students enjoy, find relevant to their own lives and career choices, and in which they achieve well.

4.6 NATRE's evidence shows that already this year a significant number of schools have removed the compulsory RE (usually delivered as the GCSE Short Course) from the timetable entirely and left the Full Course GCSE to fight for its survival against incredible odds. Others have decided that this will result in too many non-viable teaching groups so have removed RS from the timetable entirely, even if it means they are flouting the statutory requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus, or Faith Community Guidelines in schools with a religious character. Teachers contacting NATRE by email, or completing the online survey consistently tell us:

“RE will move into an option block for Full Course GCSE and will be removed from the core (compulsory) curriculum.”

“If there has to be a compulsory History/Geography instead [of RE] it is unlikely to be taught as a GCSE and may well disappear into ‘RE Days’ not delivered by [specialist] teachers and without any measurement of learning.”

“This inner city school is planning to provide RE through two ‘RE Days’ per year. This is not compliant with the Agreed Syllabus which states that the GCSE Short Course RS or equivalent should be studied [to meet statutory the requirement].”

4.7 GCSE Full Course RS is often taken as an option subject. Some schools enter all students for the Full Course as a means of meeting statutory requirements. Some of these schools are removing the “Full Course for all” model and “compulsory RE” may not be available in these schools. Some of these schools are actively discouraging students from choosing RS as an option at GCSE. Teachers contacting NATRE by email, or completing the online survey consistently tell us:

“Students will be only entered if they opt for the subject—thus failing to meet the statutory requirements at KS4.”

“Despite getting 87% A*C (51% A*-A) with the entire Year 11 group last year and an A level group of 35 students, I have just been told that RE is being dropped from my school's KS4 curriculum. This is despite the fact that Mr Gove has said that RE should remain statutory. Gutted!”

“The school is putting a strong emphasis upon students opting for GCSE Geography, History and Humanities, creaming the top students for the above three subject areas and directing the less able students towards RS. Even if students choose within their options that they would like to study RS they will be discouraged from doing so and will be ‘persuaded’ to take two of the above three subjects.”

4.8 GCSE Short Course RS is the way the majority of schools choose to deliver “compulsory RE”, thereby accrediting students' work by external examination; the external accreditation of “compulsory RE” by the Short Course is often specified in the locally agreed syllabus for RE. Short Course GCSE RS has “half the content” of the Full Course as it is intended to be studied in half the time; the course is still of GCSE standard. These schools will often also offer GCSE Full Course RS for those who wish to opt for it.

4.9 If RE remains outside the E-Bac then its days are numbered. It may be offered as an option in some schools, as a Full Course GCSE RS having to fight for numbers along with all the subjects not included in the E-Bac, but “compulsory RE” or “RE for all” as defined in statute, in locally agreed syllabuses and other statutory syllabuses will not happen in those schools. Or if it is present in the curriculum, then some schools are indicating now that students will follow the course but will no longer be entered for the terminal exam; it may also be taught by non-specialists, and in a fraction of the time needed to deliver the relevant syllabus

appropriately for students to progress in learning and achieve their potential. In some schools the RE specialist has been made redundant, or fears that they will be in due course. Teachers contacting NATRE by email, or completing the online survey tell us:

“Until now our school has followed the Short Course RS, but now they intend not examining it formally (ie GCSE)... I feel it will be a waste of time for students to study a subject they are not examined in, as well as the behaviour issues this will entail.”

“A few schools have hit upon the idea of taking RE out of the Humanities and form teachers will deliver the ‘legal bit’ of RE. These are schools that had everyone doing the Full Course, and had A level groups.”

“PSHE has gone—no more in KS4. RE will be RE in name only as I have to put the PSHE elements into the one lesson a week which is named RE. Also in there I have to put Careers. In Year 11 RE will be on a circus with a study skills lesson. Basically RE in name but not RE in practice!”

4.10 If RE is included in the E-Bac then schools have a mechanism for delivering the humanities component of the E-Bac in a way which ensures compliance with statute, and leaves space in the non-Ebac curriculum for the other subjects which need to be covered. Schools already have staff with expertise in teaching RE, they have the resources, the interest of students who perceive the subject as relevant to their academic interests, their lives and career choices, and often excellent outcomes in terms of A*-C in this rigorous and academic GCSE subject.

4.11 NATRE disagrees with those who regard GCSE RS as less academically rigorous than other GCSEs in the Humanities or Arts; this view has no foundation in fact. Durham University’s research report “Relative difficulty of examinations in different subjects” (2008) demonstrated that interpreting statistical differences in the relative performance of students in different subjects as differences in difficulty is problematic. Whilst the STEM subjects lead the chart in relation to level of challenge, RE held its own as an academic subject in its own right comparable with other Humanities and Arts subjects. The revision of the GCSE criteria since the publication of the Durham report served to make the GCSE criteria even more rigorous, thus consolidating RE’s position with regard to its comparability with other Humanities and Arts subjects. The new criteria saw a move to a 50–50 split between Assessment Objective 1 and Assessment Objective 2, meaning that the skills involved in evaluation (a higher order skill) are now worth 50% of the marks, rather than 25% as previously.

4.12 The growth of AS and A2 in Religious Studies over the last decade is spectacular: from under 10, 000 candidates, to over 25, 000. This growth can be attributed to the fact that 16–19s are very alert to the philosophical and ethical challenges of religion in the contemporary world and the demanding nature of the RS enquiry is evidenced by the wide use of RS A2 qualifications by leading universities, alongside other humanities courses. The reduction in numbers taking the subject at GCSE as a result of changes schools are implementing because of the introduction of the E-Bac will inevitably impact negatively on the growth of the subject at A level and will herald its decline.

4.13 The negative impact on RE outlined above runs counter to the Secretary of State’s declared intention that all students will continue to have RE as part of a “broad and balanced” curriculum. The data collected by NATRE indicates clearly that being “compulsory” is no protection whatsoever for RE as schools prioritise delivery of the E-Bac over other aspects of the curriculum, and even legal requirements.

5. CONCLUSIONS

5.1 NATRE supports the development of a “broad and balanced” curriculum that includes RE for all students in line with statutory requirements, with a minimum of a GCSE Short Course for all students at Key Stage 4.

5.2 NATRE asks the Secretary of State to include RE in the E-Bac as a humanity and not to allow his desire to encourage wider take-up of History and Geography to discourage the study of Religious Studies as a Full Course GCSE option.

5.3 NATRE asks the Secretary of State to acknowledge our evidence that the introduction of the E-Bac has had a serious and detrimental impact on the statutory provision of “compulsory” RE and that he takes steps to address this.

5.4 NATRE asks the Secretary of State to consider our view that the longer term consequences of the decision to omit RE from the E-Bac are sure to be damaging not just to the subject itself but to the religious literacy of the nation and the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of children and young people.

Written evidence submitted by the Geographical Association

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Geographical Association strongly supports the introduction of the EBac. It is a simple and highly cost-effective mechanism that encourages schools to ensure a broad and balanced educational curriculum for all. Following the renaming of the former department for “children schools and families”, and a White Paper that unashamedly prizes teaching, we are pleased to see a Department for Education committed to promoting deeper educational values. The EBac has the potential to do this.

1.2 This paper is focussed on a single issue: the place of a “humanities” subject in the EBac. The Geographical Association believes the government has made the correct judgement on this: that students choose either geography or history (or, presumably in some cases, both). This paper shows why this is so.

2. THE KEY QUESTION

2.1 We are concerned to re-affirm the value of a broad general education for all.

2.2 Despite unprecedented investments in the nation’s education infrastructure there is mounting evidence that developments do not cohere under a strong overall sense of purpose.⁴ If we ask the key question:

“What counts as an educated young person in this day and age?”

it is impossible to imagine a defensible answer that did not include geographical and historical knowledge and understanding. This is true whether that young person is 5, 11, 14 or 16 years old. And yet these subjects have become increasingly marginalised in schools and in some cases have become almost non-existent. The potential social, cultural and economic costs resulting from this imbalance are potentially enormous. The requirement for geography or history to make up the EBac is not only a benefit in itself, but will strengthen these subjects in the curriculum in KS3. The positive backwash should also be felt in the primary school curriculum.

3. WHY THE GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY ARE IMPORTANT

3.1 Geography and history are the “world subjects”. These subjects help us develop knowledge and understanding of the world, our place in it, and what it means to be a human being. Through studying these subjects we develop knowledge, understanding and skills that enable us to understand and illuminate our common humanity and our relationships—not only with each other but with the environmental resources on which life depends. By thinking geographically and historically about the past and the present we are better equipped to imagine our possible futures.

Geography underpins a lifelong “conversation” about the earth as the home of humankind. It is not a narrow academic subject for the few. It is fundamental to everyone.

- Geography fascinates and inspires: geographical investigation both satisfies and nourishes curiosity about the earth and the diversity on human life it supports.
- Geography deepens understanding: many contemporary challenges—climate change, food security, energy choices—cannot be understood without a geographical knowledge.
- Thinking and decision-making with geographical knowledge and perspective helps us to live our lives as informed citizens, aware of our own local communities in a global setting.
- Geography relies on a wide skills base. Using maps and images of people and places, numerical data and statistics, the written word as well as graphical modes of communication and getting to grips with the geographic information systems that underpin our lives: all this is known to make “geographers” skilful and employable.⁵

Edited from GA’s 2009 Manifesto *A Different View*
(www.geography.org.uk/adifferentview)

3.2 In summary, history and geography contributes to all young people acquiring world knowledge and understanding, to become more rounded and more capable as individuals in society. In an increasingly challenging and unpredictable world young people need this grounding in what Michael Young⁶ calls “powerful knowledge” on which to base resilience, imagination and social understanding.

⁴ We acknowledge the work of the Nuffield Review of 14–19 Education and Training for England and Wales (www.nuffield14-19review.org.uk)

⁵ Richard Waite, Managing Director of the UK’s leading Geographic Information Systems (GIS) provider ESRI UK, has said: “Business leaders across the UK are telling us that they need more employees who can help them maximise key technologies such as GIS but who also understand their business needs in these tough economic times. It’s clear from the survey that businesses can do more to help them achieve their top priorities but they need the right people to help them do that. Studying geography and learning how to utilise geographic information gives new employees many of the key skills that businesses are crying out for. As an industry it’s our job to encourage more people to take up a geography-based career so that businesses and society as a whole can benefit.”
[<http://www.esriuk.com/aboutesriuk/pressreleases.asp?pid=647>]

⁶ Young M (2008) *Bringing Knowledge Back In*, Routledge. Young describes powerful knowledge as “the knowledge across the sciences, social sciences and humanities that offers young people the best opportunities there are for making sense of the world they have been born into and for participating in debates about its future”.

3.3 As Simon Jenkins once put it:

“Without geography’s instruction, we are in every sense lost—random robots who can only read and count ... Like the suppression of history, the suppression of geography has been a conspiracy against the true education of the human mind, against scepticism and the exercise of the imagination”.⁷

3.4 The panel above indicates a range of more specific educational purposes served by geography. The discipline nurtures the development of young people’s capability⁸ by developing:

- Deep descriptive “world knowledge”.
- An understanding of how people, places and environments in the world relate to each other.
- Propensity and disposition to think critically about alternative social, economic and environmental futures.

3.5 The third of these points especially, requires skilful teaching, using strategies that emphasise the application of geographical understanding, often in realistic decision-making contexts. Young people are thus provided with opportunities to acquire, develop and apply a range of key ideas and principles, and ultimately to make judgments about particular issues or themes though “thinking geographically”. This is most effective in young people with sufficient maturity and prior learning, as found in “key stage four” (14–16 years).

4. CONTEMPORARY CAUSES FOR CONCERN: THE E-BAC MEETS THE CHALLENGE

4.1 In an unbalanced school curriculum, dominated by the language and mechanisms of performance management, geography and history have suffered in recent years. The self-evident importance of historical and geographical knowledge has been taken for granted and, by default, has been seriously undervalued. In a small number of schools it has been almost totally forgotten. The difficulties school face in maintaining a balanced curriculum for all can be identified as follows:

- The relentless focus on literacy and numeracy at all key stages, the impact of which has been magnified in recent years through the inspection regime and league tables. This results in rigid curriculum hierarchies in schools.
- The increasing curriculum demands on schools, for example, to provide more time for cookery and sport, to include a range of cross curricular “dimensions” and to develop vocational courses at 14–19, put immense pressure on curriculum time. This is partly because they have been introduced incrementally without a strong overall sense of purpose. There is sometimes a lack of “total curriculum” thinking, which is when the humanities can become marginalised.
- The loss of faith by some in the ability of so-called “traditional” subjects adequately to meet the needs of young people. In part, this reflects a belief that subjects are losing “relevance” for the 21st century, and that in the modern age knowledge quickly becomes out of date. This is a mistaken view of knowledge and based on very restricted view of the subject disciplines. However, it has been reinforced in recent years by a sustained focus on teachers’ pedagogic skills and overly technical definitions of “high quality teaching”: teachers in our subjects rarely get the opportunity to enrich *and develop* their subject knowledge.
- Encouraged by central agencies and national bodies, some schools have introduced skills-based programmes based on integrated studies, especially in key stage three. This is most unfortunate, for it is usually history and geography that are lost to the curriculum with such experimentation. Often taught by non-specialists, there is evidence over many years showing how difficult it is for teachers to provide such programmes with sufficient challenge and interest for the students. In some cases, there are students who go through their entire secondary education with very little high quality study of either geography or history: this should be a cause for immense concern to policy makers.
- The immense pressure on schools to improve results—particularly on those secondary schools in the most challenging circumstances—leads to traditional GCSE subjects often losing out to vocational programmes which are seen as easier to achieve and offering more “value” for the school. This results in a loss of opportunity for young people, especially in more deprived urban areas, to study history and geography at GCSE level. It should be noted that this almost certainly is perceived to limit career opportunities to these young people. Furthermore, the Russell Group of universities have stated clearly⁹ that avoidance of academically rigorous subject disciplines is a disadvantage when it comes to gaining access to the best universities.

4.2 To summarise, we can use Professor Alison Wolf’s words:¹⁰

“Our preoccupation with education as an engine of growth has not only narrowed the way we think about social policy. It has narrowed—dismally and progressively—our vision of education itself.”

⁷ *Guardian* 16/11/07, p 36.

⁸ See Lambert D (2011) ‘Reframing school geography: towards a capability approach’ in Butt G (2011) *Geography, Education and the Future*, Continuum Press.

⁹ <http://www.russellgroup.ac.uk/russell-group-latest-news/137-2011/4746-new-guidance-on-post16-study-choices/>

¹⁰ Wolf, A. 2002. *Does Education Matter? Myths About Education And Economic Growth*, London: Penguin Press.

5. WHAT DO PUPILS WANT?

5.1 IpsosMori research for the Geographical Association to discover the views of 11–14 year olds found that the vast majority (93%) think it is at least “fairly important” to learn about issues affecting peoples’ lives in different parts of the world, with half believing this is “very important”. Over 90% think it is important to learn about where things like food, energy and water come from, and to learn about how their world may change in the future. Unsurprisingly, pupils identified geography as the main subject for learning about these things. Yet the same research found that two-thirds of them think not enough time in school is spent learning about the wider world.

5.2 Placing geography unambiguously as a part of the EBac is likely to serve students’ natural and healthy interest in deepening their knowledge and understanding of the world.

6. GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY AND THE EBAC

6.1 Drawing from the previous sections, the case for requiring a “humanities” subject in the EBac is very strong, and we think incontrovertible. We would for example, emphasise the following points:

- It encourages a greater number of young people to study the strong disciplines of history or geography to GCSE level, and thus to complete the “compulsory years” of schooling with a broadly based education.
- Geography and history complement modern foreign languages in creating an outward looking curriculum in an increasingly connected and competitive world.
- A broad educational platform is a good thing in itself, but success in history or geography also helps students gain access to, and prepare for, higher education.
- Securing the status of geography and history in key stage four also helps support the development of these subjects at key stage three—and bring an end to the trend to undermine subject disciplinary knowledge and rigour in the early secondary years with “learning how to learn”.

7. WHAT ABOUT OTHER SUBJECTS?

7.1 Here we address a question that has gained widespread currency. Is it an injustice to limit the “humanities” component of the EBac to *only* geography or history?

7.2 The Geographical Association sees some danger in *prescription* as a guarantor of any subject’s position in the curriculum. If government insists that any single subject matters to the extent that it is protected by law, then there are potential negative backwash effects: for example, that subject community may itself be less inclined to think about its justification in a rapidly changing world, or about what constitutes high quality teaching and learning in that discipline. Compulsion in any case is, in the final analysis, a relatively weak argument, since it appears to grant status by restricting freedoms. Subject disciplines such as geography should not become like medieval guilds, defending restrictive practices.

7.3 Our argument is therefore not for compulsion. It is not to see geography (or history) as a state-endorsed end in itself. Our belief is that history and geography are of great *educational* value to all young people, and no matter where they go to school they should have both the opportunity and sufficient time to learn about people, society and environment. The “world subjects” are the critical resources for young, engaged people living in a representative democracy and a rapidly changing world. It is disgraceful that some young people, often in urban working-class settings,¹¹ are denied access to them. The Geographical Association’s argument is for a general education for all, consisting of the knowledge, skills and values essential to understanding how individuals and societies relate to each other and with the natural world. This is an extrinsic, rather than intrinsic justification for the teaching of geography and history.

7.4 The attraction of the EBac is that it stops short of prescription and compulsion. But it strongly re-affirms the notion of a general education. However, the question still remains: why not include a longer list of options under “humanities”?

7.5 The first, and main reason, is that to widen the choice of “humanities” (for example to include citizenship, business education, or even media studies) would be to dilute the simple powerful message that EBac promotes—for a broad based general education, without which studying business or the media is impaired.

7.6 The second is to recognise the significance of geography and history as “big ideas” in themselves. This counters the often heard criticism that such subjects are 19th century creations and are therefore unsuited to the 21st century. The ambition of geography has been with us since the ancient Greeks and before: to write and account for the world and our place in it is no more nineteenth century than writing itself. The disciplines have of course evolved through time and the school subject has also evolved to reflect changing understandings and techniques.

¹¹ Location, location: geography’s rural divide; *Times Educational Supplement*, 3/10/2010 <http://www.tes.co.uk/article.aspx?storycode=>. Also, see Weeden P and Lambert D (2010) Unequal access, *Teaching Geography*, 35, 2, p74–75.

8. WHY GEOGRAPHY OR HISTORY? WHY NOT BOTH?

8.1 It has been a longstanding tension in English schools that although geography and history have often both been considered “essential” they are commonly placed in opposition to each when it comes to “options time”—when children select their examination subjects. And yet these are complementary subjects, best studied together.

8.2 In the past attempts have been made to square this circle by introducing integrated studies of the humanities. In terms of increasing access, this is a “worst solution”, and therefore is no solution at all. In integrated schemes the quality of the teaching has often been found to be poor, the selection of content lacking rigour and the level of intellectual challenge diluted.

8.3 *Thus, the Geographical Association, along with the Better History Group is ready to propose a radical solution.* As above, this will not be to make either subject compulsory in key stage 4, but to enable the study of both subjects possible within current 14–16 structures. Without going into precise detail here, we think it will be possible and desirable for the long term success of the EBac to enable 14 year olds to choose one of the following routes, any of which would satisfy EBac criteria:

- Hi: Full History GCSE (a history major).
- Gg: Full Geography GCSE (a geography major).
- Gg-Hi: A joint geography and history GCSE (geography and history minor).

As well as satisfying the conditions for the EBac, any of these routes can lead to Advanced level study in history or geography or both.

8.4 *A key enabling point in the joint Gg-Hi proposal is that Year 9 of the national curriculum is specified.* In effect, all students will study, in year nine, a history module and a geography module. Performance in these modules can be used as a measure to help students judge whether to opt to “major” in history or geography in the EBac, or to “minor” in both. An additional benefit of this scheme is that it would considerably strengthen history and geography in KS3. The year nine modules are proposed to be *Parliament and Democracy* (history) and *People and Environment* (geography).

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 In the context of the “humanity” component, the EBac is retained in its current shape with students choosing geography or history.

9.2 The Geographical Association and the Better History Group be asked to provide details about a proposed geography and history joint GCSE (which would increase the appeal of geography and history and thus may be very popular with Headteachers)

9.3 Careful account should be taken about the implications of the EBac on teacher supply numbers. There is already a shortage of subject specialist geography teachers in schools, and yet the amount of geography and history teaching is likely to increase substantially.

9.4 Headteachers be alerted to the need to strengthen subject-based CPD for geography and history staff, for example, by encouraging subject association membership and participation in activities and courses aimed at improving teachers’ subject knowledge

Contact: The Geographical Association (GA) is the leading subject association for geography teachers. Contact via Mr Ricky Buck at rbuck@geography.org.uk. The Geographical Association is found at www.geography.org.uk

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by AMiE

The appearance of the English Baccalaureate (E-Bac) not only as a distinct qualification but also as a measure in league tables has been greeted with anger, confusion and dismay both by staff and pupils alike in many English schools. The fact that this barrier to success appeared without consultation, warning or indeed an opportunity to take part for many young people, has meant that this has not been a positive experience and only contributes to widening the gap between the privileged and the challenged in our schools. To this end, AMiE offers the following comments on the points raised by the Education Committee in its call for evidence into the English Baccalaureate.

1. THE PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE E-BAC AND ITS VALUE AS A MEASURE OF SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

In its present form, the purpose, benefits and value of the E-Bac are dubious to say the least. Unlike comparable qualifications with the same nomenclature, such as the International Baccalaureate (IB) with its distinctive philosophy, rationale and well thought out approach, the E-Bac by comparison does not stand up to scrutiny. It seems to be no more than a label, for a collection of subjects favouring a traditional and it could be argued, outmoded curriculum, with a distinct link to a certain type of school and pupil. It is therefore biased

in its approach and the rationale behind its inception is difficult to access and understand for many schools with a very diverse intake and particular challenges. Its value therefore as a measure of school performance is highly questionable, especially as this year, many highly effective schools and successful pupils were made to seem otherwise due to the late movement of the goalposts.

2. THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE E-BAC

The choice of subjects, to many minds, is arbitrary and without rationale. Why, for example, two humanities—History and Geography—should be given preference over any other when the skills are often comparable, would seem to be a nonsense. The inclusion of some highly specialist and esoteric subjects in this modern world eg Hebrew, must also be open to challenge. It also brings to the fore the ever controversial question of the academic/vocational divide. In its present form the E-Bac favours the latter without question and therefore by dint particular schools and pupils whilst giving a clear message to others that their efforts are not to be acknowledged in the same way. This opens further the gap in the academic/vocational divide and how subjects and pupils choosing them, are perceived and by dint their future careers and life choices. It can also be argued that even in the most academic of schools, the need for a balanced curriculum is paramount, reflecting the need for the practical as well as the purely academic to provide a rounded education.

3. THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE E-BAC FOR PUPILS, SCHOOLS AND EMPLOYERS

The implications for all three groups are immense. For those pupils already in the middle of a two year course or nearing the end of one in this academic year, they have already lost a race for which they didn't even know they were entered if their choice of subjects does not cover those permitted by the E-Bac as it stands.

For schools and pupils in future years, this opens up huge questions with regard to suitability of this narrow choice for many pupils, changes to guidance systems and implications with regard to staffing both in terms of subjects no longer favoured as well as those which are. The many creative and innovative curricula that have been developed in schools and with partnerships with employers and colleges must also be brought into doubt and their loss incalculable to the young people taking advantage of such opportunities and the future benefits to the economy and society.

It also brings up the question of Initial Teacher Training in terms of subjects in areas such a Languages which have seen a downfall in the last few years due to the change in status of such subjects. It also implies a communication and marketing perspective so far as employers are concerned, a group who at times are already confused by the ever changing educational landscape.

4. INTERNATIONAL COMPARATORS FOR THE E-BAC

As pointed out in the introduction, the E-Bac in its present form does not stand scrutiny against other distinct and rational qualifications such as the IB.

Moreover core subjects such as English/Science/Mathematics are already subject to international comparators in systems such as PISA and PIRLS and as such this is the only aspect of the E-Bac which seems to suggest any coherence.

CONCLUSION

The grouping together of five subjects in an arbitrary and incoherent way does not add any value to the curriculum and assessment debate in English schools. On the contrary it has set an alarming precedent which undermines the excellent work already taking place particularly with regard to raising attainment and confidence in young people who begin life without the advantages of others. This is a step backwards but risks pushing schools in a certain direction not for the good of the pupils and communities they serve but due to the pressures of an accountability system which is in danger of returning to the 20th century.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by J M Kenny, Thomas Alleyne's High School

As the Chair of Governors of a Community High School I, along with many others, welcome the introduction of the English Baccalaureate. It will provide sound evidence that pupils have been prepared to a recognised standard with basic skills for their future life. It will encourage schools to focus upon an essential knowledge base for their pupils so that their further education, whether it is vocational or academic, is built on good foundations. It sets a standard to which all pupils should aspire, and their teaching target.

The inclusion of Humanities in the EB is excellent in that it is obviously intended to provide our young people with an understanding of the diversity of human life and cultures. Nevertheless I have serious reservations about Humanities for the EB consisting solely of History and Geography, finding this far too restrictive.

Various definitions of Humanities can be found. Three I think particularly appropriate are:

1. "Since the late 19th century, a central justification for the humanities has been that it aids and encourages self-reflection, a self-reflection which in turn helps develop personal consciousness and/or an active sense of civic duty".
2. "Those branches of knowledge that are concerned with human thought and culture".
3. "Humanities enables people from different backgrounds and cultures to recognize, understand, and communicate past commonalities and present differences. The study of humanities is generally used to comprehend the contradictory interpretations of life and history".

The English Baccalaureate's inclusion just of History and Geography as Humanities subject choices implies that these are the only subjects that are capable of meeting the above criteria. This is far from correct and the inclusion of other subjects such as RE (Religious Education) and possibly Economics and/or Psychology is essential to provide our pupils with stimulating and engaging options from which they can learn about, and hopefully start to understand, our multicultural world.

With a revised Humanities specification we will have a qualification that demonstrates a breadth of study and also provides a sound foundation to go forward. Employers will find this invaluable in assessing the capability and potential of applicants.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by the ifs School of Finance

ABOUT THE IFS SCHOOL OF FINANCE 14–19 QUALIFICATIONS

The *ifs School of Finance* is a registered charity, incorporated by Royal Charter, with more than 130 years experience in delivering financial education.

The *ifs* is currently the only specialist provider of GCSE, AS and A level equivalent qualifications in personal finance and financial studies. These are the Award & Certificate in Personal Finance (both GCSE-equivalent), Certificate in Financial Studies (AS) and Diploma in Financial Studies (A level equivalent).

The Award & Certificate in Personal Finance provide teenagers of all academic abilities with the ability to manage their own finances and make better informed financial decisions, proving to be a crucial life skill for all.

They also provide a natural progression route through to our Certificate and Diploma in Financial Studies— AS & A Level equivalent qualifications that carry full UCAS tariff and are a widely recognised entry route to higher education. These AS and A level equivalent qualifications also provide a solid grounding for anyone wishing to pursue a career in the financial services industry; a fact recognised by some of the world's largest financial institutions.

Over 70,000 teenagers have taken one of these qualifications since they were made available to all schools and colleges in September 2006 and a further 30,000 14–19 year olds are expected to take these qualifications during the current academic year.

INTRODUCTION

The *ifs School of Finance* welcomes the opportunity to provide a written submission to the Education Committee's short inquiry into the "English Baccalaureate" (E-Bac) although we will limit our comments to only one for the four points the Committee will consider, namely the choice of subjects included in the E-Bac.

INQUIRY RESPONSE

Those representing or with an interest in religious studies, music and other subject groups not included in the E-Bac have perhaps understandably expressed their displeasure at being left out of this new measure of success. As a result they are lobbying policymakers to have their subjects included in the E-Bac.

However, recent evidence suggests that teachers and students think personal finance is a far more important qualification than traditional subjects such as religious studies and music.

In February 2011 the *ifs School of Finance* surveyed 1,000 schools and colleges to establish the views of teachers and students. They were asked the following question:

"The English Baccalaureate consists of Mathematics, English, two science qualifications, a foreign language and either History or Geography. Which qualification outside of the English Baccalaureate do you think is the most important?"

According to the survey results, both teachers and students thought that Personal Finance was the most important qualification outside the E-Bac. More than a third of teachers (34%) said so, as did 40% of students.

In comparison just 7% of students (and 6.5% of teachers) thought religious studies was the most important qualification. Only 3.5% of students (2% of teachers) thought music was the most important qualification outside the E-Bac.

Despite these results we do not believe that personal finance should be included in the E-Bac.

With most students taking at least eight GCSE options and some students taking more, we believe that there is sufficient room in the curriculum for qualifications outside the E-Bac to flourish. Furthermore, some schools may not believe that the E-Bac is a suitable measure of success and for these schools even greater choice and flexibility will remain.

Whilst the 2011 survey results referred to above are a ringing endorsement for the importance of personal finance qualifications, they also highlight that just because a qualification is not included in the E-Bac this does not mean it is not important. This is a point policymakers would do well to remember, especially when considering the case for qualifications like those from the *ifs* which provide clear progression routes to both employment and higher education as well as equipping future generations with a crucial life skill.

Ultimately we would like to see a majority of schools and colleges providing their students with the option of taking GCSE, AS or A level equivalent qualifications in personal finance so that more teenagers gain the skills, confidence and knowledge to make better informed financial decisions.

We do not see the introduction of the E-Bac as a barrier to achieving this goal and see no reason why other subject groups could not adopt a similar position ie leaving decisions, about what qualifications should be available, to individual schools and colleges.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Barnardo's

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Barnardo's has extensive experience of working to improve the life chances of disadvantaged children and young people. We believe in the unique potential of education to break the cycle of poverty and contribute to social mobility. Over two thirds of our services include education as part of their mission and many provide vocational education and training to support the potential and aspirations of those who have been alienated by the mainstream academic curriculum.

1.2 We use the experience and evidence gained from our direct work with children to campaign for better policy and to champion the rights of every child. With committed support and a little belief even the hardest to reach children and young people can turn their lives around.

1.3 We welcome the opportunity to respond to the Select Committee's Inquiry on the English Baccalaureate, especially in the light of our experience with, and evidence from, young people who have become disaffected and disengaged from mainstream school.

1.4 Barnardo's believes that young people need the opportunity to be recognised for a diverse range of potential and abilities. We know that narrowing the focus of the curriculum to a limited range of academic qualifications will restrict opportunities for a significant number of young people to shine.¹² In our experience, the current system of judging schools against a range of five, grade A*-C GCSEs already has the effect of leaving some young people with an enduring sense of failure.

1.5 While a broad academic curriculum should be on offer to all children and no-one should be denied the opportunity to stretch themselves and achieve academically, this should not be at the expense of young people who are not yet ready for this experience or who need to take smaller steps to progress. There is a risk that measuring schools' performance against the criteria provided by the English Baccalaureate risks further marginalising those children who face barriers to learning, but nonetheless have aspirations and ambitions.

1.6 Members of the Select Committee are warmly invited to visit our services working with Key Stage 4 pupils who opt to take vocational qualifications with Barnardo's or who need extra support to progress. Most of these young people go on to meet their potential; exceeding their initial aspirations and forming more. They also go on to improve their academic attainment and behaviour at school when they can relate the relevance of learning to the workplace and their futures.

1.7 This submission focuses on the following:

- A curriculum which can engage all young people.
- A range of qualifications which support the progress of all young people.
- A balanced approach to vocational learning and qualifications.
- Developing "soft" skills, positive attitudes and personal qualities.

2. A CURRICULUM WHICH CAN ENGAGE ALL YOUNG PEOPLE

2.2 Barnardo's believes that all young people need the widest possible range of opportunities in order to shine and gain the skills and qualifications they need to progress. Many of those we work with respond when they understand the requirements of the workplace and can relate what they are learning to their future job

¹² 46% of young people currently fail to gain 5 A*-C GCSEs including English and Maths.

prospects. We recognise that others delight in the intellectual challenges of academic work. Many young people are gifted artists or talented performers. But whichever path they naturally gravitate towards, most young people respond to balance and breadth in their studies. All young people need to develop the positive approaches to learning which they will require throughout their lives. The school years are a great opportunity to encourage emerging civic skills, community spirit and service to others. As a source of universal provision, school needs to be flexible enough to enable all young people to do their best according to their own unique aptitudes. Schools should be accountable for demonstrating how they support all their students.

2.3 In 2009 Barnardo's conducted a small-scale survey of young people attending services working to reengage them with education. Two-thirds of the respondents had lost interest in school before they were 16.¹³ They reported frustration with falling behind in an increasingly academic curriculum and they were unable to relate what they were learning at school to the world of work that they all aspired to join. In interviews with project workers the emphasis on school league tables and the supposed higher prestige of traditionally academic subjects was highlighted as a reason why schools were not offering what these young people needed to remain inspired by learning.

3. A RANGE OF QUALIFICATIONS WHICH SUPPORT THE PROGRESS OF ALL YOUNG PEOPLE

3.1 A wide ranging curriculum that recognises the diverse mix of talents and potential that young people bring needs to be matched by a proper opportunity to recognise progress, achievement and attainment for all children.

3.2 However, unlike other baccalaureates,¹⁴ which are usually "all-in-one" qualifications combining a holistic mix of core subjects and vocational or arts-based options, together with civic and social skills development, the English Baccalaureate is not a qualification in itself. It is simply an additional means of measuring schools' performance across a selected range of pre-existing subjects. As such, it is not clear what its added value will be for the school children who may be encouraged to choose this limited selection of subjects over other options with a view to improving a school's league table position.

3.3 If, as with other tests which are used to create league tables, this selection of subjects becomes high-stakes within schools, there is a risk that those who choose other options are perceived as being of less value to the school. Nearly half of secondary school pupils leave without attaining five A*-C GCSEs so yet another assessment measure that adds to a sense of failure for still larger numbers of young people could be seen as a negative step. It is also already the case that vocational qualifications are commonly seen as second rate, despite their value for our economy and society. This new set of criteria for judging schools looks set to increase that perception and act as a retrograde step in achieving greater parity between academic and vocational options.

4. A BALANCED APPROACH TO VOCATIONAL LEARNING AND QUALIFICATIONS

4.1 Barnardo's agrees with the ideals embodied in the English Baccalaureate, that 16- year olds should move on to the next stage of their lives with a breadth of understanding and knowledge. We do not agree that this is achievable through the purely academic range of subjects proposed.

4.2 All young people should have the opportunity to gain credentials and develop an interest in vocational areas. These should not be viewed as a second rate option for the "less academic". In a global context where manufacturing nations are showing the best rates of growth,¹⁵ our economy needs the skills demonstrated through technical and vocational training. There is a strong risk that the focus on the English Baccalaureate in the league tables will skew the range of subjects offered by schools.

4.3 Many of the young people attending Barnardo's vocational training services are proud to achieve their first qualifications. Because they are not restricted by school league tables, Barnardo's services are able to select tailored, but challenging, qualification opportunities that support skills development and use flexible teaching methods in realistic settings. Our outcomes measurements show positive results and destinations for young people who had fallen behind in mainstream school.

4.4 Vocational qualifications with hands-on or applied components can take longer to demonstrate, and are more complex to assess, than subjects which are amenable to "pencil and paper" tests of knowledge and memory. Schools need to be supported to allow for this time, as they currently do for assessments in the visual and performing arts.

5. DEVELOPING "SOFT" SKILLS, POSITIVE ATTITUDES AND PERSONAL QUALITIES

5.1 Social skills bring economic and social benefits. They are essential for getting and holding down a job, and for becoming a worthwhile, contributing member of society. Many young people gain these skills in the family, but young people that Barnardo's works with have not always had consistent parenting or family stability. Often this means these young people need extra support with basic social skills such as punctuality and politeness. Additionally, as highly regarded baccalaureates such as the International Baccalaureate

¹³ Evans, J, *et al* (2009) *Second Chances: Re-engaging young people in education and training*; Barnardo's.

¹⁴ International Baccalaureate, Welsh Baccalaureate, AQA Baccalaureate, European Baccalaureate.

¹⁵ <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/jan/12/germany-enjoys-economic-growth-spurt>

recognise, the school years are the best opportunity to encourage the social and civic skills and responsibilities that all young people need, not just for employability, but for optimum personal and social development too.

5.2 In the context of the Big Society, skills for “community and service” and the “environment”¹⁶ become all the more important. It is not clear that the English Baccalaureate can offer this rounded developmental experience with its emphasis on academic knowledge in a limited range of traditional curriculum subjects.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by John Connor

1. As a linguist, I accept the basic “direction of travel” indicated by the E-Bac. I have long argued that it is a national disgrace that so many students leave school without a basic competence in another language. This contributes in no small measure to the negative perception of British people abroad. Native speakers in other countries tend to assume I’m Dutch—they are always surprised when I say I am English—“But English people do not speak languages” they say in astonishment. So while I accept the idea that languages are “back in the frame” as a core subject, I am deeply concerned that the structure and implementation of the E-Bac are deeply flawed, and may prove counter-productive in the longer term.

2. One of my main concerns about the E-Bac is that it has already become the only measure that matters in some schools, despite being applied, unfairly in my view, retrospectively. How can schools deliver against a measure that did not exist when the cohort of students being measured sat that series of examinations? As a result there have been several spectacular knee-jerk reactions by head teachers and governors across the country, for example:

- a school that recalled all its Year 9 options booklets at the beginning of January and completely redesigned the Key Stage 4 curriculum; and
- schools that are now teaching history or geography to the whole of the current Key Stage 4 cohort in twilight time after school in an attempt to secure GCSE passes in the coming series (this was also suggested for French in one school, but it is physically impossible to do this given the enormous time pressures created by controlled assessment in modern languages GCSE examinations—there simply isn’t the time to fit it all in). These groups contain students who are in Year 11 and who thought that they had dropped history or geography eighteen months ago. What it must be like to teach them I can only imagine.

I am not in the least persuaded by the pronouncements that E-Bac is only one measure and that there are other measures, indeed parents can construct their own league tables. This is either shockingly naïve, or cynically disingenuous. A school rated outstanding by OFSTED, with 82% A*-C (67% with English and maths) which finds itself scoring 6% on the E-Bac measure will only react in one way, and for ministers to argue otherwise displays a woeful and worrying ignorance of the impact of these edicts on the day-to-day running of schools. I do, however, have to suppress a wry smile, however, when I see leading independent schools scoring 0% on this measure because their option systems were not set up to deliver it. And why should they have been? Independent schools were no better informed about this measure than anyone else, and in these schools there may be students appropriately following courses in two or three languages but no humanities, or both humanities and no language. This now has no value.

3. The selection of subjects is open to interpretation, as if these are the only subjects that can provide academic rigour. The omission of RE from the humanities is frankly baffling, despite arguments that as it’s compulsory it doesn’t need to be in the E-Bac. Does this argument also apply to English and maths, then? There is a worrying lack of logic. Leaving that aside, compulsory RE might make it difficult for smaller schools to provide the appropriate range of options to deliver the E-Bac. The lack of reference to information and communications technology is amazing—Latin is apparently more useful than ICT in the 21st century. The seminal presentation “Shift Happens” underlines clearly the explosion in technology over the last 30 years, and makes the point that we are preparing pupils for jobs that don’t yet exist using technologies that haven’t yet been invented to solve problems that we don’t yet know are problems. Where Latin fits in to this picture I have yet to determine. I have no qualms about Latin *per se*, (I studied it Advanced Level myself) but the “one-size-fits-all” model of the E-Bac does not serve the interests and capabilities of all pupils.

4. The E-Bac sits at odds with promises of greater freedom for curriculum planning. This is another example of muddled thinking, or a lack of awareness of the knock-on effect of introducing a new performance indicator into schools. Either way, this is both dangerous and disturbing. The E-Bac is already dominating planning in both the long and short term. So schools are free to teach what they like, as long as it’s the E-Bac subjects. Will this also apply to free schools and academies, and what will be the approach of OFSTED? Despite protestations of greater curricular freedoms, schools will be shoe-horned into this suite of subjects in order to deliver the measure. It’s curriculum design by league table, which is the worst of all possible scenarios. Furthermore, if we factor in the notion that this curriculum is based on the unsupported whim of one individual, based on anecdote and completely lacking in any objective evidence base, it’s almost Napoleonic in its breathtaking arrogance.

¹⁶ <http://www.ibo.org/myp/curriculum/interaction/>

5. It is the modern languages offer that paradoxically I find the most disturbing, having said that I welcome the inclusion of languages in the measure. Yet again, a government, faced with catastrophic collapse in languages learning in Key Stage 4, has come up with the wrong answer to the right question—why do so many pupils abandon languages so readily? The elephant in the room is GCSE in the case of languages. The GCSE examination in a modern language is banal, reductionist and completely lacking in intrinsic interest for the age group. The latest changes have made it even worse, as it has now become 60% a test of memory through controlled assessment. Pupils are not encouraged to speak spontaneously, instead committing chunks of text to memory in the hope that they will be able to regurgitate it on the day. They lack the ability to react to tangential questioning, and rarely do they take the initiative in speaking assessments. And yet the E-Bac is entirely predicated on GCSE. No other accreditation is acceptable. This is a real slap in the face for the enormous amount of development work done to engage pupils in language learning by providing them with different routes. Anything with a vocational flavour is summarily dismissed, as if it doesn't provide any academic rigour and challenge. The various work-related schemes available are by no means a soft option, and give pupils realistic, life-related contexts within which to work. If the languages component of the E-bac remains as it currently stands, it will be a train wreck waiting to happen. We've been here before, with reluctant adolescents coerced into following courses that have not the slightest relevance to their lives or any level of interest. Again, a startling ignorance of the reality of what the GCSE means in practice in Key Stage 4 language lessons. Once more this is either naïve, or is it a Machiavellian strategy to drive an even greater wedge between state and private education? Furthermore, I remain to be convinced that Latin, Ancient Greek and Biblical Hebrew are appropriate solutions to the issues of uptake of languages in secondary schools.

6. I am perplexed by the choice of “Baccalaureate” as the descriptor for this measure. In my experience a Baccalaureate is a qualification offered to 16–19 year olds, consisting of a broad spectrum of subject areas which ensures that students have a rounded experience of post-16 education prior to making their higher education choices. The International Baccalaureate has been adopted successfully by a number of English schools, and is a much more logical model than this arbitrary selection of subjects, which is not even a qualification and offered to the wrong age group. There is no coherence in the E-Bac, as it doesn't address the 14–19 continuum in the way that the Welsh Baccalaureate does, with a clear progression route through Foundation, Intermediate and Advanced diplomas. The Welsh Baccalaureate combines personal development skills with existing qualifications like A levels, NVQs and GCSEs to make one wider award that is valued by employers and universities. The Welsh Assembly Government introduced the Welsh Baccalaureate to transform learning for young people in Wales. It gives broader experiences than traditional learning programmes, to suit the diverse needs of young people. It can be studied in English or Welsh, or a combination of the two languages. This is a true Baccalaureate, and a much more logical model than the one currently in force in England.

7. In conclusion, I would add that it is difficult to engage in rational debate on this issue, as those on the right automatically assume that any criticism of the E-Bac means that one is opposed to academic rigour and that one is actively engaged in preventing pupils from poorer backgrounds from attending a Russell Group university. In particular, the right wing press have taken gleeful delight in trashing state schools with headlines such as “Schools fail 85% of pupils”. This is not only malicious, but deflects attention from the successes achieved by state schools, sometimes in difficult and challenging circumstances, and is to be deplored. I also find it ironic that having spent all of my professional life arguing for greater opportunities for young people to embrace the learning of other languages I now find myself sometimes criticised for daring to suggest that the way this government is going about re-establishing languages is plainly wrong.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Fiona Hopkinson

1. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the recent introduction of the English Baccalaureate (E-Bac). As a newly qualified Business Teacher and a Year 9 Form Tutor it has put me in a very interesting position. Our GCSE options programme started in October 2010 at which point we were in the excellent position of being about to offer students more than 40 courses to pursue at KS4. We were also able to advise them to choose courses based on their enthusiasm, enjoyment and previous success. Since the incredibly rapid introduction of the E-Bac our advice to students has had to change. Essentially, it is now assumed that students who will gain C or above in the core subjects of the E-Bac should follow the programme and this has meant a significantly reduced options programme for them. At a recent Parents' Evening a number of parents expressed concerns that they were torn between the desire to tell their children to pursue options they actually wanted to do and pursue those that the Government feels are “more valuable”. I personally felt very conflicted as to how to advise them given the uncertainty of the future of the qualification and the potential for them to make a decision based on something that, like so many other educational policies, may well be dropped in the future months or years.

2. In terms of the direct effect on the profession, the E-Bac is a source of considerable frustration. Whilst I appreciate the thinking behind the programme, during a period of economic turbulence it has the potential to exacerbate the jobs crisis—in terms of Secondary School places, for Business Studies alone the potential numbers of students studying the course have nearly halved because of the narrow definition of Humanities and we are far from the only subject affected. There has also already been a knock on effect on take up

numbers for PGCE courses in my local area and the retention of jobs for September 2011. The PGCE course I pursued at Huddersfield University is expecting numbers well below 50% of those it enjoyed during my qualifying year and the funding for the BAF Diploma, and other Diploma streams has now been cut for September 2011 which has implications for staffing and student options.

3. As a student of the 1990s the E-Bac is not a new concept. I myself at school was asked to choose an “Arts”, a “Humanities” and a “Language” in addition to the core subjects. After this period it was seen to be more appropriate to widen and deepen the areas of potential for students and there was a period of considerable growth in subjects such as Business Studies, Economics, Philosophy, Psychology, Religion, Morality and Ethics which was seen as valuable and indeed essential in a modern world. I do not understand why educational policy has deemed it necessary to take what is essential a back-ward step in evaluating the benefits of particular courses and placing greater weight on specific subjects, especially not without proper consultation. Limiting the area of Humanities to simply a choice between History and Geography seems particularly narrow minded given the classification in normal terms of a wide range of other subjects under this umbrella.

4. I appreciate that individual cases are not being considered in the review of the E-Bac but the very fact that I have been affected as a Teacher, a Tutor, an NQT and an advisor for potential PGCE applicants shows me that the effects of the introduction of the E-Bac are perhaps further reaching than the Government perhaps planned for. My own position for next year is no longer guaranteed and indeed looks set to not be available because of the drop in take up numbers and the market for Business Studies and Economics teachers does not look favourable for the coming year. Given the fact that one of the core issues in the last few years has been ignorance at the implications and impacts of poor business and financial understanding, this seems a somewhat ridiculous situation to be in.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by National Society for Education in Art and Design

1. The National Society for Education in Art and Design has a membership drawn from every sector of education from the primary school to universities. Its aims are to promote art and design education and to look after the professional interests of teachers in this area of education. For over 120 years the Society has combined the functions of a professional association and learned society. Members receive up-to-date information and accurate news, views and information on current developments in art and design education and access to professional advice and specialist publications including the influential *International Journal of Art & Design Education*, *AD Magazine* and the web site www.nsead.org. The Society also provides frequent professional development opportunities for teachers through a programme of international, national and regional events.

THE PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE E-BAC

2. The declared purpose of the new award—the English Baccalaureate—is to “...give special recognition in the performance tables to schools which are helping their students to attain this breadth of study”. It is also intended to “provide a powerful incentive for schools to drive the take-up of individual science subjects, humanities such as history, and, especially, foreign languages”. This is described as “a properly rounded academic education”. The NSEAD strongly disagrees that the E-Bac represents a properly rounded education for all students or that it will give schools the “...freedom and incentives to provide a rigorous and broad academic education”.

3. The E-Bac has been introduced, retrospectively, without any rationale given for the “academic” subjects that have been included or omitted: a rounded education should not only include those subjects arbitrarily defined as “academic”. One driver appears to be concern about England’s apparent decline in the PISA ratings. However the most recent PISA findings do not compare like with like as the countries listed have changed. No reference is made to longstanding Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIM SS) data where England is ranked seventh for mathematics and science behind countries that, perhaps significantly, are essentially mono-cultural. It could be claimed that in these studies England is the top multicultural country. There appears to be a selective use of evidence to support the government’s arguments.

4. Already the E-Bac has had the immediate effect in many schools of skewing or limiting the GCSE option choices that students are being given for 2011–12. Appendix 1 shows the results of an indicative survey of 100 art and design teachers. One question asked teachers whether the fact that art and design will not form part of the E-Bac will have any impact on your school’s choice of options at KS4. 61% said “yes” and another 20% were not sure at this early stage.

5. The E-Bac is not a recognised qualification for a school leaver. It has no currency for employers or higher education in its current form. The E-Bac is merely another device for making inter-school comparisons—surely league tables and Ofsted inspections already provide sufficient and complementary mechanisms for this purpose? Its retrospective introduction will allow government to claim “improvements” in the future but the validity of such claims inevitably will open to challenge. Linking individual pupil achievement with school performance in this crude way is likely to be very damaging to the curriculum as a whole and to the opportunities for students of all abilities.

6. The E-Bac will encourage schools to focus on E-Bac subjects to the exclusion of much else. It will be at the expense of a broad and balanced curriculum in schools struggling to meet the new 35% target. Its effect is already to hijack individual students' education and career opportunities by making schools feel they have to conform to an arbitrarily imposed standard and, inevitably, a narrower curriculum.

7. There is past evidence that when the focus of schools is drawn to particular curriculum areas then other subjects are neglected. For example when the numeracy and literacy strategies were introduced in primary schools the statutory obligation to follow the programmes of study for art and design and music was removed for a period of two years: arts education has not yet recovered in many primary schools.

8. There is further evidence that when efforts are made to reduce the scope of the national curriculum "to free up time for other subjects and activities" it ends in failure. Sir Ron Dearing attempted this unsuccessfully in 1993. The National Curriculum, or in this case prioritised E-Bac subjects, will invariably expand to occupy nearly all the time available.

THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS IN THE E-BAC

9. The Society believes that curriculum breadth is vital for all students in secondary education and they should have a "properly rounded education" up to age 16. This should include the humanities and languages, creative arts, mathematics, science, technological study and physical education alongside the development of other essential skills and values. This E-Bac does not have the interests of all young people at heart. It will damage the lifetime prospects of those who do not fully achieve this target many of whom will have other skills and interests which will make them just as employable in the twenty-first century. It is very difficult to understand why the proposals do not recognise the increasing importance of the creative and design industries to the British economy—a sector which according to the DCMS is still expanding, directly employs 2.3 million people and accounts for nearly 6% of GDP.

10. What happens to young people who want to pursue creative subjects? Or have more physical or practical leanings... or are less academically inclined? Neuro-scientists tell us that not all people learn in the same way and it has long been recognised that some have exceptional ability in certain subjects—maths, music, art for example—that are not matched by all round academic ability. Will these individuals once again be branded failures by the narrow measures of a limited education system? The emphasis on the E-Bac will have a negative impact on BTEC and other vocational routes, and will affect especially the arts and more practical subjects as students will be drawn into forced study of E-Bac subjects for GCSE and away from other subjects where their true interests and abilities lie. This clearly is not in their best interests but will be driven by a fear in schools of not meeting the arbitrary targets that have been set.

11. The economic arguments apart there is also ample evidence about how the arts contribute to the well-being of the individual and society. The government seems intent in denying students this opportunity. The UNESCO Road Map for Arts Education¹⁷ (2009) is based on deliberations during and after the 2006 UNESCO World Conference on Arts Education. It explores the role of arts education in meeting the need for creativity and cultural awareness in the 21st Century, and places emphasis on the strategies required to introduce or promote arts education in the learning environment.

12. The UNESCO Road Map is designed to promote a common understanding among all stakeholder governments of the importance of arts education and its essential role in improving the quality of education. It is an evolving reference document which outlines concrete changes and steps required to introduce or promote arts education in educational settings (formal and non-formal) and to establish a solid framework for future decisions and actions in this field. It aims to communicate a vision and develop a consensus on the importance of arts education for building a creative and culturally aware society; encourage collaborative reflection and action; and garner the necessary financial and human resources to ensure the more complete integration of arts education into education systems and schools. It seems evident that the government is either unaware of—or set on ignoring—the international consensus on these issues.

13. More recently a major outcome of the Second UNESCO World Conference on Arts Education (25–28 May 2010) was a plan of action entitled *The Seoul Agenda: Goals for the development of arts education*.¹⁸ This document calls on "UNESCO Member States, civil society, professional organizations and communities to recognize its governing goals, to employ the proposed strategies, and to implement the action items in a concerted effort to realize the full potential of high quality arts education to positively renew educational systems, to achieve crucial social and cultural objectives, and ultimately to benefit children, youth and life-long learners of all ages." (p 2) It seems the government does not share this international vision.

14. Is this emphasis on academic subjects what employers and industry want? They have long argued that they need people with a range of flexible skills. A survey¹⁹ of 300 employers and 50 university lecturers across the UK shows that two thirds (66%) feel schools should be doing more to encourage creative approaches to work in their students. The most highly rated creative skills include: a creative approach to problem solving;

¹⁷ http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/ev.php-URL_ID=33538&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

¹⁸ http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/ev.php-URL_ID=41117&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

¹⁹ http://www.elearningage.co.uk/newsDetail/10-10-26/employers_and_universities_look_for_creativity_in_school_leavers.aspx

creative thinking; ability to innovate; digital and online creative skills; and the skill to create visually appealing work. Where do these skills feature in the E-Bac?

CONCLUSION

15. The E-Bac might have a role as a “leaving” certificate for students if it recognised their achievements in core skills, academic subjects and wider educational opportunities. It would need to be carefully designed, piloted and consulted on to become recognised as a worthwhile qualification. The well-respected International Baccalaureate provides an excellent model from which to start. It has none of the limitations of the E-Bac that, as it stands, will damage the education of far too many young people and alienate them from school.

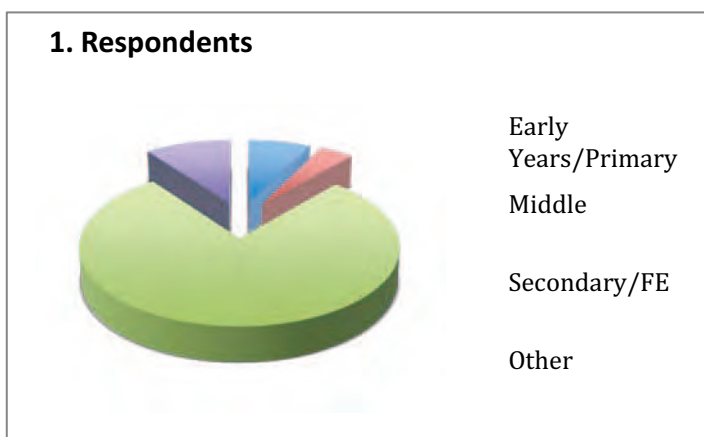
16. Finally, there is nothing that makes the British inherently more creative than people in other countries: the reason for the UK’s strong creative and design industries and hitherto vibrant arts sector is the education system that drives it. Government policies at both school and university level seem intent on destroying 150 years of steady development to the ultimate detriment of the British economy and society.

RECOMMENDATION

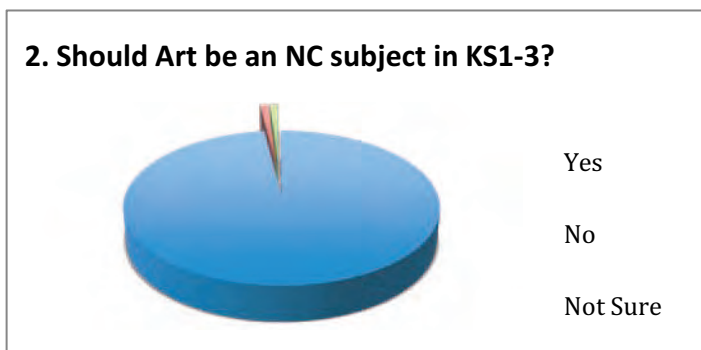
17. The Society recommends that a much more rounded baccalaureate should be developed that guarantees rich and worthwhile learning experiences that will properly prepare and meet the needs of all students for future learning, life and work in the 21st century.

21 March 2011

Art and Design National Curriculum Survey



Early Years/Primary 7.4%
Middle 4%
Secondary/FE 78.9%
Other 10.5%*



Yes 98%
No 1%
Not sure 1%

3. Would your school still fully support your subject in the school curriculum if it was not a statutory part of the National Curriculum?



Yes
No
Not sure

Yes 27%

No 11%

Not sure 58%

4. The Government intends that art and design will not form part of the E-Bacc. Will this have any impact on your school's choice of options at KS4?



Yes 61%

No 8%

Not sure 20%

Written evidence submitted by Professor Robert Jackson

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND THE ENGLISH BACCALAUREATE

SUMMARY

European research in religious education, conducted in England and seven other European countries, shows that the majority of young people aged 14 to 16 who were surveyed wish to have the opportunity to learn about and discuss issues of religious difference in the safe space of the school. In order to do this in an informed and academically cogent way, school students need the opportunity for in-depth study of religions at school. Realistically, this can only be achieved if religious education is available to the majority of students at examination level. This issue is discussed against the background of recent political discussions about multiculturalism and integration, and takes close account of policy development in European institutions.

1. *The Prime Minister's Munich speech*

1.1 The essence of the Prime Minister's Munich speech (5 February 2011) was his response to the threat from terrorism, specifically terrorist acts committed by young Muslim men drawn to an extremist ideology, because, says Mr Cameron, of a crisis in their own identity.

In the UK, suggests Mr Cameron, such young people find it difficult to identify with "traditional Islam", in which the religion is difficult to disentangle from South Asian cultural accretions brought here by earlier generations. Equally, they are not attracted to a Britain lacking a clear sense of "collective identity". The "doctrine of state multiculturalism", suggests Mr Cameron, has encouraged a kind of cultural apartheid, and there has been no countervailing vision of the British society with strong shared values.

1.2 Another part of Mr Cameron's speech states that these values include universal human rights—including for women and people of other faiths; equality of all before the law; democracy and the right of people to elect their own government; and support for social integration rather than separatism. "To belong here, says Mr Cameron, "is to believe in these things".

1.3 Mr Cameron's three practical steps are: ensuring immigrants "speak the language of their new home"; "ensuring that people are educated in elements of a common culture and curriculum" (he mentions the

introduction of national citizen service for 16-year-olds from different backgrounds to live and work together); and “encouraging participation in society by shifting the balance of power away from the state and to the people”. This, he says, will bring about a common purpose and pride in local identity.

2. *Multiculturalism, Education and Young People’s Contribution*

2.1 The shift in understanding of “multiculturalism” at the normative, political level put forward by Mr Cameron is now common. Not only was it expressed by New Labour, in speeches from Ruth Kelly when Secretary of State at the Department for Communities and Local Government, it has also been put forward by the German Chancellor, Angela Merkel, and by others. Few would disagree with the idea that the state should not give resources to separate, homogeneous cultural groups living within a society who reject the democratic values that are fundamental to the society itself.

2.2 But this is a political construction of multiculturalism. Research shows a much more complex picture of the “multicultural” nature of society and of cultural relations, with constantly changing, complex and heterogeneous cultural groupings, exhibiting much diversity and some tension over issues such as identity. Moreover, “cultures”, and indeed “religions” understood in this sense cannot be portrayed as isolated, and there are many examples of overlap with values and practices of other groups within society, both at the level of the individual and the level of various movements. Mr Cameron recognises this himself to some extent when he refers to intergenerational issues of identity within Muslim communities. Moreover, he recognises that Islam as a religion, although it has unifying elements, is not monolithic.

2.3 What is not clear is the extent to which he recognises that individuals, and religious and cultural groups to which they relate, may *themselves* have something very positive to *offer* to discussions about the social values of a democratic society—in other words to discussions about citizenship. He gives an example of how young people from different backgrounds might spend some time living and working together (all well and good), but he says nothing about how he would ensure that “people are educated in elements of a common culture and curriculum”. If this means ignoring or bypassing issues of difference within society (and tolerance of difference within the law is basic to the democratic state), then the solution is not educative, nor does it square with what young people say they would like to have in schools.

3. *Research on What Young People Want in Religious Education*

3.1 So, what do young people themselves think? Recent European research—the European Commission REDCo Project on Religion, Education, Dialogue and Conflict—among 14–16 year olds from wide ranging religious and cultural backgrounds in England and seven other nations, gives us information about what young people *themselves* want. Mr Cameron might give some careful attention to their views. (website below*).

3.2 First, the majority of students surveyed wish for peaceful co-existence across differences, and believe this to be possible.

3.3 Second, they believe that peaceful co-existence depends on knowledge about each other’s religions and worldviews and sharing common interests as well as doing things together.

3.4 Third, students who learn about religious diversity in school are more willing to have conversations about religions/beliefs with students of other backgrounds than those who do not.

3.5 Fourth, young people say that they tend not to discuss issues of religion and culture in their friendship groups. They see the *school* as the setting that potentially gives them the opportunity for learning and exchange. However, they want learning to take place in a “safe” classroom environment where there are agreed procedures for expression and discussion—and they acknowledge that this is not always provided. They want teachers to combine expertise in the study of religions and social and cultural issues with expertise as facilitators of discussion and exchange, where students can draw on their own knowledge and experience as well as that of the teacher. Students do not want to be told what to believe, but would like the state-funded school to be a place for learning about different religions, and for clarifying their own views.

3.6 Fifth, they recognise that the “safe learning space” needs very careful handling in order to avoid conflict. Moreover, religiously committed students who sometimes form minorities in classrooms feel potentially vulnerable, and want this concern to be registered by those planning curricula or training teachers.

3.7 The young people who took part in the research want learning about religions and beliefs to take place in *schools*. Their view is shared by international and European institutions concerned with the same human rights values that Mr Cameron lists in his speech. These are the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the Council of Europe, and the United Nations through its Alliance of Civilizations programme. Each of these institutions is supported by the UK Government.

4. *European Institutions and Religious Education Policy*

4.1 David Cameron’s speech was fundamentally about security, but he does not make the connection between security issues and education in schools. Britain is signed up to the largest security organisation in the world, the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe, comprising 56 participant states, including most European countries plus the USA and Canada. The OSCE’s view of security includes a human dimension,

concerned positively with activities related to human rights and democracy, including education. On this basis the OSCE produced a set of guidelines for teaching about religions and beliefs in publicly funded schools of participant states. Thus, the OSCE's *Toledo Guiding Principles* recommend that all young people should learn about and discuss religious diversity as part of their schooling (OSCE 2007 website below*).

4.2 Similarly, the Council of Europe, consisting of 47 member states, including the United Kingdom, issued a Recommendation from its Committee of Ministers (including the UK Foreign Minister) that all young Europeans should learn about and discuss the range of religions and beliefs present in European societies (Council of Europe 2008, website below*). The recommendation even mentions the value of a "safe space" in the school where young people can articulate and discuss their views in an atmosphere of sensitivity and reciprocity, and reverberates with the views of young people from the European REDCo project outlined above.

4.3 The views of the OSCE and the Council of Europe are mirrored by the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations programme which, again, argues for mutual understanding through education about religions and beliefs (website below*).

5. Religious Education in Upper Secondary Schools

5.1 The most obvious place to situate such study and exchange within the English educational system is in religious education. This subject has contributed to citizenship education in recent years, as well as being a subject in its own right. It is concerned with understanding religious diversity, including the connections between deeply held beliefs and values, and also with personal development and with issues concerned with religion in society. Many good things are happening within the subject, but it is ripe for further development in the light of the findings of various research projects. However, Mr Cameron does not draw attention to religious education in his speech.

5.2 There is a very real opportunity to develop a subject that young people see as a potential safe space for discussion about religions and beliefs, and that international organisations recognise as vital for exploring issues of human rights values. In order for this to happen, the subject should be included in the English baccalaureate. This would put religious education firmly in the examination system as a core subject, providing an intellectually challenging forum in the school.

5.3 Mr Cameron's speech raised some important issues. His points need to be discussed critically, in an informed way. Young people, with their own knowledge and experience, should have the opportunity to contribute to such discussions in the safe arena of the school, and have the opportunity to break the stereotypical representations of religions and cultures encountered in the popular media. There is a real opportunity now to develop religious education at examination level so that young people can learn about religions and discuss their place in personal and social life at depth.

WEBSITES

The European Commission REDCo Project
<http://www.redco.uni-hamburg.de/web/3480/3481/index.html>

OSCE. 2007. *Toledo guiding principles on teaching about religions and beliefs in public schools*, (Warsaw: Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights). (full text available online at <http://www.osce.org/item/28314.html>).

Council of Europe. 2008. "Recommendation CM/Rec(2008)12 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on the dimension of religions and non-religious convictions within intercultural education", available online at:
[https://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?Ref=CM/Rec\(2008\)12&Language=lanEnglish&Ver=original&BackColorInternet=DBDCF2&BackColorIntranet=FDC864&BackColorLogged=FDC864](https://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?Ref=CM/Rec(2008)12&Language=lanEnglish&Ver=original&BackColorInternet=DBDCF2&BackColorIntranet=FDC864&BackColorLogged=FDC864)

United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, Education about Religions and Beliefs
<http://www.aocerb.org/>

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by NASUWT

The NASUWT's submission sets out the Union's views on the key issues identified by the Committee in respect of the introduction by the Coalition Government of the English Baccalaureate.

The NASUWT is the largest teachers' union in the UK, with over 270,000 serving teacher and school leader members.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Regardless of the views of teachers and school leaders about the learning needs of pupils, the Coalition Government has made clear that it is committed to making use of the high-stakes system of school accountability to generate pressure on schools to implement the E-Bac.
- Schools will experience increased pressure to focus their resources, available curricular time and organisational effort to a disproportionate extent on subjects contained within the E-Bac with significant and negative implications for pupils.
- The introduction of the E-Bac places the continued employment of many teachers at significant risk and raises the prospect of an increasingly casual working environment within which staff are likely to be engaged on an increasingly temporary basis to meet fluctuating demand learning outwith the E-Bac framework.
- It is perverse for the Coalition Government to base a significant element of its post-14 qualifications and curriculum strategy, including the selection of qualifications to be included in the E-Bac on the claimed requirements of the elitist Russell Group of universities.
- There is clear evidence that the lack of curricular breadth and balance in the E-Bac, both in terms of the areas of study it prescribes and the limited range of qualifications it recognises, does not reflect the legitimate and appropriate concerns of employers.
- The E-Bac risks creating a perverse incentive at school-level to divert resources away from the most deprived pupils in order to secure the most positive possible accountability outcomes.
- Schools serving relatively deprived pupil populations are likely to be seen as second-tier in terms of status as a result of the introduction of the E-Bac, undermining a core principle of the public education system that all schools should aim to provide access to learning opportunities that meet the individual needs of all their learners regardless of background.
- Rather than providing support for the introduction of the E-Bac, international suggests that it will undermine quality and equality within the education system.

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

1. The NASUWT welcomes the opportunity to submit evidence to the House of Commons Education Select Committee Inquiry into the English Baccalaureate (E-Bac).

2. The Union believes that the Committee is right to highlight the potential impact of the E-Bac in terms of the nature and range of subjects of which the E-Bac is comprised, the potential implications of the introduction of the E-Bac for the education system and the extent to which the introduction of the award is justified by international evidence.

3. The NASUWT does not accept the rationale put forward by Ministers for the introduction of the E-Bac and rejects the assertion set out in the Coalition Government's Education White Paper, *The Importance of Teaching*, that the introduction of the award will enhance the learning experience of all pupils. The Union is clear that the narrow range of subjects associated with the E-Bac and its inclusion in current systems of school accountability will undermine the ability of the education system to meet the needs of pupils and will create incentives at national, local and school level to give disproportionate emphasis on the subjects contained within the E-Bac, thereby marginalising provision in other important areas of learning. The Union's view of the implications of the introduction of the E-Bac in light of the areas of concern identified by the Committee is set out in detail below.

SECURING COMPLIANCE WITH THE ENGLISH BACCALAUREATE THROUGH AN INTENSIFIED SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY REGIME

4. It should be recognised at the outset that the inclusion of the E-Bac in systems of school accountability is most appropriately interpreted as a deliberate act of policy intended to secure the widest possible implementation of the award at school level. In this way, the Coalition Government has confirmed that regardless of the views of teachers and school leaders about the learning needs of pupils, it is committed to making use of the high-stakes system of school accountability to generate pressure on schools to comply with its model of effective curricular provision in secondary schools. In this regard, this approach to the implementation of the E-Bac undermines the Coalition Government's claims in the White Paper that it believes that professionals in schools are best placed to make decisions about teaching and learning.

5. While concerns about the distorting effects of performance tables on the ability of teachers and school leaders to establish relevant, engaging and personalised learning opportunities for pupils are well established,²⁰ it is evident from the White Paper that the Coalition Government intends to intensify the consequences associated with the school accountability regime for schools it regards as weak or failing. In particular, the Department for Education (DfE) has emphasised that schools falling below levels of performance it regards as acceptable will be converted forcibly to academy status.

²⁰ Reed, J and Hallgarten, J (2003) *Time to Say Goodbye? The Future of School Performance Tables*. London: Institute of Public Policy Research.

6. The threat of the imposition of academy status on schools regarded as underperforming in the context of school performance tables will therefore serve to compound existing pressures on teachers and school leaders to construct learning offers that aim to generate quantifiable outcomes that satisfy the external demands of the school accountability regime rather than the needs, interests and aspirations of pupils. Therefore, inclusion of data in respect of the E-Bac in these systems of school accountability will result in pressure to distort curricular practice in school still further to ensure that a sufficient proportion of pupils gain the qualifications associated with the award, as failure to do so would increase the risk of the school being subject punitive intervention from the DfE.

7. Despite the relatively recent introduction of the E-Bac, reports that schools have already begun to alter their curricular offers to pupils in an attempt to increase the proportion of pupils qualifying for the award²¹ demonstrate the legitimacy of concerns about the extent to which the inclusion of the award in systems of school accountability will drive practice at school level.

8. It is therefore important to identify the likely nature of these changes and their potential implications for pupils, the education system and wider society given the prospect that the E-Bac will exert an increasing influence over the ways in which learning is organised and provided for in the secondary sector.

CONSEQUENCES OF THE E-BAC FOR PUPILS' LEARNING EXPERIENCES

9. The pressures school will experience to focus their resources, available curricular time and organisational effort to a disproportionate extent on subjects contained within the E-Bac would risk undermining a longstanding aim of 14–19 qualifications and curriculum policy of tackling learner disaffection and disengagement from education by ensuring that all pupils can have access to the widest possible range of high-quality learning routes that meet their needs and interests as effectively as possible. By creating an incentive within the education system to direct more pupils along E-Bac-determined learning routes, recent efforts to ensure that all young people remain motivated and committed to remaining in education and training until the age of 18 have been placed at significant risk.

10. The unjustifiably narrow content and scope of the E-Bac must also be regarded as a matter of significant concern in this regard. In particular, it is unacceptable that while participation in English, mathematics and science remain key compulsory components of all the learning routes available to pupils currently, qualifications other than GCSE or iGCSEs by which pupils can demonstrate that they have attained National Qualifications Framework (NQF) or Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) Level 2 in these subjects, such as through the functional skills elements of the diploma, are not recognised within the E-Bac framework. These alternative qualifications, although acknowledged formally as comparable in terms of learner-demand with GCSEs and iGCSEs, can represent a more appropriate and accessible accredited qualification option for many learners. Their exclusion from the E-Bac therefore serves to highlight the intrinsically flawed nature of the award as a means of recognising the learning achievements of pupils in these core subjects and reflects the clear implication in the White Paper that an inappropriate and unjustified distinction can be drawn between so-called “soft” and “hard” subjects.

11. The inclusion of a modern or ancient foreign language and a humanities subject in the E-Bac is also highly problematic. The NASUWT is clear that these subject areas represent valid educational choices for some pupils and offer an engaging and worthwhile experience within which learners can develop a range of important skills and understandings.

12. However, it is necessary to recognise that for many pupils, these subjects are not appropriate in terms of addressing learning needs and interests. Alternative yet equally demanding areas of study may be identified by pupils as more relevant to their future educational and employment aspirations. While it is the case that, as currently constituted, the E-Bac would not compel young people to undertake GCSEs in these subject areas, the pressures on schools described elsewhere in this evidence that will result from the inclusion of the award in the school accountability regime, will not only create pressures on schools to seek to direct pupils along E-Bac-driven learning pathways but will also, because of the overemphasis on these subjects that would be likely to result from this policy, serve to “crowd-out” other subject areas from the curriculum as schools place greater emphasis on pupils selecting the qualifications that comprise the award. In the longer term, this reduction in capacity in subjects outside the E-Bac may serve to narrow subject choices within the system permanently.

13. This latter consideration, combined with the reduction in the availability of learning options that will arise as a result of the Government’s decision to end the requirement of schools and other providers to work together co-ordinate their different qualifications and curriculum offers, highlights the risk that many young people will be denied the option of following a programme of learning best suited to their abilities and interests.

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE WORKFORCE

14. The negative impact on the workforce of the introduction of the E-Bac is likely to be significant. The use of the school accountability regime to drive forward the implementation of the award, rather than creating

²¹ Exley, S and Marley, D (2011) “Schools rush to re-vamp timetables for the EBac” *Times Educational Supplement* (20 January) (<http://www.tes.co.uk/article.aspx?storycode=6068590>), retrieved on 22/2/11.

an environment within which a broad range of subject areas will still be made available, will act in a way that reduces overall levels of take-up of subject areas not incorporated within the E-Bac.

15. The result of this shift in provision in schools will be reduced allocation of resources at school-level to these subject areas, with a corresponding decline in the direct employment of teaching and other staff with specialist knowledge. It is clear that places the continued employment of many teachers at significant risk and raises the prospect of an increasingly casualised working environment within which staff are likely to be engaged on an increasingly temporary basis to meet fluctuating demand for provision of learning outwith the E-Bac framework.

16. The NASUWT is clear that this would not only represent an unacceptable squandering of the expertise of highly skilled practitioners and an unjustified and unnecessary deterioration in their working conditions, it would also deny learners the opportunity to benefit from the professional skills and expertise of these staff and undermine the capacity of the teaching and wider school workforce to provide pupils with the wide range of high quality learning experiences to which they are entitled.

THE VIEWS OF ELITE UNIVERSITIES AND EMPLOYERS

17. The failure of the Coalition Government to appreciate fully the need for the qualification and curriculum system to address equitably the needs of all learners is demonstrated by the admission of the Secretary of State that the composition of the E-Bac was determined to a large extent by the demands of the elitist, self-selecting Russell Group of universities.²²

18. Notwithstanding the lack of any objective basis for giving this particular body of higher education institutions the opportunity to exert a dominant influence over the curricular arrangements pertaining to all schools to which the E-Bac will apply, it is clearly the case that the vast majority of learners will, given the very small number of places available at Russell Group universities and the limited form and range of learning opportunities they provide, seek to pursue their education and training interests and needs in alternative ways. It is therefore perverse for the Coalition Government to base a significant element of its post-14 qualifications and curriculum strategy on the claimed requirements of a small number of higher education institutions.

19. In this regard, the interest of the Committee in the views of employers is also highly pertinent. The White Paper describes an apparently serious commitment on the part of the Coalition Government to seek to reflect the interests and needs of employers. While the NASUWT has articulated longstanding concerns that employers have frequently been given a disproportionate degree of influence over key aspects of national education policy to the detriment of other legitimate stakeholders,²³ it is nonetheless important that the education system is able to contribute to the development of the skills base of the future workforce. It is therefore clear that the perspectives of employers should be taken into appropriate account in the development of national curriculum and qualifications policy.

20. It is therefore instructive to assess the content of the E-Bac with evidence of the skills needs of employers. While it is the case that the skills and knowledge obtained through study of academic subjects are valuable and relevant in this context, there are clear indications that for many employers, skills including ICT, creativity, communication and problem solving are important and that concerns have been expressed with regard to the implications of programmes for learning that fail to strike an appropriate balance between these skills and those that are obtained through formal academic study of the type promoted by the E-Bac.²⁴

21. In this respect, the lack of breadth and balance in the E-Bac, both in terms of the areas of study it prescribes and the limited range of qualifications it recognises, does not reflect the interests and concerns of employers, in stark contrast to the diplomas, excluded from the E-Bac, which were designed and developed with a significant degree of employer engagement. For this reason, it is unsurprising that reservations about the limitations of the E-Bac in this respect have been expressed with regard to the technology-intensive and creative industries that have a critical role to play critical to sustained future economic growth.²⁵

THE E-BAC AND EDUCATIONAL EQUALITY

22. As a result of the location of the E-Bac within the high stakes-school accountability regime, it is likely this result in pressure on schools to target resources on pupils who, with additional support and assistance, might attain the standards required for the award of the E-Bac but who may not do so otherwise. The additional resources required to provide this support would therefore undermine the key principle that resources should be allocated to ensure that the learning needs of all pupils are met to the fullest possible extent.

²² *House of Commons Hansard Debates* (7 February 2011) (<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm110207/debtext/110207-0001.htm>), retrieved on 22/2/11.

²³ NASUWT (2006) *NASUWT Response to the Leitch Review of Skills* (http://www.nasuwt.org.uk/consum/groups/public/@education/documents/nas_download/nasuwt_000722.pdf), retrieved on 24/2/11

²⁴ Belt, V, Drake, P and Chapman, K (2010) *Employability Skills: A Research and Policy Briefing*. London: UK Commission for Employment and Skills.

²⁵ Livingstone, I and Hope, A (2011) *Next Gen: Transforming the UK into the world's leading talent hub for the video games and visual effects industries*. London: National Endowment for Science Technology and the Arts (NESTA).

23. The implications of pupil poverty and social exclusion are critical considerations in this context. It is beyond dispute that the education system has a fundamental responsibility to seek to overcome the impact of socioeconomic deprivation and to operate on the basis that disadvantaged pupils can reach the highest academic standards.

24. However, international evidence make clear that no education system, no matter how high its expectations or how effective the nature and scope of its school-level interventions have been, has managed to end the tendency for pupils from relatively advantaged backgrounds attaining higher measured outcomes in the academic subjects that are central to the E-Bac.²⁶ It is therefore clear that poverty and its many complex material and cultural implications for children and young people represent a barrier to progress and achievement in all countries.

25. Therefore, it is clear that pupils from less deprived backgrounds will have the greatest prospects overall of achieving the qualifications required to secure award of the E-Bac. As a result, the E-Bac risks creating a perverse incentive at school-level to divert resources away from the most deprived pupils in order to secure the most positive possible accountability outcomes. The prospect is therefore raised of the funding made available through the proposed Pupil Premium being allocated through decisions taken at school-level to support activities focused on relatively advantaged pupils and not on addressing the needs of the pupils for whom it is intended.²⁷

26. The relationship between pupils' prospects of obtaining the E-Bac and their socioeconomic status has further relevance in respect of action to tackle between-school social segregation. As schools serving relatively advantaged pupil populations are more likely to secure higher rates of achievement of the E-Bac, they are therefore likely be regarded in the context of the school accountability regime as successful.

27. As a result of the high status afforded to the E-Bac and its constituent qualifications by the Ministers, schools in these circumstances may be incentivised to secure their position in the performance tables through an even greater focus on a limited range of E-Bac-related subjects. Plans by the Coalition Government to amend the Code of Practice on admissions²⁸ and to remove the ability of the School Commissioner to review the collective impact of admissions policies, set out in the Education Bill currently before Parliament, are of particular concern in this context, given the prospect they raise of schools that act as their own admissions authorities, including academies and free schools, being able to secure pupil intakes more likely to sustain and increase their E-Bac performance indicators. Conversely, schools serving relatively deprived pupil populations are unlikely to be able to outperform other schools in this regard and will therefore be seen as second-tier in terms of status, undermining a core principle of the public education system that all schools should aim to provide access to learning opportunities that meet the individual needs of all their learners regardless of background.

INTERNATIONAL COMPARATORS FOR THE ENGLISH BACCALAUREATE

28. It is significant that no meaningful evidence has been provided by the Coalition Government to support its implied claim that the majority of European countries use their school accountability regimes to drive forward curricular provision that compares with the narrow range of subject areas contained within the E-Bac. Instead, studies undertaken in this area indicate that securing genuine breadth and balance in the secondary curriculum is a predominant concern in comparable education systems and that no other country has in place curriculum and qualifications arrangements that mirror those of the E-Bac in terms of their form and content and in relation to the way in which schools are required to comply with these arrangements.²⁹

29. However, in light of the particular attention given by Ministers to the outcomes of the most recent outcomes of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), it is helpful to consider some of the features of effective education systems identified through analysis of OECD data and the extent to which attainment of these outcomes in the English education system will be assisted by the introduction of the E-Bac.

30. In light of its previous interest in the importance of pupils' levels of engagement with learning, the Committee will wish to give particular consideration to the extent to which the PISA outcomes indicate clearly the extent to which pupils in England are more positive about their educational experiences than their peers in most other OECD countries and the importance of this in respect of sustaining and improving rates of pupil attainment and progress.³⁰ In this light, this re-inforces the consideration highlighted elsewhere in this response of the need to take into full account the extent to which the limiting of learning options that the E-Bac will generate will impact negatively on pupils' dispositions towards learning, with correspondingly negative consequences for their educational achievement.

²⁶ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (2009) *Education at a Glance 2009*. Paris: OECD.

²⁷ IPPR (2010) "Pupil premium is at risk of being spent on the wrong children" (<http://www.ippr.org.uk/pressreleases/archive.asp?id=4223&fid=284>), retrieved on 22/2/11

²⁸ Exley, S (2010) "Enemy at the gates: admissions code risks new inequalities" *Times Educational Supplement* (3 December) (<http://www.tes.co.uk/article.aspx?storycode=6064863>), retrieved on 22/2/11.

²⁹ Sargent, C, Byrne, A, O'Donnell, S and White, E (2010) *Curriculum Review in the INCA countries*. Slough: National Foundation for Educational Research.

³⁰ Bradshaw, J, Ager, R, Burge, B and Wheater, R (2010) *PISA 2009: Achievement of 15 year olds in England*. Slough: NFER.

31. A clear concern in respect of the E-Bac is its potential to exacerbate between-school social segregation and inequality within the education system in England through its accountability driven-impact on the operation of the school admission system and on the allocation of resources within schools. However, the case for the E-Bac is undermined through analysis of the outcomes of successive PISA studies that makes clear that education systems that are marked by high levels of between-school social segregation are less likely to be effective than those that secure a greater degree of systemic equity.³¹

32. In relation to school accountability, while it is recognised as important, the OECD makes clear that accountability should be not regarded merely as a crude “vertical” concept. The OECD refers explicitly to “lateral” autonomy as well in terms of the ways in which institutions can collaborate and be held accountable collectively for the learning outcomes of pupils.³² However, the divisive nature of the E-Bac and its location within a punitive school accountability regime as set out elsewhere in this response, is incompatible with the notion of systemic collective accountability that the OECD identifies as critical. In relation to its interpretation of the outcomes of the most recent PISA study, the OECD is clear that systems that seek to use performance data as a means of fostering competition between schools, as is the evident purpose of the inclusion of the E-Bac in the performance tables, are generally ineffective.³³

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Felicity L Gibbins

I WOULD like to say how deeply saddened am I to see that the Government have not made provision for Philosophy and Ethics in the new English Baccalaureate and would ask you to seriously consider this preposterous idea. I would not have been surprised to see a Labour Government go for this but I am appalled and disappointed that it has come from this current one. If you go ahead with it will be one of the worse political decisions of your careers and show an astonishing lack of forethought. There are so many reasons why it should be included:

1. It is NOT ENOUGH to say it is COMPULSORY as so many schools know that OFSTED are not commenting on it and therefore are finding loopholes all the time not to teach it. If Geography and History are included we should be too. If we fail to address this issue for Religious Studies it could have a devastating effect on the future of the subject in schools. We are a very hard working RS/RE department at Dr Challoner’s High School in Bucks with high numbers entering the GCSE full course year 10 and 11. In years 10 and 11 we have about 70 girls out of a year group in a free choice out of 150 pupils. Also for AS/A level we have in next year’s year 12, 32 students opting for the subject. If schools and parents see its exclusion surely this will affect choice and numbers especially if it is not rewarded as other full GCSEs in Humanities with recognition and status. Our students work extremely hard, and as they all gained A*’s this omission will be soul destroying.
2. Religious Studies has been one of the examinations that has had great growth in numbers in recent years and this could damage the status and the perception of the value of good RS/RE that is going on in many schools. The future in education looks bleak enough with cuts looming and we are losing sight of the importance of our first obligation to the young people of this country, who are our future.
3. Universities accept RS as an academic subject alongside any other subject. It is one of the fastest growing fourth options and so many people in the public sector took it at university. We need young people who are willing to engage in philosophical discussion, take a wider world view and contribute to communities in all kinds of ways.
4. The challenges that RS presents really engage pupils and demands that they think, analyse, reflect, evaluate and relate the topics to everyday life, which few other subjects do. In the multicultural society of the 21st century, RS really helps individuals see the value of themselves and others working together in a diverse community.

I would therefore ask you to seriously consider making a decision which will have wide reaching implications in this century. We need people in the decision making process who have vision with foresight. Please do not make a decision which will be one of the worse in current Education and I DO NOT say that lightly.

21 March 2011

³¹ OECD (2010) *PISA 2009 Results: What Makes a School Successful? Resources, Policies and Practices Vol. IV*. Paris: OECD.

³² Schleicher, A (2010) “The Importance of World Class Schools for Economic Success” (<http://help.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Schleicher.pdf>), retrieved on 22/2/11.

³³ OECD (2010) *op.cit.*

Written evidence submitted by New Visions for Education Group

The New Visions Group draws together individuals who are involved in education and are concerned for its future. Chair: Sir Tim Brighouse.

Its members include some of the country's leading educationists, among them headteachers, academic researchers, educational administrators and leading figures in parents' and governors' organisations.

Members meet in London at occasional intervals throughout the year to debate and discuss education policy. Representatives meet with ministers and civil servants and produce papers on a range of educational issues.

This paper has been prepared by Professor John White on behalf of the Group.

1. *The stated rationale for E-Bac*

Para 4.20 of the White Paper states that:

In order to encourage and facilitate a more rounded educational experience for all students we will create a new way of recognising those students, and schools, who succeed in achieving real breadth.

The English Baccalaureate will encourage schools to offer a broad set of academic subjects to age 16.

If we assume for the present that breadth in academic subjects is desirable, reasons are needed why E-Bac should be based on the five subject areas of:

English, mathematics, the sciences, a modern or ancient foreign language and a humanity such as history or geography.

No reasons are given for this particular selection.

2. *What is an "academic" subject?*

It is not clear what counts here as an "academic" subject. From the above list, it would seem to involve more than the acquisition of propositional knowledge (ie "knowing that" something is the case). For much modern language learning is about acquiring *practical skills* in reading and speaking; while much work in English literature is about acquiring *aesthetic sensitivity*, not simply factual knowledge about texts.

Even if one defines "academic subject" narrowly, to include only fact-rich subjects, no reasons are given why subjects like Social Studies, Economics, Psychology, Theology, History of Art, or Political Studies are not on the E-Bac list.

If one broadens the focus, as E-Bac does, to include subjects in which practical knowing-how and aesthetic sensitivity are prominent, no reasons are given for leaving out of account subjects like design and technology, ICT, art and design, music.

3. *Why the focus on academic subjects in any case?*

The introduction of E-Bac is said (above) to "encourage and facilitate a more rounded educational experience for all students". Why does the White Paper focus only on academic subjects (whether narrowly or broadly defined) as ways of providing this experience? It gives no reasons for this.

If we confine ourselves to National Curriculum subjects, why are PSHE and Citizenship not included in E-Bac? Is it thought that they are not conducive to a more rounded educational experience?

But there are other vehicles than discrete school subjects (of any kind) that can be used to pursue desirable educational aims, eg projects, including practical projects. Why is it apparently taken for granted that a rounded education has to be within a subject framework? The White Paper gives no reasons for this.

4. *What is meant here by a "more rounded educational experience" (4.20) (or "a properly rounded academic education" (4.22)) and why is this held to be important?*

The White Paper does not answer these questions. But the answers to them are not self-evident. There are fundamental issues embedded in them about what the aims of education should be. These deserve fuller discussion. See also 6. below.

5. *The place of reason-giving in a democracy*

Paragraphs 1 to 4 show that the E-Bac proposals in the White Paper are evidentially weak. At point after point, arguments in support are lacking.

This is disturbing from a democratic point of view, given the centrality of reasoned discussion to a democratic society.

6. *The proper remit of government on matters to do with the school curriculum*

Although there is no sharp dividing line between the two, it is useful to distinguish the aims of the curriculum from the ways in which those aims are to be pursued.

There is no good reason to leave curriculum aims in the hands of the teaching profession. This is because what schools' aims should be is inextricable from issues about the kind of society they are intended to promote; in a democracy, a teacher has no weightier voice on this than a doctor, shop assistant, or any other citizen. This is why the determination of aims should be the task of a democratic government, given obvious safeguards, eg against improper bias.

Teachers *are* best placed, on the other hand, to judge, in the light of the particular circumstances of their school, how aims are to be delivered, that is, on the curricular vehicles (subjects or other vehicles) and pedagogy which best promote them.

Since 1988, governments have tended to sidestep their proper job, of working out what the aims of school education should be in a democracy (beginning with the most general of these and then moving further into specifics). E-Bac is a case in point: the proposals start too far in, with a list of desired subjects, and without justifying this in terms of overall aims.

7. *Reference to other countries*

Para 4.21 of the White Paper states that “in most European countries school students are expected to pursue a broad and rounded range of academic subjects until the age of 16”.

If this is meant as a rationale for the E-Bac proposals, it is weak. For [1] it does not claim that these countries highlight just the five subject areas of E-Bac; [2] why should we do what most European countries do, in any case? No reasons are given.

8. *Conclusion*

The E-Bac proposals are ill-supported by reasons throughout.

APPENDIX

THE POSSIBLE SIGNIFICANCE OF MATTHEW ARNOLD

A recent publication of the think-tank *Civitas*³⁴ has been influential in ministerial circles³⁵ and may help to explain the choice of the E-Bac subjects. Its author, philosopher David Conway, sees the intellectual foundation of an acceptable National Curriculum in the curriculum that Matthew Arnold proposed in 1868 for the lower secondary school in England. This is virtually identical to the E-Bac curriculum, comprising “the mother tongue, the elements of Latin and of the chief modern languages, the elements of history, of arithmetic and geometry, of geography, and of the knowledge of nature”.³⁶

What grounds does Arnold give for his choice of subjects? He sees his curriculum as providing the two kinds of knowledge found in a desirable education, whose “prime direct aim is to enable a man *to know himself and the world*”.³⁷ Arnold calls these two items taken together “the circle of knowledge”. He does not go on fully to explain *why* acquiring a totality of knowledge of this sort should be the aim of education, but a partial justification is found in his claim that:

Every man is born with aptitudes which give him access to vital and formative knowledge by one of these roads, either by the road of studying man and his works, or by the road of studying nature and her works.

In the upper secondary school, Arnold envisages students going along the specialised road suited to their innate aptitude, but “the circle of knowledge comprehends both, and we should all have some notion, at any rate, of the whole circle of knowledge”.³⁸ Hence the broader provision in the earlier part of secondary education.

Arnold's justification rests on two unfounded claims. The first is that what the aims of education should be is to be derived from people's innate characteristics, namely their “aptitudes”. This runs foul of the difficulty facing all such appeals to human nature: how can one derive what *should* be the case from a premise about what *is* the case? It simply does not follow that if one is born with a particular ability or inclination, that this ability or inclination is a good thing to develop. We may all be born with the ability to take pleasure in others' misfortunes, and some of us may early develop a propensity in that direction; but Schadenfreude is something to be discouraged.

³⁴ David Conway (2010) *Liberal Education and the National Curriculum* (London: Civitas).

³⁵ See Nick Gibb on Conway's “fascinating paper” at <http://www.education.gov.uk/inthenews/speeches/a0061473/nick-gibb-to-the-reform-conference>

³⁶ Arnold, M. (1964) *Schools and Universities on the Continent* (Arnold's Report to the Taunton Commission of 1868) Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press. See page 300.

³⁷ p 290 (Arnold's italics).

³⁸ p 300.

The second claim is that human beings divide into two groups, according to whether their innate aptitudes “carry” them to the study of nature, or to the humanities (p.300). Arnold gives no evidence for this highly implausible assertion.

The upshot is that a sound intellectual backing for E-Bac cannot be found in Matthew Arnold. It would be surprising, in any case, if a mid-Victorian curriculum intended for the small proportion of the child population deemed suitable for attending what were then called “middle-class schools” were a good model for us in our very different kind of society today.

March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Mr Afshar, Head of Business Studies, Wimbledon College

I am currently the Head of Business Studies at an all boys comprehensive school in South West London where I have been teaching for the past nine years.

Although I feel the introduction to the “English Baccalaureate” has some agreeable and understandable benefits with some reasonable rationale behind it, I cannot help but feel the disadvantages significantly outweigh them.

I believe the introduction of the English Baccalaureate could lead to and see

- Pupils being conversed and intentionally pushed into choosing subjects that fall under the English Baccalaureate umbrella by Heads of Schools and Senior Management Leaders in order to remain as competitive as possible and to appear high in school league tables judged under the criteria of five GCSE grades A*-C in English Baccalaureate—leading to pupils no longer finding themselves actually studying and opting for subjects they themselves choose and wish to.
- Subjects such as Business Studies and traditionally other popular chosen subjects losing the value and importance within the curriculum and sidelined as a less academic and in turn important subject to study and to opt for in the eyes of students, parents and in turn by school leaders.
- Schools, because of the pressures of league tables and as mentioned above remaining competitive with local surrounding schools may enforce subjects that were once “optional” to become “compulsory” or at least for this to be the case for the more able students. This in turn, in my opinion would lead to a two tier system whereby only certain subjects (those that fall into the E-Bac) attract and have the strongest pupils and all others will be distributed amongst the remaining subjects which would in turn put even more pressure on those subjects and teachers in terms of trying to compete internally for department success and recognition.
- The limitation of humanities subjects that are currently planned to be included to be a concern with it being restricted currently to just two. Would it not be a far more practical and a logical decision to allow for the option of more than just two humanities subjects or if restricted to just the two allow the English Baccalaureate to include two humanities subjects that can be chosen from a wider range say at least four or five. Allowing greater opportunities for pupils to study subjects that they in fact would like to study as opposed to what is being recommended to them and at the same time by widening the option of humanities subjects that can be studied and included in the E Bac, allowing greater fairness and opportunity for more teachers of these subjects to compete on a “fairer level playing field”.

Finally it is my humble opinion that the subject that I am qualified to teach in and have been teaching for many years holds as much if not arguably more current relevance and importance for pupils to study and understand than the current humanities subjects that are currently being considered to be included. I am sure countless other Business Studies teachers will be able to justify the importance and relevance of this subject in the national curriculum particularly in this current economic climate. They would neither consider it a “less academic” or for some describe it as a “vocational” subject—yet one which is engaging, current and particularly relevant in the world we face ourselves in today.

March 2011

**Written evidence submitted by Mrs Marion Gibbs, Headmistress,
James Allen’s Girls’ School**

1. As a headteacher of a secondary school, I welcome the Government’s effort to disentangle GCSE qualifications from other qualifications which are regarded as “equivalent to four or five GCSE passes”. Too often applicants for the Sixth Form at my school are unable to be accepted as they do not have the basic qualifications with which to proceed to A level courses and Higher Education. Some apply with references stating that they are on course to achieve 13 A or A* grade at GCSE, but in fact are only taking maths, English, a short course in RS or Citizenship plus a BTec or diploma in ICT and another in something such as Health and Social Care. These pupils are not being given passports for future progress on any academic route.

2. However, the choice of subjects for the English Baccalaureate is extraordinarily arbitrary. I agree that maths, English, two science subjects and a modern language are a sensible core. I am perplexed as to why the Humanities option only includes History (and Ancient History) and Geography. At my school, where we teach a rigorous and challenging academic curriculum, we make a humanity at GCSE compulsory, but we include Religious Studies and Classical Civilisation in that category and pupils find them just as challenging as History and Geography. There are certainly very worthwhile and rigorous courses provided by the Examination Boards as full GCSEs in both those subjects.

3. I am concerned that the effect of having declared certain subjects as required for the “English Baccalaureate” will be to devalue other subjects. I know that in many schools subjects such as RE and Classics will now be discontinued and all efforts will be put into entering pupils for History or Geography. This is a great shame and will lead to teacher redundancies and the demise of these subjects.

4. The modern way in many state schools is for pupils to be entered for GCSE modules from Year 9 onwards, and to be trained for each bite-size module and re-entered for it two or three times each year until they achieve a C grade. Broader education has been replaced by constant examinations and preparing to jump through hoops. I am aware that re-sits are now to be restricted, but it would perhaps be a useful tool to suggest that the GCSEs for the E-Bac should be taken within two years or some such, rather than one at a time. The ability to take a group of subjects together and reach a certain level is a valuable one.

5. I am confused as to what the E-Bac is supposed to be. At the moment it seems to be a “notional performance indicator”. Is it intended that schools which enter students for 10 or so academically rigorous GCSE examinations may be deemed to be failing or inadequate if their pupils do not take History or Geography amongst their subject choices? This would be ridiculous.

6. A baccalaureate is normally understood to be an overarching certificate made up of key ingredients which is also more than the sum of its part (eg AQA Bacc and the IB) and thus has added value. This does not appear to be the case with the English Baccalaureate.

7. It is preposterous that this English Baccalaureate was imposed retrospectively, after the pupils had actually sat their examinations. In fact, we have two more cohorts of pupils going through schools who had chosen their GCSE subjects and started the courses before the E-Bac was announced. Judging people against a retrospectively imposed measure is actually unfair.

8. I am also concerned that the focus on E-Bac subjects will reduce the opportunities for creative subjects in schools, such as art, music and drama. If you take the six core subjects (and many pupils will do all three sciences not just two), add PE and RE and PSHCE, there is very little time left for anything else.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Staffordshire County Council

INTRODUCTION

Staffordshire is a county with both a rural and urban county. Approximately 75% of the land area is rural. The main urban centres include Stafford, Lichfield, Tamworth, Cannock, Burton-upon-Trent, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Biddulph, Leek and Codsall/Bilbrook. Staffordshire is a two-tier authority with eight District and Borough Councils.

In Staffordshire young people 11–19 have a wide range of specialist provision to suit their needs. There are 52 secondary schools of which 44 have sixth form, 14 special schools, 14 middle schools, five colleges of FE, two Universities, four Academies (JCB, Deferrers and John Taylor in East Staffordshire and Landau Forte in Tamworth). There are three post 16 centres and two large purpose built skills centres in Tamworth and Lichfield, other smaller skills centres are accessible to learners across the breadth of Staffordshire. We therefore offer a wide range of academic and applied learning opportunities to best suit the needs of our young person by working in partnership with all providers.

Staffordshire has been heavily involved in moving forward curriculum development for its young people including:

- International Baccalaureate delivery in our sixth forms.
- Delivery of quality carers guidance through the use of the Staffordshire IAG quality mark.
- A particular focus on raising standards Post 16.
- Foundation Learning curriculum development at level 1.
- Personalised programmes for young learner such as Activ8 funded through ESF.
- Raising of the Participation Age pilot, Staffordshire is a pilot authority.
- Diploma delivery

- A rich programme through Staffordshire STEM centre to ensure young people develop their self confidence, team working skills, enterprise, and financial literacy, short-term and extended work placements, taster visits, and challenge days help prepare our young people for the world of work. Staffordshire EBPO is the hub for this activity and has recently gained the Award for Education Business Excellence (AEBE); and is a member of the The Institute for Education Business Excellence (IEBE).

All of this innovative work with our schools has had a positive impact for Staffordshire young people with:

- An 11% increase in 5A*–C including English and maths from 2006–10 compared to a national increase on 7.3% (DfE), with Staffordshire now above the national average.
- Post 16 in schools shows an increase in average point score per candidate of 19.8 from 2006–10 compared to a national increase of 11.4.(EPAS).
- Post 16 in schools shows an increase in average point score per entry of 11.8 from 2006–10 compared to a national increase of 7.6 (EPAS).
- Engagement in education and training between 16–18 is above our statistical neighbours, with over 95.3% of young people at 16 with an offer of employment or training (NFER).

We therefore feel we are well placed with a breadth of experience to provide a well informed response to the English baccalaureate.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE MAIN POINTS MADE IN THE SUBMISSION

Staffordshire welcomes the plans for all qualifications to have underpinning rigor with a balanced curriculum choice including the core subjects as identified in the E-Bac, as we move into a more global society these areas will become increasingly important. However the challenge will be to deliver this within a personalisation framework that will continue to engage all young people.

A technical baccalaureate as a value measure sitting alongside the English Bacc would help to develop further skill areas important to our global economy and support the personalisation agenda linking to infrastructure such as 14–16 studio schools and University Technology College. Is the E-Bac an entitlement for all or is it seen as compulsory for all? Clarification on this would be welcome.

As a measure it will be important to ensure that employers as well as parents understand the E-Bac as a measure but also what progression routes are available for young people who have studied E-Bac subjects to the exclusion of others eg Engineering, ICT, Music. The new all age careers service and careers guidance in schools must be able to clearly identify routes for all young people.

A key concern is the requirement for GCSE, so it appears to be a choice of qualification not choice of subject. It was felt that all qualifications should hold equal rigor at a specific level and Wolf was looked to in anticipation of this.

Specific concerns from senior school leaders re use of the measure:

- Will the E-Bac become the measure of the future and replace 5A*–C including English and maths?
- Will the E-Bac be used as measure with a floor target?
- Will the E-Bac be used as an indicator for entry to University/College/employment?

FACTUAL INFORMATION

The following information is drawn from discussions with senior leaders in schools and school improvement professionals within Staffordshire LA under the key headings shown below.

IMPACT ON STUDENTS

- Prepare students better for work in a more global economy through access to at least two languages.
- Reduced additional choice as options could be limited due to the timetable, restricting the breadth of choice for the Arts and more applied learning.
- Remove the worth of the non E-Bac GCSEs such as IT, Engineering which will be so important for our global economy. A technical bacc could reduce the impact of this and support schools that have developed specialisms outside E-Bac subjects.
- Create confusion over progression routes to FE, HE and into Apprenticeships. The new on line all age careers service will need to come up to speed quickly to support pupils and parents. With Connexions services in transition this will be particularly important.
- Impact on progression routes for pupil with special needs, who may be working toward level 2 but not in the E-Bac GCSEs.

- Create additional pressure on young people from schools should they not pass all the E-Bac GCSEs, this comes back again to effective guidance the importance of PSHEe in the curriculum.
- Disenfranchise young people for whom the most suitable route is Apprenticeships.

IMPACT ON PROGRESSION AND COHERENCE

Shortened KS3 and extended KS4 will need to be considered and how this can be managed with the E-Bac alongside the NC review which maybe considering age not stage assessment.

Influence of the Russell Group and their future requirements will need to be managed along with their expectations and requirements. Young people currently on programmes will not necessarily have the full E-Bac suite of qualifications for at least three years as this begins to roll out in schools.

The E-Bac may not necessarily prepare young people for Apprenticeship routes, a Tech Bacc could support this and employers needs very well.

CONSIDERATION FOR PARENTS

It was felt that not all parents, particularly in the most deprived areas were fully informed and easily influenced by the press. Again this raised the issue for a comprehensive and clear careers guidance strategy in schools and the local community, with clear progression routes for all youngsters .Local area prospectuses could be a useful vehicle for this, linking into the all age careers service.

CONSIDERATION FOR STAFFING

- Impact of redundancies on squeezed budgets as there is an excess of other staffing areas eg the arts.
- Budget restraints on staff redundancies and re training could impeded progress to a wide range of well qualified linguists and humanities teachers.
- Basic lack of MFL, Mathematics and Science teachers, for example HE has reduced their intake of ATs in many areas nationally with a reduced intake into secondary training programmes. This may require facilitation of networking to access staffing through partnerships and hard federations.
- Schools identification developed through the specialist schools trust maybe lost eg Performing Arts.
- Culture shock to staff not used to teaching unwilling students forced in option—more behaviour issues to deal with.
- Support for visioning will be needed for senior leaders in schools in this new environment.

CONSIDERATION FOR CURRICULUM/TIMETABLING

Should the school day be extended to accommodate more choice?

Common timetabling at KS4 to access staff with location of specialist schools for clusters to access shortage subjects MFL for example.

The E-Bac should be about subject, NOT qualification—too much emphasis upon GCSE and not the more applied subject qualifications such as NVQ languages and BTEC Sciences.

Awarding bodies should be encouraged through Ofqual to revisit the GCSE in the E-Bac area's to ensure they deliver content in a way that suites all learning styles and incorporate a skills element.

GCSE languages tough—not for all.

Can young people build up toward a E-Bac over two/three years, picking up some elements post 16 A cumulative certification This would be welcome as it would allow more personalisation through the 14–19 phase?

Likewise will young people still be able to take GCSEs (and others) in Y9 and 10 and so broaden their options and yet still be able to gain E-Bac certification?

Recommendations for action by the Government or others which the submitter would like the committee to consider for inclusion in its report to the House.

- Clarify future role of the E-Bac in league tables as a prime measure.
- Work with FE and Universities on progression routes for all.
- Investigate a technical bacc.
- Support Careers Guidance and monitor closely the impact and effectiveness of the all age careers service.
- Ask Awarding Bodies to revisit the GCSE in the E-Bac areas.

- Ensure rigor in all qualifications not just GCSE through Wolf and Ofqual.
- Continue dialogue with practitioners on development of the E-Bac.
- Investigate the position of other rigorous GCSEs such as IT, Music, Engineering and how they can be sustained as a realistic choice for students.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Peter Davies, University of Birmingham

1. The e-bac is proposed in the Education White Paper as a method of (i) increasing the proportion of 14–16 year old students who study languages other than English and the proportion of students who study a humanities subject and (ii) making it less likely that competitive pressures through school league tables will be subverted by examination boards developing easier courses and schools diverting pupils into these easier courses.

2. This submission identifies a number of questions and pieces of evidence which bear upon these two objectives. These are briefly summarised in points 3 and 4 below.

3. Will an increase in the proportion of students who study a language and an increase in the proportion of students who study a humanities subject be in the interest of the country and the interests of student?

3.1 The proposal means that some students who would previously have studied other academic subjects (eg in social science, business or music) will now study a language or a humanities subject instead. There is no evidence to suggest that studying one academic subject rather than another at GCSE level is associated with different labour market outcomes. The closest evidence we have comes from a study of the relationship between studying A level subjects and labour market outcomes. This found that only Mathematics made a difference. It is therefore unlikely in the extreme that studying a humanities or a language subject when aged 14–16 would make any difference compared to studying another academic subject.

3.2 Students are more likely to choose a subject at advanced level if they have had an opportunity to study it between the ages of 14 and 16. This happens for two reasons. First, schools are more likely to employ a specialist teacher (in say Business Studies) if they can provide them with a full teaching load in their specialist subject and this is more likely in smaller to average size schools if a subject is taught to 14–16 year old as well 16–19 year-old students. Second, students make choices about what to study on the basis of their (usually fairly accurate) assessments of their relative strengths in different subjects (Davies *et al* 2009). Therefore, we may expect that the introduction of e-bac which includes a rather restricted menu of subjects will also affect the proportions of students studying different advanced level subjects.

3.3 A series of studies (Dolton and Makepeace 1990, O’Leary and Sloane 2005, Naylor *et al* 2007, Hussain *et al* 2009 and Walker and Zhu 2010) provides consistent evidence of the difference to future earnings which arises from studying one degree subject rather than another. This research shows that the high wage premium subjects are: mathematics, computing, law, medicine, business (and economics) and engineering. Humanities subjects are found to have very low wage premia and languages rather modest wage premia. Whilst we do not know the effect of GCSE choices and subsequent trajectories, we do know that students choose subjects in which they are doing better and we do know that they can only judge this if they have a chance to study the subject.

4. Reducing the risk of diluting standards through diversion of students on to easier courses in the face of league table pressure is not easily accomplished. Evidence from the last 10 years suggests that schools find it easier to make strong improvements in their public performance through changing the courses which students study than they do by improving the quality of teaching. Examination boards have now developed considerable experience in facilitating this as they compete for examination entries. The regulation of standards has not been sufficient to resist these pressures. The difficulty of courses varies significantly within as well as between subjects (see for example Bachan 2006). It is reasonable to expect that the introduction of an e-bac will increase the pressure on examination boards to find ways of designing courses in e-bac subjects that result in more students getting high grades whilst leaving their actual achievement unchanged.

21 March 2011

REFERENCES

Bachan, R and Barrow, M (2006) Modelling Curriculum Choice at A-Level: Why is Business Studies more popular than economics? *International review of Economics Education*, 5, 2, pp 58–80.

Davies, P, Davies, N, Hutton, D, Adnett, N and Coe, R (2009) Choosing *in* schools: locating the benefits of specialisation, *Oxford Review of Education*, 35, 2, pp 147–167.

Dolton, P and Vignoles, A (2002) Is a broader curriculum better? *Economics of Education Review*, 21, 5, pp 415–429.

Dolton, P and Makepeace, G H (1990) Graduate earnings after six years: who are the winners? *Studies in Higher Education*, 15, 1, pp 31–55.

Hussain, I, McNally, S and Telhaj, S (2009) *University Quality and Graduate Wages in the UK*. London School of Economics and Political Science, Centre for Economics of Education, Discussion Paper No 0099.

Naylor, R, Smith, J and McKnight A (2007) *Sheer Class? Returns to educational performance from UK graduates' first destination labour market outcomes*. University of Warwick Department of Economics Working Paper No 786 (Warwick: University of Warwick).

O'Leary, N and Sloane, P (2005) The return to a university education in Great Britain, *National Institute Economics Review*, 193, 75, pp 75–89.

Walker, I and Zhu, Y (2010) Differences by Degree: Evidence of the Net Financial Rates of Return to Undergraduate Study for England and Wales. IZA Discussion Paper 5254 (Bonn: IZA). Available online at http://www.iza.org/index.html?lang=en&mainframe=http%3A//www.iza.org/en/webcontent/publications/papers/viewAbstract%3Fdp_id%3D5254&topSelect=publications&subSelect=papers.

Written evidence submitted by Linda Cadier

1. I have had a long career in languages for business and employability, owning my own language training company with large private and public sector clients, then overseeing UK-wide networks of centres promoting the importance of languages for business and employability and more recently setting up and on the directorial team for an England-wide network of centres to provide continuing professional development for language educators.

2. My understanding from this wealth of professional and personal experience is that a knowledge of languages is not only a linguistic, educational and intellectual resource but also a valuable cultural resource, with benefits for the individual, the family, the community, the economy and society generally. Languages improve the quality of life and having language skills gives access to whole new worlds (music, culture, travel, and people).

3. An increased ability in languages can ensure that Britain is more successful in the global economy, build better relationships at home and abroad and put young Britons on a par with their international peers. British industry is at a crossroads whereby it benefits from international trade and tourism but urgently needs to improve its language capability to meet the growing global market and multilingual customer service and workforce requirements.

4. A little language can make a lot of difference. Different jobs need different levels of skills: fluency in another language is not always needed. For many jobs, employers look for people who can handle simple phone calls or build rapport using a few friendly phrases. A survey in March 2010 conducted for CILT, the National Centre for Languages (2010) revealed that employers rank foreign language skills as second only to IT in prospective candidates. 43% of recruiters say speaking a second language gives a jobseeker the “X-factor” when applying for work.

5. The CBI Education and Skills Survey (2009) shows that UK firms value staff who can communicate in a foreign language and who show an understanding of different cultures and business environments. 74% of employers interviewed in the survey are looking for candidates with conversational language skills rather than full fluency, as linguistic proficiency helps to build relationships. “Companies value an employee's ability to communicate conversationally with potential business partners, customers or clients in their own language”, said a spokesperson for CBI, “this can help break the ice, deepen cultural understanding, and open business access to new markets”.

6. We understand that speaking English is not enough as 94% of the world's population do not speak English as their first language and 75% do not speak English at all. Yet, in a Eurobarometer study (2006) on “Europeans and their languages in 2006”, 62% of respondents from the UK admitted not knowing any language other than their mother tongue. This is compared to an average of 44% across all EU countries, keeping the UK at the bottom of the European league table.

7. This research shows that UK nationals without language skills are effectively disadvantaged for recruitment by multi-national and international firms with global companies regarding language skills as a “given” for senior managers. These companies consider themselves to be international and expect senior staff to think and act in international terms. UK nationals within these companies without language skills have more difficulty in accessing the international experience required to make career progress.

8. UK students participation in the Erasmus programme is extremely low compared to continental student involvement and they are not taking advantage of opportunities to study abroad, a fact that is attributed primarily to the lack of linguistic capabilities.

9. For UK students to take advantage of the advantages listed above, the value of foreign languages needs to be re-emphasized by the British Government and at schools. I therefore welcome the proposal to include a

language strand in the new E-Baccalaureate and would urge the Committee to approve this proposal and indeed to suggest that statutory education in one or more languages up to the age of 16 be considered for all UK pupils.

REFERENCES

Confederation of British Industry (2009) *Emerging Stronger: the value of education and skills in turbulent times* (London, CBI).

CiLT, the National Centre for Languages (2010) Employers Survey. Report available online at: <http://www.cilt.org.uk/home/news/news%20items/employers%20rank%20languages%20most.aspx> (accessed 22nd February 2011).

European Commission (2006) *Special Eurobarometer: Europeans and their languages*. Available online at: http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_243_en.pdf (accessed 22 February 2011).

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by All Hallows RC Business, Enterprise and Sports College

THE PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE E-BAC AND ITS VALUE AS A MEASURE OF PUPIL AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

1.1 Our opinion is that it is understandable that a measure of pure academic performance could be needed but we feel that the action of introducing such a restrictive E-Bac, is short sighted, inappropriate and damaging to many pupils and schools, and indeed to the system of education.

1.2 We also think it is inappropriate to be insisting that schools report on a measure not planned for, as the GCSE courses are two year courses. Many of our pupils left school last year with at least five academic GCSEs but not in the subjects listed for the E-Bac. The same will apply this year. To publish these results publicly is even more inappropriate and unfair to many good and outstanding schools such as ours.

1.3 Presently, in our school, we offer a wide ranging and personalised curriculum that caters for the needs of all students whatever their academic ability. We offer academic GCSEs alongside BTEC courses. Students are engaged and motivated following courses that suit their individual needs. The result is that pupils attend regularly, behave appropriately, enjoy their courses and achieve success. Pupils are leaving school confident with a sense of achievement and success and a desire to continue post 16 education. Last year for example, our CVA was 1,026, VA: 1,011 and staying on rate: 92%. We are an inner city school providing an excellent standard of education to pupils from the most disadvantaged wards in the country. We do not use this as an excuse to underachieve. All our pupils leave school with high value added scores and average point scores. This is because of the personalised curriculum they follow. Our results last year were: 5A*-C: 87% and 5A*-C including English and Mathematics: 53%. (FFT D data predicted 5A*-C: 54% and 5A*-C including English and Mathematics: 31%). Year on year, KS4 results have far exceeded externally imposed predicted targets.

THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE E-BAC

2.1 We feel that the choice of subjects in the E-Bac is too restrictive and certainly, in a Catholic school, where Religious Studies is compulsory, disadvantages both pupils and the school. It is understandable that a measure of five good academic GCSEs is required but it could be argued that the skills and concepts involved in Religious Studies is commensurate with those in History and Geography. To include Religious Studies within the Humanities offer removes the disadvantage to Catholic pupils and schools.

2.2 We feel also that the E-Bac would still be a valid measure if it was to include a wider offer of academic subjects. We suggest English, Mathematics and Science with two additional academic GCSE. There are many intelligent young people who have no interest in languages and no flair for languages but are very able students. Many other GCSE subjects are challenging and academically demanding. We feel it is short sighted to narrow achievement of the E-Bac to such a restricted offer of subjects.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE E-BAC FOR PUPILS, SCHOOLS AND EMPLOYERS

Pupils

3.1 The E-Bac reminds us of the old system of Grammar schools, Technical schools and Secondary schools. Children were made to feel elitist or failures. The Comprehensive system offers wider opportunities for pupils to progress at different ages and stages and follow courses that cater for their needs. In our school, as already mentioned, pupils are engaged and motivated, achieve success and have the confidence to progress in education post 16. If pupils are forced to follow courses/subjects that do not interest them or are too difficult for them to access, this will lead to disruption and disaffection causing a rise in the incidences of disruptive behaviour, truancy and drop-out rates.

3.2 We suggest that the BTEC qualification remains as a valid measure but if there are concerns, BTECs could be improved by introducing greater stringency and amending them to meet more specific criteria or amending their value in terms of GCSE equivalences.

Schools

3.2 We do not feel that the E-Bac is an accurate measure of good or outstanding schools. Outstanding schools that provide high quality education, track pupil progress and support achievement and progress could on the E-Bac measure, be deemed a failing schools because of the academic ability of the pupil intake. Similarly, schools that merely “coast” but attract high academic cohorts will be perceived as being “good” schools. The E-Bac could be modified to measure schools performance on five academic GCSEs including English, Mathematics and Science plus two other subjects. This could sit alongside the existing measures. Pupils could have a wider choice of purely academic GCSEs.

Employers

3.3 We feel that high standards of English and Mathematics are valued by employers as is competence in ICT and personal and social skills, equipping young people to work in teams or on an individual basis. Employer’s requirements are for an intelligent and flexible and adaptable workforce with transferrable skills. Whilst seeing some merit in an E-Bac system designed to add an academic achievement measure we feel that the current proposal is flawed, being narrowly conceived and restrictive. More flexibility involving English, Mathematics and three academic GCSEs from a wider spectrum reflecting the needs of employers, would be of greater relevance.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by National Union of Teachers

INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY

1. The NUT believes that changes to the curriculum and assessment methods should not be subject to party political interference. The education of our young people is too important to be determined by policies which are not consulted on, or based on evidence or substantial research. The English Baccalaureate is a prime example of this. To make things worse, the Government’s rhetoric around the introduction of the English Baccalaureate has moved from it being described as a measure of success to a measure of failure and in doing so they have alienated the vast majority of head teachers, teachers, parents and students.

2. The NUT submits that this approach will not be appropriate for all students: alternative pathways to achievement still have an important part to play. A narrow, academic focus will not equip young people to take their place in society or foster their innovative skills. Students need to learn about tolerance, diversity, respect, teamwork, taking responsibility and being independent as well as being given the opportunities to develop their creativity.

THE PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE ENGLISH BACCALAUREATE AND ITS VALUE AS A MEASURE OF PUPIL AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

3. The NUT regrets that there was no consultation about the content and purpose of the English Baccalaureate before it was introduced. Students who began their GCSEs two years ago should not have been judged on measures only recently announced. The English Baccalaureate benchmark introduced retrospectively has had a devastating effect on schools. Improving schools in some of the most challenging areas of the country have seen themselves plummet further down the league tables, which puts at risk the significant progress they have made so far. This measure has branded a large number of pupils a failure for missing its targets. This will do nothing to bridge the attainment gap between pupils from rich and poor backgrounds.

4. Selective schools and independent schools have dominated the top rankings of the English Baccalaureate so far. The narrow range of subjects offered in the English Baccalaureate has resulted in just 16% of 16 year olds meeting the target. This is an unacceptable, elitist approach to education unfairly condemning other schools by using a very narrow range of subjects as a benchmark to achieve the English Baccalaureate.

5. The NUT and the NAHT, in their joint statement on Assessment, advocated that school performance league tables should no longer be compiled or published. They paint an erroneous picture of school achievement and damage the confidence and stability of school communities. A wider review of the effect of current accountability mechanisms on teaching and learning and on schools in communities is urgently needed.

6. Accountability measures such as league tables should never determine the nature of the curriculum in schools. Evidence is growing, for example, that some schools are preparing their most academic pupils for a curriculum designed to deliver the English Baccalaureate.

7. Forty years ago just 15% of 16 year olds were entered for O Level GCEs. This restrictive access to education is mirrored in the introduction of the English Baccalaureate. A similar small percentage of schools have been successful in achieving the English Baccalaureate benchmark.

8. This benchmark is detrimental to those young people who are in danger of not participating in education, training or employment. Only less than 4% of pupils on free school meals are thought to have achieved the English Baccalaureate according to DfE figures.

9. There is a contradiction in the Government's education policy which on the one hand wants to "set schools free", but on the other hand has introduced a new central target of 35% of pupils in every school to achieve the English Baccalaureate.

THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE ENGLISH BACCALAUREATE

10. The English Baccalaureate should be reviewed urgently to include a wide range of subjects. No educational rationale has been given as to why the English Baccalaureate has focused on GCSEs in English, Maths, two sciences, a foreign language and a humanities subject. RE, for example, has not been included.

11. The introduction of subjects such as Hebrew and Classical Greek in the English Baccalaureate is questionable when other subjects, such as a Business qualification, have not been included.

12. A constraint will be placed on pupils who want to specialise in areas of the curriculum they enjoy. Some schools are already changing their curriculum and taking reactive decisions based on the English Baccalaureate measure, rather than taking a holistic view of the curriculum that is fit for purpose for all pupils.

13. Subjects such as Business Studies, ICT, Sociology, Design and Technology, Construction, Health and Safety, Social Care and Catering are likely to decline in number because of the introduction of the English Baccalaureate. Excluding these subjects and the Arts from the English Baccalaureate will result in these subjects being marginalised, not only leading to cuts in provision but also reducing opportunities for young people to gain recognition in what they can excel.

14. Schools must not be pressurised into changing the Key Stage 4 Curriculum because of the English Baccalaureate. Restricting subject options in schools as a reaction to the new performance indicator will reduce choices for pupils. This will restrict the potential to succeed and could also reduce life chances.

15. By forcing schools to promote subjects such as geography and history above ICT and the Arts, the Government is sending a clear message that only certain academic subjects matter. Refusal to allow applied sciences or creative subjects to be included means students will lose the opportunity to have a broad and balanced curriculum and a curriculum that is exciting.

16. Regrettably, the English Baccalaureate is a throwback to bygone times and is almost a carbon copy of the 1868 Taunton Report which described what a curriculum designed for specific social strata in the 19th century should look like. The NUT believes that such a curriculum, designed with exclusivity in mind, cannot be at the cutting edge of curriculum development now and for the future.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE ENGLISH BACCALAUREATE FOR PUPILS, SCHOOLS AND EMPLOYERS

17. The NUT has serious concerns about the employment status of existing subject teachers who may no longer have the opportunity to teach their specialisms in GCSEs as the new Baccalaureate takes hold. Some schools, for example, have started to make cuts in the teaching of RE and Music as these are not subjects recognised in the new measure.

18. It is crucial that teacher training allocations are taken into account as demands are made on schools for the teaching of subjects such as history, geography and languages as identified in the English Baccalaureate. Extra demands for these teachers will impact severely on national and regional shortages. There is already a shortage, for example, of history and MFL teachers. In a survey by the National Association of Music Teachers, 60% of respondents said some schools had already been adversely affected by the introduction of the English Baccalaureate. Music teachers in 57 of 95 schools plan to reduce opportunities to study music from September 2011. The omission of RE and other subjects from the list of approved humanities subjects has rightly prompted concerned responses from subject associations. Some schools, for example, will no longer provide RE in Year 11, even though it is a statutory requirement.

19. The Government must address how 14–19 education can be an integrated system of learning as depicted in the Tomlinson report of 2004. The call by Tomlinson for the comprehensive reform of secondary education and the introduction of an integrated Diploma system to include academic and vocational subjects under an overarching qualification is still relevant today. The introduction of the English Baccalaureate is another unwelcome tinkering at the edges.

20. If the aim of the English Baccalaureate is to create a "rigorous" benchmark for academic achievement, it is wrong to assume that qualifications excluded from it will "fail" students. Schools must remain committed to finding the most appropriate courses to suit the needs of all their pupils. This will not be the case with the introduction of such an exclusive measure.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

21. The NUT will continue to campaign for a single general 14–19 integrated system of education that recognises achievement in all subjects as well as the wider skills, crucial to innovation, employment and

lifelong learning. The exclusion of vocational qualifications in the English Baccalaureate signifies an unnecessary wide division between academic and vocational qualifications. Vocational qualifications in ICT and engineering are crucial areas of learning for the 21st century. The English Baccalaureate will denigrate the status of vocational subjects with universities and employers.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Brian Murphy

1. THE PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE E BAC

The introduction of the E-Bac as a measure of school and student performance is an opportunity to streamline education measurement indicators.

A simpler, yet more comprehensive measure, applied to all schools, can only help to improve the quality of education in the United Kingdom. School senior leaders, teachers, parents, inspectors and employers would, I believe, welcome one measure that is applied to all schools so that performance comparisons can be more easily be made.

2. THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS IN THE E-BAC

Whilst preference should be given to English, Maths, Science and a Language it is important that other subjects are included in the proposed E-Bac.

Art, Music and Drama make a significant contribution to the economy of the United Kingdom. These subjects along with business Studies and IT should be included in the E-Bac measure if economic value of the arts to the UK economy is to be maintained. The fashion industry, the music Industry, publishing, film and theatre and aspects of building construction rely on arts graduates. Graduates who have been enthused in the arts through examinations in school that have been monitored by OFSTED.

If the arts industries are to remain successful in the United Kingdom it is important that art examinations are included in the way that schools are measured and inspected. If the arts are not included in the E-Bac measure they may be less successfully taught. This will lead to a decline in high quality graduates entering the arts industries in this country.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Steve Jewell, The Littlehampton Academy

E-BAC INQUIRY

1. I am grateful that the Education Select Committee are considering this initiative.

2. I note that on the one hand we are told that central government want to free us up to decide locally what is best for each individual yet on the other hand we are now to be constrained by the E-Bac. It is unnecessary (and not very Conservative or Liberal) to prescribe in great detail what is 'best' for so many young people. Politicians have a tendency to micro-manage once in charge.

3. It is generally agreed that English and Mathematics are of special importance and the current league tables already reflect this appropriately.

4. I am not convinced that it is reasonable to argue that History is more important than Art or Music; or that French is more important than ICT. It all depends on an individual's aspirations and aptitudes. There is more than one way to produce a well-rounded, well-educated young person. We should celebrate diversity.

5. If we have to have an E-Bac then it is peculiar that Religious Studies is not classed as a Humanities subject. To understand beliefs and values is surely of great worth when producing well-rounded citizens.

6. I do not understand the objection to other qualifications such as BTECs within the E-Bac. The equivalencies may need adjusting but if a BTEC Science is judged equivalent to two Science GCSEs then let's celebrate success via that different accreditation route.

7. Year on year schools across the country are raising standards of expectation and achievement. Students are doing better than ever before. Some will thrive studying the more traditional subjects and others will benefit from different pathways. The E-Bac is an unnecessary initiative and therefore a retrograde step.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Little Ilford School

Please see below Little Ilford School's submission for E-Bac as requested.

1. We are supportive and welcome rigour in Education. However the limited ranges of Humanities subjects do not reflect the concept and skills required to be an effective citizen in the 21st Century.
2. The Humanities option needs to reflect the wider range of concepts and skills young people will need to be effective citizens in the complex world of the 21st Century. Subjects such as Religious Education, Citizenship and Sociology must be included.
3. The 21st Century world will require citizens who are effective communicators across languages. The E-Bac needs to reflect this and recognise equivalent language qualifications that are not currently recognised as GCSE qualifications.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Danielle Fairey

1. I am Head of Classics at Cranbrook School in Kent where we have a strong take-up of AS and A level Classical Civilisation. I ask the Select Committee to consider the following figures taken from our current Year 11 options for A level subjects. Of a cohort of 150 those opting for A level English Literature are 10; for Geography 17; for Politics 21; for History 27 and for Classical Civilisation 27. As you can see, the value of the study of Classical Civilisation is high. Indeed it rather neatly incorporates study of literature, history, politics and even geography and for this reason it is popular and certainly falls under the heading of a humanity.
2. Students of A level Classical Civilisation from my school, where this is one of their three main A levels, have regularly received offers from the Oxbridge Universities who regard it as a rigorous subject.
3. Removal of Classical Civilisation will remove the contact that our students have with the origins of the literature of the Western World. The thought that it is only valid if studied in its original form is a misinformed one.
4. I suspect that the Committee really has no idea what goes into teaching Classical Civilisation. Reading a specification goes some of the way to understanding content, but spending time with students and teachers of the subject would lead to a better informed decision.
5. It makes no sense to exclude the WJEC certificates in Latin from the list of valid E-Bac subjects. This new certification, which is recognised by all universities as a valid qualification, is should not be excluded due to a technical point. Latin is Latin whatever the exam board, and a Level 2 is a recognised GCSE equivalent level qualification. It is doing a lot of good for the study of Latin in our schools, particularly in the State sector. To dismiss this WJEC course would be illogical.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by the Cardinal Newman Catholic School, Coventry

THE PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE E-BAC AND ITS VALUE AS A MEASURE OF PUPIL AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

We recognise that there is a strong argument to support the government's decision to identify a "core entitlement" which will compare like with like across all schools. This is particularly so given the plethora of current qualifications and the likelihood that with so much on offer many pupils are likely to drop subjects that in the longer term might have benefitted them; especially modern languages where numbers studying have dropped significantly. This is so in our own school.

The focus on a narrower, and more academic, set of subjects does not prevent schools being creative in their curriculum offer and many pupils will still have access to a variety of exciting technical and vocational range of options in addition to the E-Bac.

THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE E-BAC

Our overarching concern with the choice of subjects is the narrowness of definition of a Humanity and, especially, the omission of Religious Studies from the E-Bac. In every Catholic secondary school RE is studied as a core subject at GCSE. It is not a half GCSE or non-examined enrichment lesson, but a full and rigorous academic GCSE qualification. We would strongly argue for its inclusion in the E-Bac.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE E-BAC FOR PUPILS, SCHOOLS AND EMPLOYERS

Schools will need to be creative in planning their curriculum for Key Stage 4 if they are not simply to reduce the options available in order to enable as many pupils as possible to access the E-Bac.

It is possible that the extent to which some schools can personalise the curriculum to meet student need will be reduced. In our school we will now teach Careers, Citizenship and Personal Development through a “Pastoral Programme” taught by form tutors in order to create enough curriculum time for a modern language in addition to the other options. We have also removed discrete ICT at Key Stage 4 and will instead offer an ICT qualification at the end of Key Stage 3

The E-Bac is a level 2 only qualification. Therefore some students will not have access and they could be marginalised in terms of the E-Bac being perceived as the better pathway to employment and progression routes.

Some pupils will inevitably feel pressure to take a subject which they neither enjoy, nor feel they can be successful at. It will be important to ensure that modern languages and humanities are taught in exciting and interesting ways and that appropriate syllabi are chosen. Schools may have difficulty recruiting additional modern languages and humanities teachers.

Employers may find school leavers have fewer technical and ICT skills than they would like if schools reduce opportunities for pupils to take design and technology subjects as a result of the E-Bac.

There may be impacts on the staffing requirements of different subject specialisms as numbers taking each subject vary in response to the new qualification.

INTERNATIONAL COMPARATORS FOR THE E-BAC

The International Baccalaureate is a recognised qualification not just a performance indicator. It comprises a much broader base including two languages and is not just subject driven.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Mrs G A Byron

As the parent of a child currently in year 9 at a Faith school, I urge you to reconsider the inclusion of Religious Education as a core Humanity subject.

My son has a stark choice to make, he can take a language, or three single science subjects, **or** either History or Geography. As his interests lie in the science field (his intention is to study medicine) he would obviously prefer to do the sciences and a language, but this choice means that he cannot achieve the E-bac qualification.

Surely this cannot be the intent behind the E-bac? In a Faith school RE is quite rightly a core GCSE subject, but this means that children in such schools are disadvantaged by this new qualification.

Of course, the choice not to pursue this qualification can be made and subjects chosen accordingly, but as parents we worry that countenancing this will lead to problems further down the line. Will colleges and Universities demand this as additional entrance criteria? How much store will be set by this new qualification? The truth is we have no idea, nor do the educational professionals who are advising us and our children.

The only fair way to resolve this issue is to accept that as RE is, indisputably, a “humanity”, it should be seen as such, and accepted as a core subject for the purposes of this qualification.

Thank you for taking the time to read this submission, and I hope it will assist your enquiry to be aware that at a recent year 9 Options evening there were many parents of this opinion, and I expect this to be replicated in Faith schools across the country.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Mr A J Glover, Head Teacher, The Becket School

At The Becket School we are utterly committed to the principle of a broad education and we welcome the introduction of the English Baccalaureate. We see the curriculum as a whole rather than as a collection of entities and we feel that the Baccalaureate will serve to promote high standards and aspirations on the part of young people and it will lead to an enriching and appropriate preparation for young people to take an active part as adults in the society which they will inherit.

We agree that “getting good passes in rigorous GCSEs or iGCSEs” will be key in ensuring that the English Baccalaureate has the respect and the credibility afforded to other baccalaureate systems that deliver a broad educational curriculum. The highest standards of learning and achievement across a broad and balanced curriculum reach to the heart of the very purpose of education. In this context, therefore, I am extremely concerned that the list of qualifying Humanities disciplines is narrow and does not include Religious Studies/ Religious Education (I will subsequently refer to this under the generic term of Religious Education).

1. In Religious Education pupils have exceptional learning opportunities; they engage with higher order thinking skills in addressing the most profound metaphysical questions concerning human existence and the nature of reality and they readily see relevance in covering the most pressing ethical problems of our day.

Religious Education is a Humanities discipline with an extremely broad base, inherently developing knowledge and skills in history, literary analysis, textual criticism, anthropology, ethics, philosophy and theology. In itself it reflects thoroughly and profoundly a study of social systems without which society could not function. Furthermore the knowledge, skills and insights developed through Religious Education transcend the exigencies and the pressures of time, providing an education of permanence regardless of social change. Religious Education will contribute hugely towards enabling our young people to become more rounded, tolerant and compassionate individuals. The case for Religious Education being a core element of a qualification aiming to reflect a broad and balanced education is surely overwhelming.

2. The quality of teaching and learning in Religious Education is, according to the recent OfSTED report, variable, yet in Catholic Schools the teaching tends to be of a high standard and the attainment of pupils, the majority of whom take the full GCSE course, tends to be strong. Religious Education in Catholic Schools is well resourced and rigorously inspected, contributing positively to the overall standards agenda. Furthermore, the rigour of learning within Religious Education lends itself to progression to AS/A2 level courses of high academic value and to successful study at degree level.

It is the government's stated requirement that Religious Education is part of the curriculum for all pupils of compulsory school age. The inclusion of Religious Education within the English Baccalaureate would secure the place of this rigorous and valuable learning discipline and it would inevitably serve to raise standards of achievement.

3. At The Becket School we made a considered choice to include Humanities as one of our areas of specialism and to include Religious Education as a target-setting subject. I contend that no discipline fits more appropriately within the definition and scope of Humanities than Religious Education and that it should be part of any qualification which is intended to reflect a broad and balanced education with aspirational and yet accessible approaches to learning.

In summary, I endorse the principle of a broad and rigorous education which the English Baccalaureate reflects. I believe that it contains the parameters which enable existing international comparisons to be made and that it could set a benchmark in terms of its breadth for further and more robust comparison. More importantly, I believe that it establishes an appropriate entitlement for our young people. I believe that the educational grounds for the inclusion of Religious Education are overwhelming and I urge the Government to ensure that Religious Education is properly regarded as a Humanity within the parameters of the English Baccalaureate.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by the Association of University Professors and Heads of French

As the Education Committee has recently announced a short inquiry into the English Baccalaureate, I should like on behalf of the Association of University Professors and Heads of French (AUPHF) to submit some observations:

1. THE PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE E-BAC

The E-Bac will not supply information over and above what can already be derived from existing sources with regard to individual performances. To this extent, its title may seem misleading, and its value may fall short of expectations. However, it will have a symbolic value, and a role in affecting public awareness of a particular measurement of performance across the stated range of basic subjects.

2. THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS

Any initiative that gives a central role to foreign languages, as a core component of 21st-century citizenship and intercultural competence, must be welcomed for that reason. However, the inclusion of a language GCSE will not improve the language curriculum *per se*, and may even be instrumental in pushing out other language qualifications that are suitable for less academic pupils. This indicates that the E-Bac proposals must be seen in the context of the National Curriculum Review (at KS3 as well as of 4), and the need to give proper recognition to the importance of foreign languages. The aim should be not simply to increase the numbers of pupils on language courses, but also to provide courses which will facilitate both linguistic attainment and intellectual stimulation.

3. THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE E-BAC FOR PUPILS, SCHOOLS AND EMPLOYERS

If GCSE curricula were to remain the same, the key implication lies in the differential timescale between policy changes and school staffing changes. Schools that have disinvested in Modern Foreign Languages may well wish to re-invest, and this will inevitably impact upon their other priorities and activities. For pupils, the award of the E-Bac will equip them with an additional achievement profile to present to employers. Nevertheless, from the point of view of MFL, employer confidence in the level of linguistic ability represented by E-Bac will be linked to the efficacy of the curriculum review.

4. INTERNATIONAL COMPARATORS

The title of the E-Bac is unfortunate, since the baccalaureate is generally understood as a 16–19 school leaving qualification, and usually applies to the whole of the final assessment rather than a limited grouping of subjects within it. In comparison with the 11–16 curricula of other advanced and developing countries, the level of attainment in languages is very low in relative terms. This is not surprising given the significantly reduced teaching time available to British students in comparison with other European counterparts.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by the Department of Theology and Religious Studies, University of Bristol

THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE E-BAC

1. Members of the Department of Theology and Religious Studies, University of Bristol, were disheartened to learn of the Government's plan not to include Religious Education (RE) in the E-Bac, the Government's proposed new measure of school effectiveness. If the ministers choose to evaluate school performance on the percentage of students attaining five good GCSEs, a measure which does not include RE, we believe that this decision will have negative implications for the study of religions in the UK and for the way future generations discuss issues of faith, ethics and morals in general.

2. Let us consider the first point: the exclusion of RE from the E-Bac will have negative implications for the future of RE in the UK. While one might argue that because schools have a statutory requirement to teach RE, it will continue to be a leading subject. We posit, however, that if RE is not included in the E-Bac it will result in a reduced amount of resources being dedicated to its teaching. Jon Mayled, an education consultant and former chief examiner in RE based in Somerset, has pointed out recently: "To include History and Geography but to exclude RE from the baccalaureate inevitably devalues the status of the subject both in the eyes of pupils and, I suspect, in the eyes of senior management." (See <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-somerset-12380937>). Indeed, if RE is not part of the E-Bac requirement it will not be among the subjects which schools will be judged within league tables. Although most would agree that league tables are only one measure of performance and they should not limit schools' ambitions for their pupils, the harsh reality is that league tables greatly influence the nature and design of curricula. For example, a recent poll (7 February 2011) taken by the National Association of Teachers of Religious Education (NATRE) indicates that the E-Bac is already having a deleterious effect on the allocation of resources to RE. Close to 800 schools were polled and it was established that nearly one in three secondary schools are planning to cut time spent teaching RE as a result of the English Bac. (See <http://www.guardian.co.uk/education/2011/feb/07/gcse-arts-cut-english-baccalaureate>).

3. While the NATRE poll implies that schools in an attempt to remain viable in the league tables are already cutting back resources in RE, other statistics demonstrate that students very much want to study RE. In 2008, it was noted that the numbers of students opting for RE grew considerably at GCSE and A-Level (See <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/education/schools/keep-the-faith-why-religious-education-is-booming-769322.html>). More recently, the Bishop of Oxford, the Right Rev. John Pritchard who heads the Church of England's education, reported that religion at GCSE level is popular among students with close to 460,000 pupils now studying it compared with 113,000 15 years ago. (See <http://www.presstv.ir/detail/161549.html>).

4. This last point ties in with the second unwelcomed outcome mentioned earlier: the exclusion of RE from the E-Bac will have negative implications for the way future generations will discuss issues of faith, ethics and morals in the UK. The early signs indicate that RE teaching time is already being decreased, yet student demand is up for this subject area. Indeed, teachers and researchers in the field of RE stress that part of the increase of students studying the subject is associated with their desire to learn about other faiths and to discuss the challenges that young men and women encounter in their attempt to understand the varied opinions of others.

(<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/education/schools/keep-the-faith-why-religious-education-is-booming-769322.html>). Helen Cairns, head of RE at The Chalfonts Community College in Buckinghamshire and the 2007 winner of the National Teaching Award has described one of the many significant benefits that emerge from having RE as an important part of the curriculum: "We can challenge the messages that pupils get from the media, promote debate, and ask any of the big questions, such as: can you be a spiritual person without being religious? Why are we here? What is your purpose in life? It's all to do with their personal development ... RE is also very good for helping pupils learn to communicate and how to listen. They learn to listen to someone else's opinion and compare it to their own in a respectful way." (<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/education/schools/keep-the-faith-why-religious-education-is-booming-769322.html>). A similar conclusion has been drawn by Brian Gates, Emeritus Professor of Religious and Moral Education at the University of Cumbria and chair of the RE Council of England and Wales (REC). The REC have recently published (15 December 2010) a study on the impact of RE on 1,000 students. Professor Gates stated: "Our research has shown RE has a measurable impact on those who study it; RE in schools shouldn't be viewed as controversial or a minefield but an essential part of the humanities mix. RE is a rigorous academically based subject that will equip and inform future generations about the origins and meanings of the different beliefs, ethics and opinions found in Britain and around the world." (See

<http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=17322>). Jon Benjamin, Chief executive of the Board of Deputies of British Jews has corroborated these points: “religious studies has proven itself to be a valuable contribution to the academic curriculum, teaching students to respect themselves and others and, importantly, build identities which contribute favourably to all areas of society ... The multi-disciplinary nature of the subject, involving textual study, philosophical thinking, ethics, social understanding and skills of analysis and reasoning, develops critical thinkers.” (See http://news.reonline.org.uk/re_news.php?340) If RE is decreased, it will in turn reduce the benefits that these educators and researchers have outlined.

5. We as University educators in the field of Theology and Religious Studies have seen many of our own students become teachers of RE. Their aims as expressed to us echo the sentiments and aspirations of Helen Cairns, Brian Gates and Jon Benjamin—they too want to facilitate the opportunity to understand the nature of faith and belief in society and create occasions for constructive discussion which will discourage the neglect of a subject that is key in the understanding of individuals and communities from the past and present. In response to Baroness Warsi’s recent warnings on Islamophobia The Right Rev. John Pritchard has added: “RE is a real tool for creating that kind of cohesive community and society that we’re looking for... we neglect it at our peril.” (See

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/jan/23/religion-education-school-examinations?INTCMP=SRCH>). A lack of understanding of what role religion plays in the shaping of various cultures will encourage ignorance, making many of our literary classics and art treasures incomprehensible. Furthermore, it will cut off ripe possibilities for the next generation to develop a better understanding of their neighbours and colleagues. With this in mind, we ask the Education Committee to consider with the utmost urgency these points and to include RE in the E-Bac, an inclusion whose benefits will bear much fruit.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Anne Teasdale

COMMENTS FOR CONSIDERATION ABOUT THE INTRODUCTION OF THE E-BAC

- All pupils in English schools take English, Maths and Science, so the only addition is a humanities subject and MFL.
- Humanities traditionally includes RS, so why is this not included?
- There is a national shortage of MFL teachers, so how will this be addressed?
- The E-Bac encourages pupils to opt for a language even if this is a subject they struggle with. This will result in demotivated and demoralised pupils, who may become disruptive in class (and consequently affecting the ethos of a school).
- The E-Bac will create a second tier of subjects which will be seen as less valuable. This will include subjects like PE and Food which one could argue should be included as a priority in a society which faces a rising levels of obesity and health issues. We face a crisis situation in the NHS. In a multi-disciplinary solution, education is an important strand.
- The reality in the school option pattern is for many subjects to be ‘squashed’ into the remaining option blocks. These include many quality subjects such as music, art, drama, economics, business and technology. These will struggle to attract numbers and in some schools some subjects will be cut, possibly resulting in staff redundancies. It will cause problems with A level groups, again affecting staffing.
- At GCSE surely the point is to motivate and encourage pupils to study subjects that they enjoy and will make good progress in?
- I am a G&T coordinator in a state comprehensive. One of my top scoring candidates in year 12 would not have gained the E-Bac as she did not study history/geography. She has chosen wisely at A level and I anticipate that she may get a place at Oxford or Cambridge. As she said to me “What is all the fuss about?”

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by St John Fisher Catholic College

1. The purpose and benefits of the E-Bac for pupils, schools and the general good seem unclear. No one would argue against a universal entitlement to a broad and balanced curriculum. It has always been the case that overtly or otherwise, many universities have selected candidates with a GCSE in a MFL in preference to those without MFL. On this basis it would be wise for schools to advice pupils and parents of this at the time of option choices. Most schools do this already and would continue to do so.

2. As a measure of pupil and school performance the E Bac has a narrow and limited value. It will as has already been demonstrated favour selective schools which have retained a narrow and purely academic KS4 curriculum because this continues to meet the needs of their pupils. The majority of comprehensive schools and pupils will continue to be branded as failures. Most comprehensive schools operate a mixed curriculum at

KS4 to cater for the learning needs and interests of the full range of learners. GCSE was never intended for the full ability range any more than “O” levels were. Not all subjects lend themselves to a very traditional diet of terminal assessment. Many valid and well regarded qualifications demand high levels of practical and applied learning with modular assessment. These not only match the needs of many learners they are appropriate preparation for further training and employment.

3. The choice of subjects included in the E-Bac seems deliberately intended to force schools and pupils into a narrow range of subjects regardless of aptitude, preference or future usefulness. A similar format was imposed following the 1988 Act, revised almost weekly and subsequently fell into disuse. It is not clear why the humanities options should be limited to history and geography. Classical civilisation is a worthy academic subject that encompasses literature, history, cultural issues and philosophies. Religious Studies is a prime example of a subject with a rich academic tradition which develops philosophical debate, cultural analysis, social and anthropological issues and the capacity to engage in complex and profound ideas. Most church schools already have Religious Studies as a core subject with all pupils taking a full GCSE course. This course is diverse and includes ethics and a comparison of teachings in different religions.

4. The implication of the E-Bac for schools are worrying. Schools in which pupils are well served and where they achieve high standards will be branded as inferior if they do not revert to the E-Bac formula. If schools do amend the curriculum to suit the E-Bac mode they will be faced with a number of issues all of which are incompatible with the offering of a rich and meaningful range of provision that meets the aptitude, needs and interests of all pupils.

These issues will include:

- (i) restricting the option available to the most academic (what about those who want to do two languages or history and geography?);
- (ii) forcing the least academic (who are not necessarily the least able) into a format which stifles their progress and causes them to disengage;
- (iii) losing a number of subjects from the KS4 curriculum which will then results in them not being available at A level; and
- (iv) trying to recruit suitably qualified staff at a time when initial teacher training numbers for history, geography and modern languages are all being reduced by government!

The implication for employers are also of concern. Candidates at both 16 and 18+ will fall into a number of categories:

- (i) those who have achieved the E-Bac but have no creative or business qualification;
- (ii) those who have not achieved the E-Bac but who have also not had the opportunity to gain technical, creative or business qualification; and
- (iii) those who have become so disillusioned that they have dropped out of education considerably earlier than 16.

5. The international comparators much quoted by the government are of very little relevance because they are not comparing like with like. The whole social framework in the Asian countries is very different from that in the UK. To compare the UK with Finland is bizarre. Finland is still a relatively homogenous country where education is virtually all provided by the state. Social welfare is a strong component of many of the states activity. Similarly the “free school” model in Sweden has not been universally regarded as a success as it is seen to damage the general state system. There is a very real danger that E-Bac and other education policies being driven through by the current government will increase the disadvantage experienced by the most vulnerable children and the schools that endeavour to serve them. Selective schools and those in more privileged areas will be able to manipulate whatever measures are put in place to their own advantage. This does not mean that they are better or more effective schools. It means that they have fewer barriers to success. Good schools are those in which children learn, achieve and grow as people regardless of their ability and background—not because they are able and have well informed and highly motivated parents.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Dr Elizabeth Swinbank

SUMMARY

It is a matter of great concern to me that the E-Bac has already been implemented with very little advance notice to schools and with minimal consultation. I am also concerned at the omission of some subjects from the lists of those approved for the E-Bac.

1. If new performance indicators are to be introduced, such as the number of pupils being awarded the E-Bac, schools need to have sufficient advance notice that they can plan their provision accordingly. I am particularly concerned that some schools have abandoned BTEC courses mid-year and switched Year 10 pupils to GCSEs with the sole aim of improving the school’s league-table performance. Such moves are highly

disruptive to the education of the pupils concerned. I recommend that public reporting of schools' E-Bac awards be suspended until at least two full academic years after the introduction of the qualification.

2. The lists of subjects that are either approved, or not, for the E-Bac seem ill thought out. They seem to reflect a very partial view of what constitutes a broad and rigorous academic education. I recommend that the list be revisited and amended.

3. Under Science subjects, I am concerned by the omission of Core Science + Additional Applied Science. Awarding bodies and curriculum developers have worked to ensure that the demands of Additional Applied Science are on a par with Additional Science. I recommend that Core Science + Additional Applied Science should be added to the list of approved Science subjects.

4. Under Humanities subjects, I am concerned that the range of approved subjects is extremely narrow—only History and Geography. Other subjects in this area, notably RE, are equally academic and worthwhile. I recommend that RE should be added to the list of approved Humanities subjects.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Jill Taylor

As a parent and teacher in the Catholic Education system, I ask that you consider including the GCSE in Religious Education as part of the English Baccalaureate. I strongly share the Government's belief that schools "should offer all pupils a broad range of academic subjects to age 16", and give a welcome to the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) as one of the ways in which that aspiration may be promoted.

I also recognise that "getting good passes in rigorous GCSEs or iGCSEs" will be key in ensuring that the EBacc commands the respect enjoyed by other baccalaureate systems that deliver a broad educational curriculum. However, I am very surprised and concerned that Religious Studies GCSE seems not to have been included in the initial list of qualifying humanities subjects.

As this year's very useful Ofsted report (*Transforming Religious Education: Religious Education in Schools 2006–09*) pointed out, the quality of RE/RS teaching in English schools varies considerably (especially where teachers are non-specialists and short-course GCSE courses are followed). However in Catholic Voluntary Aided schools teaching of R.E. tends to be of a high standard and almost all pupils are entered for the two-year full GCSE following the "Catholic Christianity" option offered by the examination boards. Moreover, in such schools RE is well resourced, rigorously inspected and normally taught by specialists.

In RE pupils have the opportunity to engage not only with the most profound metaphysical questions concerning human existence and the nature of reality, but also with the most pressing ethical problems of our day. RE itself is a broad based humanity, demanding knowledge and skills in history, textual criticism, anthropology, ethics, philosophy and theology. Thus it seems aptly suited to being part of any qualification which seeks to ensure that our pupils receive a genuinely broad education. I therefore urge the government to ensure that RE be regarded as a humanity for the purposes of the English Baccalaureate.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Joe Hughes, Director of the Education Service, Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle Education Service

THE ENGLISH BACCALAUREATE AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

1. The White Paper of 24 October 2010 announced the introduction of the English Baccalaureate with the intention of promoting the study of a broad range of academic subjects to age 16. It covers achievement in English, mathematics, science, a language and a humanities subject.

2. I firmly believe that students should be encouraged to realise their potential. They will be more likely to do this if a school provides a broad and balanced curriculum and I am not sure that the E-Bac will actually promote this. First of all it fails to include a whole range of academic subjects such as Economics, Business Studies, Music, Psychology, Sociology and Religious Education. Secondly, it ignores subjects with a practical, performing or vocational dimension; subjects which many students of all abilities both enjoy and succeed in. Your first bullet point points to the use of the E-Bac as "a measure of pupil and school performance". From both perspectives there is the danger of the E-Bac leading to a narrower, more restrictive curriculum offer which is likely to increase levels of student dissatisfaction.

3. I would therefore ask that the entire concept of the E-Bac be reconsidered. It could be argued that the consultation, now underway, via the Education Select Committee, should have taken place prior to the decision to introduce the E-Bac.

4. Following its introduction humanities was defined as appertaining only to history and geography. Both history and geography are very important subjects. Both enable students to understand better our "human" story; how the human race has evolved down through the centuries and how our environment, the planet, has

played its part in shaping our journey. In the study of both subjects students gain knowledge, acquire skills, develop insights and grapple with some of the big ethical and moral questions. Accordingly I am supportive of your encouragement for the study of these two subjects which have much to offer our young people.

5. However, where I am puzzled and disappointed is in the omission of Religious Education from the definition of what constitutes a humanity. Religious Education is a rich subject with much to offer young people growing up in 21st century Britain. It too has a distinctive body of knowledge and gives students the opportunity to develop a range of skills. It too helps them to understand “our story” and in the context of a multi-cultural UK adds an appreciation of the many traditions of religious belief found in our society. Religious Education clearly focuses on ethics and morals and helps students to reflect on and develop values and principles which will guide them in living out their lives. It encourages a sense of respect for others, a sense of responsibility, a sense of right and wrong. It can help young people develop into adult members of society who will contribute positively towards building a better and more just society. The current government has promulgated the concept of the “Big Society” in which people support each other, live in a spirit of collaboration and tolerance and take on responsibility for developing cohesion in their communities. It is a fine ideal and one that I fully support. I would contend that in deciding not to class Religious Education as a humanity they have “missed a trick” and would urge them to reconsider your original definition.

6. On 15 December the Religious Education Council reported that young people recognise that Religious Education is important and want to study it. They recognise its worth. A few days prior to this ASCL Council reported that large numbers of their members are expressing “extreme concern” over the decision not to recognise Religious Education as a humanity. There is a growing groundswell of opinion that feels that this would merit re-consideration.

7. In our Diocesan secondary schools Religious Education is a core subject given a high profile and an appropriate level of resourcing in terms of facilities, equipment and curriculum time. Our RE Departments are staffed by specialists and post-16 Religious Education continues to be a core component of our general entitlement courses. It is a serious academic subject and our schools and our students take it seriously. By leaving it out of the subjects within the English Baccalaureate you have, I hope unintentionally, in effect downgraded this key subject. In conclusion, I would urge you in the strongest possible terms to reconsider and to widen your definition to allow for the inclusion of Religious Education.

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Dr Cain, School of Education, University of Southampton

1. THE PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE E-BAC AND ITS VALUE AS A MEASURE OF PUPIL AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

1.1 Whilst I recognise that the old “5 GCSE” measure was inadequate as a means for assessing pupil and school performance, I think the E-Bac is unnecessarily narrow. The measure of five GCSEs including Maths and English was better because it did not try to prescribe school options.

1.2 The stated purpose of the E-Bac is, according to Michael Gove’s interviews, to give parents more information about schools. This is disingenuous; its real purpose is to shape the curriculum in Secondary schools which it will do, because headteachers are rightly concerned about their schools’ position in league tables. Its secondary purpose is probably to indicate to the public that schools’ results are improving, as can be deduced from the fact that the figures were published for last year’s results.

1.3 Having a disparity between a stated purpose and a real purpose is problematic, suggesting that Michael Gove and, by implication, politicians in general, cannot be trusted to explain their motives. This is a real and abiding problem for politicians, not only ministers. I think it would be helpful for select committees to discourage them from the practice.

2. THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE E-BAC

2.1 The choice of subjects appears fairly arbitrary. The White Paper claimed that the E-Bac provides for a “broad and rounded” education but I’m not convinced that this is so. I am particularly concerned that no arts subject is mentioned because of the importance of the arts to the creative economy.

2.2 The inclusion of languages such as Polish, Chinese and Turkish is problematic. Schools are certain to enter native speakers of these languages for a GCSE examination, in the hope of improving their scores in the E-bac. Such scores will say nothing about the quality of their teaching, will do nothing to educate the Polish, Chinese and Turkish students and will be a waste of public money.

3. THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE E-BAC FOR PUPILS, SCHOOLS AND EMPLOYERS

3.1 Schools will try to score as highly as possible on the E-Bac measure. As a result, pupils will be required to study the subjects on the E-Bac, whether or not they have any aptitude for them.

3.2 If it is the case that some GCSE exams are too easy (and I don't think this is proven) a better response would be to ensure that the standards across the whole of the GCSE are better maintained.

4. INTERNATIONAL COMPARATORS FOR THE E-BAC

4.1 The E-Bac is a very different animal from other baccalauréats; it's hard to compare. As far as I can tell, other systems are less rigid and have different streams, to account for different types of students (eg those who have an aptitude for sciences, and those with aptitudes for arts subjects).

21 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Alderman Colin Craddock, Chair of the South Gloucestershire Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education; Margaret Murphy, South Gloucestershire Advisory Teacher for Religious Education; and Antony Evans, South Gloucestershire Adviser for Personal, Social, Health and Moral Education and Citizenship

WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO THE PLACE OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

1. THE PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE ENGLISH BACCALAUREATE...

1.1 The Government's declared belief that the English Baccalaureate promotes the aspiration that schools should offer pupils a broad range of academic subjects is not supported by the evidence:

- 1.1.1 five subjects is not broad;
- 1.1.2 the pre-GCE "O" level system of the matriculation qualification was abolished as too narrow, and that was 60 years ago (matriculation coming from the Latin=little list); and
- 1.1.3 the current GCSE A*-C standard is well established, well understood and flexible in that it not only does include a broad range of subjects, but it is easy to extrapolate the subjects identified in the current English Baccalaureate proposal as required.

1.2 Whatever the declared purpose of the English Baccalaureate, in the competitive and graded educational world, schools will naturally teach more particularly to the English Baccalaureate subjects than to those outwith the English Baccalaureate.

1.3 With our unrivalled language heritage, no range can be described as broad if it excludes English Literature as the English Baccalaureate does.

2. ...AND ITS VALUE AS A MEASURE OF PUPIL AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

2.1 All measures have their advantages and limitations:

- 2.1.1 the advantage of the English Baccalaureate as a measure is that it is narrowly focussed and relatively uncomplicated as a measure of basic competence marking the ability of a young person to access the skills needed to live as fulfilled adult and citizen;
- 2.1.2 its limitations are that it is relatively unsophisticated, narrows the curriculum and effectively second classes many areas of study particularly those that might be followed by the less academically inclined, but potentially no less intelligent and valuable students; and
- 2.1.3 over the last few years, whatever the declared good intentions at the time of introduction, new measures to assess pupils and schools have become critical indicators of school performance, so schools have almost unavoidably worked to these measures to maintain and enhance their marketability. This jeopardises the delicate balance between teaching to the test and teaching for the pupil.

3. THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE ENGLISH BACCALAUREATE

3.1 This is too narrow if we are properly to value and encourage the wide range of diversity that this country and its population need for a successful future.

3.2 The omission of English Literature is nothing short of extraordinary and that of Religious Education concerning. Coupled with the mutual exclusivity of History and Geography this reduces the Humanities profile to an absolute minimum.

3.3 The absence altogether of the visual and performing Arts, cultural education, the technologies in their many forms and excellence in Sport and physical activity neither represents reality for young people to-day nor prepares them well for a diverse yet cohesive society to which the government states it is committed.

The case for Religious Education/Religious Studies

3.4 Religious Education/Religious Studies is statutory in the school curriculum for all pupils, but is the only subject with this status that is not represented in the English Baccalaureate.

3.5 Religious Education/Religious Studies more than any other subject, even if not completely uniquely, requires pupils to be reflective, to pose and consider profound questions of existence, purpose, identity and social and racial harmony, and to present and accommodate deeply held views and opinions, rationally and meaningfully.

3.6 Religious Education/Religious Studies properly taught is not doctrinaire and evangelistic, but does promote morality in a troubled world and celebrates the best of the “Sunday School” values that were more common a generation or two ago as part of good traditional English society.

3.7 Employers, further and higher education and universities value qualifications in Religious Education/Religious Studies as an indicator of someone who is likely to possess a high order of thinking skills, an ability to mix and work in a team, and to be inclusive in their outlook on the world.

3.8 In a society that will depend increasingly for success on its ability to be tolerant, inclusive, diverse and multi-cultural, the central role of Religious Education/Religious Studies in helping to shape the youngsters of to-day who will become the adults of to-morrow is self evident.

3.9 The year on year increase in the number of students keen to take a qualification in Religious Education/Religious Studies is a clear indication of the growing interest young people have in the approaches to life this subject brings. If it is not even part of the English Baccalaureate, this trend is likely to be reversed.

3.10 If Religious Education/Religious Studies may not feature in its own right in the English Baccalaureate, at the very least it should feature as one of the humanities subjects.

3.11 We believe that Religious Education/Religious Studies is fundamental to the ethos of the Big Society and therefore should be given a clear profile in something that is as important as the English Baccalaureate.

4. THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE ENGLISH BACCALAUREATE FOR PUPILS, SCHOOLS AND EMPLOYERS

4.1 *Pupils*

4.1.1 A potentially narrower curriculum that becomes falsely understood by society and further and higher education as the overriding objective of 0–16 years education.

4.1.2 A more limited school experience.

4.1.3 For many pupils an emphasis on areas of education in which they may not excel at the expense of those in which they do.

4.1.4 Particularly for those pupils in the 4.1.3. above, a sense potentially of not being as valuable and valued as others in the school.

4.2 *Schools*

4.2.1 Progressive direction of resources including staff away from those subjects not in the English Baccalaureate.

4.2.2 Inter-school competition more based on the success of the English Baccalaureate subjects than in the others leading to a loss of appropriate balance between, for example, Maths and the Arts, and a potential “ghettoisation” of schools in a given area, potentially “first” and “second” class schools.

4.2.3 Schools and pupils also coming to regard some subjects as first and second class.

4.2.4 Governors forced to make decisions in the interests of a school’s survival that do not represent the interests of the pupils and the community.

4.3 *Employers*

4.3.1 Employers are often represented in the press and the media as concerned about the poor basic standards attained by school leavers who enter the world of work. Universities make similar points. Undoubtedly there is truth in this, but equally and less publicised is the employers’ wish for youngsters who are multi-skilled and broadly educated with interests that enable them to work well and adaptably in teams or independently. These vitally include the ability and skills to reflect, to see alternative approaches in work situations, to be able to acquire wisdom as well as knowledge. The English Baccalaureate, as currently placed and configured, is unlikely to be able to do this.

5. INTERNATIONAL COMPARATORS FOR THE ENGLISH BACCALAUREATE

5.1 These are important, but their value should not be over-emphasised as the context, however well reconciled for inequalities and cultural variations, can never take full account of the differences between national circumstances.

Alderman Colin Cradock

Chair of the South Gloucestershire Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE)

Margaret Murphy

South Gloucestershire Advisory Teacher for Religious Education

Antony Evans

South Gloucestershire Adviser for Personal, Social, Health and Moral Education and Citizenship (PSHME+C)

22 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by The Field Studies Council

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Field Studies Council (FSC) is delighted to contribute to the Education Select Committee's consultation on the English Baccalaureate (E-Bac). This submission focuses on the Committee's call for evidence on the choice of subjects included in the E-Bac and the implications of the E-Bac for pupils, schools and employers. The FSC is a pioneering educational charity committed to bringing environmental understanding to all. Our corporate vision includes the statement to "develop learning experiences which link climate change and sustainable developments to the natural environment."

1.2 The FSC welcomes the Government's ambition to introduce the English Baccalaureate, particularly the inclusion of science, geography and history within the E-Bac as we believe that this will increase the uptake of these subjects at GCSE level facilitating greater opportunities for pupils to engage in fieldwork and outdoor learning. In addition, we particularly welcome the inclusion of science within the E-Bac as we believe this will help to address the decline in the uptake of science subjects at GCSE, enabling more students to continue further study in the STEM disciplines and to become the scientists of the future.

1.3 However, we would also like to emphasise that our experience has taught us that out-of-classroom learning can play a crucial role in engaging students about science and encouraging them to take up STEM subjects beyond the age of 16. In addition, the FSC recognise the potential for the E-Bac to facilitate cross-curricular CPD in outdoor learning, increasing the confidence, competence and commitment of teachers in the use fieldwork in order to improve the quality of provision of outdoor education.

2. BACKGROUND TO THE FSC

2.1 The FSC is an educational charity committed to bringing environmental understanding to all. It currently welcomes 120,000 visitors and 3,000 schools every year on courses to its national network of 18 Field Centres. Most visitors from secondary schools are studying GCSE/A level science and/or geography. Established in 1943, the FSC has become internationally respected for its national network of education centres and is the UK's leading provider of field courses. We know that fieldwork is a great way to increase students' enthusiasm for science and geography, helping them on their way to becoming the new scientists and geographers of the future.

2.2. The FSC provides informative and enjoyable opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to discover, explore, be inspired by, and understand the natural environment. We believe that the more we know about the environment, the more we can appreciate its needs and protect its diversity and beauty for future generations. We feel that fieldwork should be a vital element of an imaginative and contemporary science and geography education.

2.3 The FSC also run a programme of subsidised courses for postgraduate certificate in education (PGCE) student and newly qualified teachers (NQTs), providing effective and meaningful training to deliver learning outside the classroom. These courses provide training in basic fieldwork skills such as group management and site risk assessment. The courses are open to all PGCE Geography, Earth Sciences, Science and Biology students, and are partly subsidised by the FSC reducing the cost for the applicant.

2.4 There is evidence that good quality residential fieldwork and outdoor learning helps to improve education standards.³⁹ Despite this, fieldwork provision in science and biology is declining in British secondary schools. More than 96% of GCSE science pupils will not experience a residential field trip, while nearly half of all A-level biology students will do no field work, with the possible exception of half a day's experience near their school.⁴⁰ Similar trends at all key stages and extending to universities appear to be leading to a shortfall in people with the practical skills needed to support biodiversity-related careers and activities.

³⁹ National Foundation for Educational Research (2004).

⁴⁰ School Science Review (2003).

3. THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE E-BAC

3.1 The Field Studies Council particularly welcomes the inclusion of science and geography within the Baccalaureate as it is likely that this will encourage greater GCSE and A level uptake of the two subjects in schools, in particular allowing more young people to train to become the scientists of the future and contribute to the UK STEM economy. However, the Field Studies Council would also like to highlight the importance of the inclusion of fieldwork within the curriculum and its role in inspiring student's enthusiasm for science.

3.2 A recent study found that the number of school students choosing to take physical science post-16 has fallen over the last 25 years,⁴¹ with just 17% of 16 to 18-year-olds taking one or more science A-level in 2009.⁴² Research recently published by Shell revealed that only 28% of those students electing to study science after the age of 16 intended to pursue a scientific career. The result is that six out of ten companies employing STEM-skilled staff say they are having difficulty recruiting and are turning to countries such as India and China for new staff. Unless the numbers selecting STEM subjects post-16 are retained there will be a loss of innovation and participation by UK companies in this area and Britain will struggle to compete in the global market, particularly given that Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) industries contribute over £68 billion a year to the UK economy. A skilled workforce is essential in achieving the Government's aim to create a high technology and high value-added economy by 2014, and it is expected that the UK will need to fill over three-quarters of a million extra jobs requiring highly numerate, analytical people with STEM skills. Therefore it is vital that we encourage greater uptake of science in schools, and the inclusion of science within the E-Bac is likely to encourage increased participation in science GCSE.

3.3 However, in order to ensure that students continue science study beyond GSCE level, enabling them to go on to develop the STEM skills needed to help the UK economy grow, it will be vital to promote ways of supporting fieldwork within the curriculum and in teacher training for science teachers. Many studies have indicated a major decline in positive attitudes from students towards science. Young people at secondary school generally see less relevance in science to the real world, find it less inspiring, enjoy less practical work and feel they have less opportunity to use their imagination. Students are "turning off" science and more work is needed to ensure that students are inspired and to enable the UK to develop a rich source of skilled scientists so vital to the future of the British economy. Whilst there is no single reason for the fall in popularity, particularly in physical sciences, it is clear that students need to be engaged in the subject to a higher level. Their enthusiasm for, and commitment towards, science needs to be raised. A report by the Public Accounts Committee found that a pupils' desire to continue studying science depends largely on whether they enjoy the subject.⁴³ Hands-on practical science is known to stimulate and inspire and effectively-planned and well-taught fieldwork is a particularly powerful approach which helps to improve education standards.⁴⁴ Furthermore, and often most importantly, out-of-classroom activity provides an exciting and memorable experience for young people which can enthuse and inspire them, and will help to link science to their everyday lives through dealing with real issues at first hand. The Field Studies Council believe that high quality "field experiences" can help to define life choices, tipping the balance in favour of post-16 science.

3.4 Despite this, fieldwork provision in science and biology is declining in British schools. Over 96% of GCSE science pupils will not experience a residential field trip, and nearly half of A-level biology students will do no fieldwork, or will only have a half-day experience near to their schools.⁴⁵ Initial Teacher Training (ITT) is not working effectively enough to help produce sufficient numbers of science teachers with the competence, confidence and commitment to meet the modern day challenges of teaching fieldwork to the next generation of children and young people.⁴⁶ This could undermine the UK's ability to compete in STEM-related areas. Any reversal in the decline in secondary school science fieldwork will have to be led by teachers. The capacity and enthusiasm to teach science in the field will need to be increased by ensuring a high status for fieldwork within ITT in order to effectively equip teachers with the competence, confidence and commitment to take their students into the "outdoor classroom".

3.5 The Field Studies Council also welcomes the inclusion of history and geography within the Baccalaureate. These subjects are strongly fieldwork oriented, and it is hoped that the introduction of the E-Bac will increase the uptake of these subjects in schools, thereby increasing the opportunities for pupils and students to engage in outdoor learning experiences. In addition, this could help to improve standards in outdoor teaching, by allowing teachers in the science disciplines and other subjects to draw on the expertise of teachers who have strong experience of leading outdoor activities, facilitating best practice sharing in outdoor learning across subjects. A recent Ofsted⁴⁷ report on science education found that the most effective provision built in cross-curricular elements with collaboration across staff, allowing students to understand the role of science in wider society. A recent report by the Outdoor Science Working Group⁴⁸ also recommended that performance management for teachers seeking to gain AST status should include an opportunity for more experienced

⁴¹ Learning to Love Science: Harnessing Children's Scientific Imagination (2008).

⁴² The Royal Society, State of the Nation Report, Preparing for the Transfer from school and college science and mathematics education to UK STEM higher education (2011).

⁴³ The Public Accounts Committee, Educating the Next Generation of Scientists (2011).

⁴⁴ National Foundation for Educational Research (2004).

⁴⁵ School Science Review, Association for Science Education (2003).

⁴⁶ Field Studies Council/Association for Science Education, *ITT and the Outdoor Classroom*. (2007).

⁴⁷ Ofsted, *Successful Science*, (January 2011).

⁴⁸ The Association for Science Education Outdoor Science Working Group, *Outdoor Science* (2011).

teachers to demonstrate their own role in providing fieldwork training for colleagues in other departments and schools. The Field Studies Council believe that the inclusion of science, history and geography within the Baccalaureate will provide greater opportunities for CPD sharing across these core subjects, increasing the confidence, competence and commitment of teachers in the use fieldwork.

4. THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE E-BAC FOR PUPILS, SCHOOLS AND EMPLOYERS

4.1 The Field Studies Council believes that the inclusion of science, geography and history within the E-Bac will increase the uptake of these subjects as more students desire to achieve this qualification. Increased uptake in these subjects will help to address the STEM skills gap in the UK workforce, providing UK employers with the skilled workforce needed to meet demand and contribute to the growth of this sector of the UK economy.

4.2 However, effective teaching in these key subjects requires the use of practical education and fieldwork, which will place greater demands on teachers to deliver high quality outdoor education. It will therefore be vital to develop a co-ordinated programme of teacher training in fieldwork to promote effective pedagogy and to support a coherent approach towards the improved quality of teaching and learning through fieldwork in these disciplines. The Field Studies Council would specifically like to see the Government introduce minimum Qualified Teacher Status standards for ITT fieldwork training and development. These will ensure that all ITT students will have fieldwork training, enabling them to effectively deliver teaching in these disciplines to make the new E-Bac a valuable qualification for the 21st century economy.

4.3 The FSC also believes that the inclusion of fieldwork in the curriculum as an entitlement is essential to ensure that all pupils get the opportunity to experience the outside world. The FSC would be flexible on the exact wording of the entitlement but would as a starting point suggest that the entitlement contains an opportunity for all young people to experience a learning outside the classroom visit, including at least one visit during their secondary school years (during which the biggest dip in motivation and attitude to learning occurs).

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 The Field Studies Council welcomes the inclusion of science, geography and history within the Government's new E-Bac. We believe this will increase the uptake of these subjects at GCSE level facilitating greater opportunities for pupils to engage in fieldwork and outdoor learning, as well enable more students to continue further study in the STEM disciplines where there is currently a skills deficit. However, we would also like to emphasise the importance of engaging students in these subjects through effective fieldwork and outdoor education, and the need to ensure that teachers are adequately trained to have the confidence, competence and commitment to deliver high quality outdoor education in these disciplines.

22 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by the Senior Leadership Team at Sacred Heart of Mary Girls' School

SUMMARY

1. In this submission, whilst we acknowledge the need for a broad curriculum, we would like to express our grave concerns regarding the potential outcomes for all schools, but moreover for schools with a designated religious character, and in particular our own school, if the proposed model of the E-Bac is implemented. Our concerns regarding the E-Bac are as follows:

- (i) Its introduction in the proposed format will, most certainly, result in the marginalisation of Religious Education as schools are compelled to prioritise other subjects in order to meet the "Gold Standard" and so retain their place in League Tables and in the educational "market place".
- (ii) It will unfairly discriminate against our school where the quality of provision in Religious Education is "Outstanding" (Section 48 2009) and results are consistently very high and among the highest in the school.
- (iii) It has the potential to divert resources away from the "majority" of learners as success/failure will be dependent on the minority of students at the C/D borderline.
- (iv) The proposed model does not recognise RE as a rigorous academic discipline alongside History and Geography. For schools of a religious character, in particular Catholic schools, Religious Education is at the heart of our core curriculum and is regarded as "the" humanity which, above all others, encourages critical thinking and the study of philosophy and ethics as well as the acquisition of knowledge. It is therefore just and fair that RE be included in the E-Bac measure.

SUBMITTER

2. The submitter is a Catholic comprehensive school for girls 11–18. The school has been awarded "Outstanding" by Ofsted in the past two inspections. We are a high achieving school and we are committed to the provision of a broad and balanced curriculum and to the pursuit of excellence. All pupils in Key Stage 4 study GCSE Religious Education and there are currently three full-time RE specialists who deliver the

curriculum. Geography and History are offered as optional GCSEs. In the current cohort of Year 11 students 80% study History or/and Geography. The History Department is made up of three specialist historians. Geography has two specialist Geography teachers. All pupils in KS4 study a language to GCSE.

THE PUPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE E-BAC AND ITS VALUE AS A MEASURE OF PUPIL AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

3. The aims of the E-Bac are commendable insofar as it seeks to provide an enhanced curriculum for pupils at KS4 and endeavours to address a recent decline in the number of pupils studying languages and the Sciences to GCSE. The introduction of a Humanities subject as a compulsory GCSE will be beneficial to pupils and ensure a broad and rich curriculum at 14–16.

4. Its value as a measure of pupil and school performance remains questionable. It is simplistic in nature as it merely evidences the number of pupils gaining a “pass” in nominated subjects and gives no indication of progress made by pupils.

5. The model is prohibitive to Specialist schools or schools recognised as excelling in particular subjects, as no measure is taken into account of excellence achieved in these subject areas. This, therefore, is discriminatory against Catholic schools like ours where performance in RE is outstanding.

6. The E-Bac is not simply a “measure of performance” but a mechanism that will drive schools towards a prescribed curriculum. Curriculum provision will be determined by the compulsion to meet the “Gold Standard” and not by the needs of pupils. In Catholic schools, for example, it is part of our mission to deliver Religious Education and so it is imperative that RE is at the centre of our core curriculum and not marginalised by secular priorities.

THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE E-BAC

7. *English, Maths and Science*

All three are essential qualifications for all learners and GCSE is the best measure although a “pass” with a Grade C does not give any real indication that a given pupil has made real progress or indeed, genuinely “achieved”.

8. *Modern Foreign Languages*

The importance of languages is already recognised at our school. All pupils study a GCSE in French or Italian at KS4 in an endeavour to ensure that pupils receive a curriculum that is rich and diverse.

9. *Humanities*

History, Geography and RE are all humanities subjects that challenge pupils intellectually.

Already, all KS4 pupils in our school study full course GCSE RE, 80% study Geography and/or History. Whilst all three demand a sound subject knowledge in order to secure a pass at GCSE, RE is recognised at our school as a rigorous academic discipline that also challenges learners to engage with profound questions concerning the human existence and encourages them to think critically and develop skills and knowledge in theology, ethics and philosophy.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE E-BAC FOR PUPILS, SCHOOLS AND EMPLOYERS

10. The centrality of RE to our school’s curriculum does much to promote community cohesion and foster knowledge and understanding of other faiths. The importance of Religious Education has been widely recognised by Government Ministers, educationalists and social commentators and yet, despite it being a statutory requirement for schools to teach it, an unintended, but unavoidable outcome of the E-Bac will be a significant reduction in the time allocated to RE and in community schools its possible disappearance from the curriculum altogether as a discrete subject.

11. At KS4, schools have already been obliged to re-vamp the curriculum to accommodate the statutory requirement to provide two hours PE at KS4. To provide a broad and balanced curriculum whilst meeting statutory requirements as well as devoting 10% of teaching time to RE, as required by the Bishops of England and Wales, is a significant challenge. Whilst remaining true to our commitment to Catholic educational principles, there is a danger that our mission will be compromised as we are forced to abdicate our responsibilities as a Catholic school in order to survive in the educational marketplace.

12. A further unintended outcome will be a dilution in the teaching of RE: The current financial restraints on school budgets have far reaching implications for curriculum planning and staffing in schools. The E-Bac in its current format will compel our school to re-think curriculum provision and so re-consider staff allocation. The necessary increase in Geography and History specialists in order to ensure quality teaching in the subjects that will be part of the performance measure of E-Bac, will, no doubt, have an impact on staffing elsewhere as we struggle to “balance the books”. This could result in RE being delivered by non-specialists with flexibility in their timetables; a disaster for Catholic schools.

13. The E-Bac contravenes our mission as a Catholic school to prioritise the “poor and marginalised” by compelling us to focus resources in prescribed GCSE courses on the minority of pupils on the C/D borderline. This, in turn, will divert resources away from pupils with Special Educational Needs as well as compromising provision for Gifted and Talented pupils at the other end of the spectrum. This, also, is in conflict with our mission to serve each pupil as a unique individual in a learning environment where all pupils have an equal entitlement to high quality educational provision.

14. The proposed model will, undoubtedly, have a detrimental effect on the future of quality teaching of RE in schools. Fewer pupils will take the full GCSE course in RE, consequently fewer pupils will pursue A Levels in Religious Studies and Philosophy and Ethics. This will undoubtedly have a significant impact on future numbers of students in these academic disciplines at degree level and result in drastically reduced numbers of specialist trained RE teachers in the future. This will negatively impact on the quality of Teaching and Learning in Religious Education and result in the demise of RS and Philosophy and Ethics, as academic disciplines.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

15. We strongly urge that RE be given its rightful place alongside History and Geography as a rigorous academic Humanities subject at GCSE.

16. We urge the Government to re-consider the proposed model of the E-Bac measure to allow for schools that have been designated as Specialist Schools or centres of excellence in particular fields to be recognised and credited for their specialism or area of excellence.

22 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Incorporated Society of Musicians in conjunction with Conservatoires UK

1. SUMMARY

1.1 The Incorporated Society of Musicians (ISM) is the professional association for music and musicians and also has a substantial corporate membership. Conservatoires UK is the representative body of conservatoires in the UK.

1.2 Whilst we welcome the intention to ensure a breadth of study at GCSE, we are deeply concerned about the impact of the English Baccalaureate on the provision of music.

1.3 In particular, in light of the Henley Review of Music Education in England we are disappointed by the Government’s exclusion of music from the English Baccalaureate, especially given its own admission that it is an “enriching and valuable academic subject”.

1.4 The continued omission of music from the English Baccalaureate is having a negative impact on pupil and teacher options within schools and could also lead to longer term skills shortages in the creative and cultural sector.

1.5 To resolve these problems the Government must either expand the English Baccalaureate to include a creative “pillar” of study or at the very least, include music as a subject within the humanities pillar of study.

2. ABOUT THE INCORPORATED SOCIETY OF MUSICIANS (ISM) AND CONSERVATOIRES UK

2.1 The ISM is the professional association for music and musicians in the UK. Founded in 1882, our mission is to “champion the art of music and support the music professional”.

2.2 We have over 5,500 individual members including head teachers, classroom teachers, and peripatetic music teachers, teachers in all the specialist music schools and in the conservatoires, performers, conductors and composers.

2.3 Our substantial corporate membership of over 100 organisations includes all the UK conservatoires, universities, specialist music schools such as Chethams School of Music, Wells Cathedral School and the Yehudi Menuhin School, the Federation of Music Services, the Association of British Orchestras (ABO), Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM), the Worshipful Company of Musicians, individual music services, Jazz Services, the International Artists Managers Association (IAMA), Sing Up, Classic FM, the Music Industries Association and Making Music.

2.4 Our past presidents have included Sir Thomas Beecham, Dame Gillian Weir DBE and The Lord Menuhin, and previous winners of our distinguished musicians award have included Sir Simon Rattle, Dame Evelyn Glennie DBE and most recently Judith Weir CBE.

2.5 We are independent of government and our Chief Executive chairs the Music Education Council.

2.6 Conservatoires UK (CUK) is a network of UK music colleges. Originally set up in 2004 to further the advancement of higher and further education in the UK in the fields of music and performing arts, a particular goal of CUK was to work with UCAS to create a system which would facilitate and co-ordinate admission to

its member organisations: CUKAS. The original members of CUK were: Birmingham Conservatoire, Leeds College of Music, Royal College of Music, Royal Northern College of Music, Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama, Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama and Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance. Since the launch of CUKAS, CUK has grown to include the Guildhall School of Music and Drama which remains outside the CUKAS system.

2.7 The main activity of CUK is to promote good practice and the sharing of information between institutions. There are now two formal sub-committees, concerned with Finance & Administration and Academic Administration, and, under the title of CUK Forum, a number of informal groups and networks covering academic, professional, musical and pedagogical matters. The overseeing of all CUK activities is undertaken by the Principals' Group (Directors of CUK).

3. THE PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE E-BACC AND ITS VALUE AS A MEASURE OF PUPIL AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

3.1 The stated objective of the English Baccalaureate is to ensure that pupils study a broad range of subjects at GCSE. The Secretary of State added that the English Baccalaureate was introduced to promote a "range of core academic subjects" and to ensure that exam standards "match the highest standards around the world".¹ The benefits of ensuring a breadth of learning to counter other influences on pupil subject choice at GCSE level are welcome.

3.2 However the details of the English Baccalaureate proposals may have unintended consequences for the cultural and creative sector of the economy.

3.3 The Government's commitment to music as an "enriching and valuable academic subject"² in conjunction with the Government's stated purpose and benefits of the English Baccalaureate are incompatible with music's omission from the five pillars of learning proposed.

4. THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE E-BACC

4.1 On 24 September 2010 Darren Henley was asked by the Secretary of State for Education, Michael Gove to conduct a review into music education in England. The final report of the Henley Review of Music Education and simultaneously released Government response were published on Monday 7 February 2011.

4.2 In his review Henley sets out a clear recommendation (Recommendation 5) that "Music should continue to be offered by schools at Key Stage 4 and beyond, allowing pupils to gain GCSE, BTEC and A level qualifications in the subject." He also wrote "I believe that Music should be included as one of the subjects that go to make up the new English Baccalaureate. Otherwise, there is a risk that the subject may be devalued."³ The review is unequivocal in its recommendation to government.

4.3 The Government response to this recommendation that "Students are entitled to study an arts subject in Key Stage 4"⁴ is inadequate. It fails to address the specific issues of a) music within the English Baccalaureate itself, b) the warning of subject devaluation and c) the reduction in learning opportunities of specifically music and/or other arts subjects.

5. THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE E-BACC FOR PUPILS, SCHOOLS AND EMPLOYERS

(i) *The removal of music as an opportunity*

5.1 The absence of music from the English Baccalaureate proposals is particularly striking given the benefits attributable to music education more broadly and the negative consequences which will therefore inevitably arise if it is removed as an option or made less attractive as a form of academic study by comparison to other disciplines.

5.2 In a recent survey of ISM members (closing on 14 March) less than 0.3% of respondents reported that the English Baccalaureate proposals were having a positive impact on music education options within their teaching environment, whilst 15.7% drew attention to a direct negative impact and only 13.7% said it had had no effect. The overwhelming majority answered "don't know".

5.3 This means that, of those responding, approximately 54% have seen the English Baccalaureate have "a negative impact on the provision of music education" in their teaching environment.

Examples: One respondent, referring to pupil uptake this year, following the introduction of the English Baccalaureate said: "We've had our options choices this week and it looks like we [are] down by around 20/30% on last year." Another said: "Many students who would have chosen music are being discouraged by their parents as it is not an EB subject." A further comment, echoing the Henley Review, read: "It will inevitably reduce the perceived status of music GCSE and A level and will consequently lead to smaller uptakes of those subjects."

(ii) *The removal of the extrinsic benefits of music education*

5.4 Music education has been shown repeatedly to have a positive impact on pupils' perceptual and language skills, literacy, numeracy, intellectual development, attainment, social and personal development, physical skills

and health.⁵ One can assume that with a decline in the availability of music in schools, a similar decline will be noticed in these core areas.⁶

(iii) *The importance of music GCSE in underpinning our creative and cultural economy*

5.5 England contains a number of world-class conservatoires which not only “train the next generation of music educators” but also “the next generation of world-class composers and performers”.⁷ A high proportion of these practitioners end up working in degree relevant employment; this includes education work, professional performance, and sound recording and technical support. In addition, those with a higher education music qualification are less likely than average to fall in to the categories of *assumed to be unemployed or not available for employment study or training*.⁸ The route of progression highlighted by the Henley Review of Music Education in England, combined with the importance of music to the creative and cultural economy (see 5.5), suggest that a decision to omit music from the English Baccalaureate will prove counter-productive. This omission could in turn have the unintended consequence of music disappearing from our schools.⁹

5.6 The creative arts industry in the UK employs 1.1 million people across 157,000 businesses, contributing 6.2% of the UK’s Gross Added Value in 2007. The creative industries sector grew by 5% per annum between 1997 and 2007¹⁰ and were the only part of the economy—outside the public sector—to grow during the recession. The creative industries as a whole are estimated to contribute some £60 billion per year to the UK economy.

6. INTERNATIONAL COMPARATORS FOR THE E-BACC

6.1 Many of our members have highlighted that the English Baccalaureate itself is not a qualification but rather a measure of attainment in other qualifications by which school attainment can be measured. It should not be regarded as a separate qualification.

6.2 However, in its aim to imitate the *International Baccalaureate* the English Baccalaureate falls short of the standards set by the International Baccalaureate which, according to the Institute of Education “has good representation of the Arts” in that it has a sixth subject “pillar” dedicated to the arts.¹¹ If the English Baccalaureate is to compare favourably with international usage of the term “Baccalaureate” it must include an arts pillar.

7. SOLUTIONS AND CONCLUSION

7.1 On 5 September 2010 Michael Gove, Secretary of State for Education made it clear that the English Baccalaureate as he saw it would include “GCSE English, Maths, a science, a modern or ancient foreign language and a humanity like History, Geography, Art or Music”¹² Subsequently, music was omitted. There are three solutions open to the government to reverse this omission:

- (a) The English Baccalaureate could be abandoned.
- (b) Music could be included within the humanities category of the English Baccalaureate, recognising its specific value as an enriching and challenging academic subject.
- (c) Music and the creative arts could be included in a sixth pillar of subjects to replicate the International Baccalaureate Group 6 option *the arts* and recognise the importance of cultural education in supporting our world-class creative and cultural economy.

7.2 Given that music was among the four subjects of the ancient and medieval Quadrivium¹³ alongside arithmetic, geometry and astronomy, it would be a great shame as well as a great irony for the study of ancient Greek to be promoted above music. We could end up with a situation whereby students can translate the *Republic*, but not engage in its content.

7.3 The ISM, Conservatoires UK and individual conservatoires have collaborated on this submission as our corporate members and colleagues. We are the professional association for music and musicians and the conservatoires represent the highest standards of education in musical progression. We are deeply concerned about the English Baccalaureate as it stands.

7.4 We are pleased that the Committee is conducting an inquiry into the *English Baccalaureate* and look forward to reading your report in full. We would also welcome the opportunity to give oral evidence to the Committee.

REFERENCES

¹ Parents get more information about school performance, Department for Education, Wednesday 12 January 2011.

² Introduction to the Department for Education’s response to the Henley Review of Music Education in England, Monday 7 February 2011.

³ Recommendation 5 and extract from the full text of the independent Henley Review of Music Education in England, Monday 7 February 2011.

⁴ Introduction to the Department for Education's response to the Henley Review of Music Education in England, Monday 7 February 2011.

⁵ *Music Education in the 21st Century in the UK*, Professor Sue Hallam and Dr Andrea Creech, Institute of Education, 2010.

⁶ As examples of this research see: The importance of music to adolescents, North, Hargreaves and O'Neill, *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 10, 255–272 2000 or Arts Education in Secondary Schools: Effect and effectiveness, Harland, Kinder, Lord, Stott, Schagen and Haynes, NFER, ACE and RSA, 2000 or The effect of a music intervention on the temporal organisation of reading skills, M Long, Unpublished PhD dissertation, Institution of Education, University of London, 2007.

⁷ Henley Review of Music Education in England, Monday 7 February 2011.

⁸ What do Graduates Do? Higher Education Careers Services Unit (HECSU) and the Education Liaison Task Group of the Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services (AGCAS), 2010.

⁹ Professor Sue Hallam, Institute of Education, Inaugural meeting of the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Music Education, Wednesday 2 March 2011.

¹⁰ *Music*, Website, Department for Culture, Media and Sport.

¹¹ *Concern that English Baccalaureate overlooks arts subjects*, Institute of Education, Tuesday 18 January 2011.

¹² Michael Gove, Secretary of State for Education, Andrew Marr Show, BBC News, September 2010.

¹³ *Book VII, Republic*, Plato.

22 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by The Stockport Secondary Headteachers Consortium

The GCSE results of Stockport students in 2010 were rightly celebrated as the “best ever”. This public judgement was based largely on achievement as measured by the well established key headline figure of the % of students who achieved high grades.

(C or higher) at GCSE in five or more subjects including English Language and Mathematics. That figure was 62 % across the borough. This was well above the national average (53%) and put Stockport in the top three boroughs in terms of achievement across Greater Manchester. Headteachers were particularly proud of this achievement as students who reached this standard mostly did so through being successful in long standing academic subjects chosen by the students themselves as well as in the core subjects of English and Mathematics and each school's specialist subjects. Only a minority of Stockport students achieved this standard by including “non GCSE” courses (OCR, BTEC etc.) in their totals.

The Coalition Government's Minister for Education has now brought in a new measure by which schools can be ranked known as The English Baccalaureate. It assesses for each school the % of students who have gained C+ grades in the following subjects at GCSE:

English Language.

Mathematics.

Two Sciences (not counting applied science GCSE or BTEC Science).

A foreign Language (including Latin).

History or Geography (but not other traditional subjects such as R.E.)

We are dismayed that the government has chosen, without consultation to judge schools publicly and retrospectively against criteria for which we have had no preparation. This is not the usual method of bringing in a new policy and then giving schools time to work with it before using it as a measure.

The Department for Education has now put the % figures for all schools into the 2010 “league tables”. This came as a surprise. When the schools settled their curriculum for the 2010 examinations cohort in 2008 and when the students made their choices for GCSEs, no-one knew that this was to be a measure of judgement on the schools and our students.

Schools can put the baccalaureate in our plans for the future from 2011 for the exam cohort of 2013. However it is strange to find ourselves being judged on a measure that we did not know about when the key decisions and plans were made. Stockport schools already offer a strong academic curriculum as defined over time by governments and Ofsted. Every subject in the Baccalaureate is already offered in all our schools, though History, Geography and a foreign language are not compulsory. Headteachers are concerned that the new baccalaureate could well mean less choice for our best students and possibly an inappropriate prescription for others.

On the next page are details of the additional concerns we have about the way the new policy is developing:

We have concerns about some of the options chosen by students which seem to be excluded from the baccalaureate.

- Students who study three traditional sciences and/or two or more foreign languages may not qualify for the baccalaureate because they have not studied History or Geography at GCSE.
- We want to encourage more students to gain a foreign language qualification. However a significant proportion of students will not have the ability or perhaps even the commitment to gain C+ in a foreign language.
- Also, the judgement that a GCSE in History or Geography has a greater status than a GCSE in , for example, ICT, Design Technology, Engineering, Music, Art, Business or Drama or even RE is a matter for professional debate.

Finally the notion that students should be propelled towards some subjects rather than others (even though they have talents in these other areas) will not assist us to foster a “success culture” in schools. The present combination of core English and Mathematics and options chosen by students according to their talents and aspirations has been a major factor in building success over the years.

Schools in Stockport have for many years offered students all the subjects in the baccalaureate. What we have not done is to make all these subjects compulsory at the expense of others where they will be more successful. The minister is also championing courses in business and industry related subjects. We agree with him on this but we wonder if the effect of the baccalaureate could be that fewer Stockport students take these subjects in the future.

We hope that the minister is willing to take headteachers’ views on board as he develops the baccalaureate for 2011 and beyond. We understand the minister’s wish for measures based on rigour. We feel he could have done this by restricting the E-BAC to GCSE subjects but that the current definition is too narrow. BTECs etc have their place but could be part of a more wide ranging measure than the E-BAC.

22 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by the School of Education, Birmingham City University

1. THE PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE E-BAC AND ITS VALUE AS A MEASURE OF PUPIL AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

1.1 To have applied an “English Baccalaureate” retrospectively as a measure of GCSE results for the academic year 2009–10 was to misappropriate the purpose of introducing such a tool. Moreover, it seriously undermined the significantly hard work over a sustained period of time by teachers, the accomplishments of young people and the support of their parents and carers. It was imposed without consultation and was an outrageous gesture that has weakened the international credibility of any subsequent development of an English Baccalaureate.

1.2 If the E-Bac is to be used as a measure of pupils and school performance, then it is unreasonable to impose it retrospectively, since what is measured is not the pupil or school performance but a random item for which neither pupils nor schools prepared.

1.3 The measurement of pupil and school performance should be based on what is taught and assessed. What is taught and assessed needs to reflect what is valued in education. There is a distinct danger of valuing what we can assess rather than assessing what we value. There is no value, purpose or benefit in attempting to apply a system of measuring performance unless it is part of a taught programme of study that is assessed and leads to an award.

1.4 An English Baccalaureate must be far more than an additional measure for school accountability.

1.5 An English Baccalaureate should be a carefully designed programme of study that addresses the needs of young people in the 21st century and: covers a broad and rich range of subject areas; embrace skills for international citizenship, employability and life-long independent learning; offer considerable student ownership and challenge; include balanced assessment methods such as performance, portfolios and products in addition to final examination, and have currency with employers and higher education institutions at home and abroad.

2. THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE E-BAC

2.1 The choice of subjects included in the current E-Bac is far too limited and limiting. Inevitably schools will tailor their curricula to whatever is reported in league tables, despite government claims otherwise; there is anecdotal evidence of this happening already. To limit young people’s education to five subjects is inadequate, reductionist and a retrograde step. The five subjects identified do not reflect current needs of, and aspirations for, education.

2.2 The wisdom of including modern and ancient languages in the E-Bac must be questioned. Whilst there is a need to change attitudes toward the leaning of languages in this country, it is unrealistic to seek to change this culture through a programme of enforcement. It is clear that the current shortage of language teachers will mean that, in the short to medium term, this goal will be unachievable. Clarification of the role of community languages is necessary.

2.3 What is the rationale for requiring history or geography to be included rather than other humanities subjects? Humanities might additionally include religious studies, politics, philosophy, psychology, sociology, business studies and more. To require either history or geography only denies choice and flexibility.

2.4 There are two serious omissions from the current choice of E-Bac subjects: arts and technology. The arts and creative industries currently form a major part of GB plc in terms of bringing funding into this country. To fail to include education in and for the arts and creative industries is to omit to deal with one of our major exports and revenue providers. Surely the subjects which form the arts and technology are vital to twenty first century education?

2.5 The relationship of Science, Technology, English and Mathematics (STEM subjects) to E-Bac seems to be at best functional and at worst to have excluded technology. In the light of para 2.4 above, the taught English Baccalaureate might follow a model similar to that of the International Baccalaureate and include assessment in English, mathematics, science and three other curriculum areas.

3. THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE E-BAC FOR PUPILS, SCHOOLS AND EMPLOYERS

3.1 The current proposals for the E-Bac are far too constraining for pupils; they do not measure or value the breadth of pupils' ability, progress or attainment. They offer neither breadth nor balance, which the Secretary of State tells us he wishes to support. Pupils will be forced into a very narrow range of subjects which significantly undermine individuality, personalisation and creativity. The proposals deny growth, challenge, employability and the wider purposes of education. Pupils should be partners in their own education. By shoehorning them into a predetermined mould, where subjects rather than skills values and attitudes are assessed, we are likely to train, rather than educate, a generation of pupils unable to think for themselves and become independent learners.

3.2 As indicated above, head teachers and school managers are already changing the curriculum in an attempt to satisfy the current E-Bac proposal. For example in one West Midlands school, where Bengali is a community language, it may in future not be taught in order to conform to what the Head and Governors see as the requirements of the E-Bac. This reduction in choice is being met with hostility and opposition from students and parents and is leading to resentment and demotivation, neither of which will assist in the raising of standards.

3.3 A further consequence of the proposed E-Bac is that schools will no longer be able to cater for particular local needs. For example, in construction, engineering and motor mechanics, if these are represented locally and with whom the school has positive connections and a good record of school leavers gaining employment. What else will schools be able to offer, really? There will be little variation in what students have to offer to employers, besides pass grades in a limited number of subjects?

3.4 How will schools with specialist status use their specialism in future: in particular those schools whose specialism is not one of the E-Bac areas Performing Arts, Enterprise or Technology? This expertise will be lost.

3.5 The E-Bac, as currently proposed, will be little more than packaging for a student's 5 A*-C grade GCSE passes. This will be of little consequence to employers.

3.6 A new Baccalaureate needs to follow the principles mentioned in the better baccalaureate website <http://abetterbaccalaureate.org/> see below.

- A breadth of rich, well-rounded and coherent pathways of learning for young people.
- Elements recognising skills for employability, civic participation and independent learning.
- Greater student engagement and ownership.
- Flexibility to offer a challenge for all students.
- Balanced assessment including performance, portfolios and products in addition to exams.
- Multiple accreditation routes.
- Currency with employers and higher education institutions beyond school accountability.

4. INTERNATIONAL COMPARATORS FOR THE E-BAC

4.1 The OECD has described high performing countries in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). However, only students' abilities in reading, mathematics and science are reported. In the light of this, it is difficult to see the justification for languages and history or geography in the current E-Bac proposal. Arguably, what is more important is pedagogy and subject content if the intention is to improve the rating of education in comparison to other countries.

4.2 It is simplistic to assume that international comparisons of education can be made on attainment alone; this denies the countries' views of education in terms of its purposes, importance, values, content, resourcing and culture, amongst many other aspects.

4.3 In the UK we are one of very few countries which assesses students at age 16 and where the school leaving age has been 16 for such a long time. The introduction of a school leaving examination or Baccalaureate at age 18 which could incorporate a range of pathways and subjects, would make international comparisons much easier and would be comparable with the International Baccalaureate, Abitur (Ger), Baccalaureate (Fr), European Baccalaureate (European Schools) and others.

22 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Democratic Life

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Democratic Life believes that Citizenship Studies, with its requirement for active citizenship, is an essential inclusion in any broad and balanced measure of student attainment. The EBacc is narrowly defined, exclusive and prescriptive. It fails as a national measure of what we value in the education of our children. This is of concern to our coalition of supporters.

2. ABOUT DEMOCRATIC LIFE

2.1 Democratic Life (www.democraticlife.org.uk) is a coalition of 34 organisations and over 500 committed individuals who have come together to champion citizenship education as the only curriculum subject that teaches young people about their rights and responsibilities as citizens and how young people can participate effectively in our democracy and society.

3. INTERNATIONAL COMPARATORS AND CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE EBACC

3.1 A “Baccalaureate” is respected for a philosophy of breadth and balance that values a well rounded education. Both the International Baccalaureate (IB) and the Welsh Baccalaureate (Welsh Bacc), have a requirement for civic/community action or active citizenship, which underpins the qualification and enables students to see themselves as active participants in a wider community.

3.2 The IB Diploma consists of six subjects (two languages, individuals and societies, experimental sciences, mathematics and computer sciences and the arts) and three core requirements. The three core requirements are an extended essay, theory of knowledge and creativity, action and service (CAS), with the “service” component of CAS being a volunteering placement. These core requirements are intended to “broaden the educational experience and challenge students to apply their knowledge and understanding” and CAS is considered by the IB to be “at the heart of the Diploma programme”.⁴⁹

3.3 The Welsh Bacc, which was launched in 2003, is similar to the IB in aspiring to a breadth and balance between skills and subject knowledge and consists of a core and options. The core is made up of: key skills; Wales, Europe and the World; work-related education; personal and social education (PSE); and an individual investigation. Options comprise courses and programmes currently offered at GCSE, Vocational GCSE, AS/A levels and Vocational Qualifications (NVQ, BTEC).⁵⁰ The combination of a core and options means the Welsh approach offers different levels of achievement, breadth and student choice.

3.4 The PSE core component of the Welsh Bacc consists of five elements: positive relationships; health and emotional well-being; active citizenship; sustainable development and global citizenship; and activity in a local community. This fifth element requires that candidates spend 15 hours on activity in their community at the Foundation and Intermediate levels and 30 hours at Advanced level.⁵¹

3.5 Citizenship education is an internationally recognised and respected subject. The recent IEA International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS) shows that 20 out of 38 countries surveyed include a specific subject for civic or citizenship education in their national curricula. Finland, the country who tops the international comparison tables for reading and science in PISA 2009, also had the highest country civic knowledge scores (along with Denmark). England was 13th in the ICCS civic knowledge country scores (behind Finland, Denmark, Korea, Sweden, Ireland and Italy).⁵²

3.6 The EBacc in its current form fails to recognise the breadth and balance that define both the IB and the Welsh Bacc. Incorporating the GCSE Citizenship Studies, which includes an active citizenship project, would

⁴⁹ International Baccalaureate. Diploma Programme curriculum—core requirements. Available: <http://www.ibo.org/diploma/curriculum/core/>. Last accessed 25 Feb 2011.

⁵⁰ Welsh Baccalaureate. The Qualification. Available at: <http://www.wbq.org.uk/about-us>. Last accessed 25 Feb 2011.

⁵¹ Welsh Baccalaureate. Personal and Social Education (PSE). Available at: <http://www.wbq.org.uk/about-us/personal-and-social-education-pse>. Last accessed 25 Feb 2011.

⁵² Department for Education. *Young People's Civic Attitudes and Practices: England's Outcomes from the IEA International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS)*. Available at: <http://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/DFE-RR060.pdf>. Last accessed 3 March 2011.

ensure the EBacc recognises attainment in important political, legal and economic knowledge and values an education that promotes positive and democratic participation in society. It will furthermore signal a commitment to increasing civic knowledge amongst young people, which must surely be an aspiration following England's performance in the ICCS.

4. IMPLICATIONS OF THE EBACC FOR PUPILS AND SCHOOLS

4.1 Democratic Life would like to raise the following points regarding the implications of the EBacc for pupils and schools:

- We feel that introducing the EBacc retrospectively was an unfair decision, especially as the Department for Education did not first consult with the teaching profession, parents and other stakeholders;
- The use of the term “Baccalaureate” can lead to confusion about the EBacc. “Baccalaureate” is more usually associated with qualifications, but the EBacc is not a qualification or qualification “wrapper”—it is being used by government as an additional measure of attainment;
- The new EBacc measure is potentially exclusive as it only recognises a small range of subjects at GCSE—particularly in the “Humanities” category, which should include other social sciences, including Citizenship Studies—and therefore does not acknowledge children's achievement in other rigorous qualification subjects. This could have a number of consequences: a hierarchy of subjects with some valued more than others; the curriculum in Key Stage 3 being narrowed to focus on attainment in EBacc subjects; and many children feeling excluded or devalued if they don't achieve the EBacc even though they do achieve in other subjects and equivalent qualifications.
- The EBacc as a measurement of performance for annual league tables is unfair to students and schools. Qualifications may be taken over a period of years. It is not clear how the EBacc measure accommodates students who for a range of reasons, take qualifications early or late and do not take the subjects required in the same year.
- Finally, the announcement of the EBacc before launching, let alone concluding, the National Curriculum review presents questions about the relationship between the two and whether the National Curriculum review's outcomes will be prejudiced by the Government's preferences for the subjects in the EBacc. It is essential that the Government makes clear that the EBacc will be reviewed once the National Curriculum review has concluded in order to ensure that the two compliment one another.

22 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Girls' Day School Trust

ABOUT US

1. The GDST is the UK's leading network of independent girls' schools, with nearly 4,000 staff, and 20,000 students between the ages of three and 18. As a charity that owns and runs a network of 24 schools and two Academies in England and Wales, we reinvest all our income in our schools. Founded in 1872, the GDST has a long history of pioneering innovation in the education of girls.

2. GDST schools encourage a breadth of learning, through intellectual engagement across contrasting subjects, to GCSE. Having achieved high standards in a broad and balanced portfolio of subjects, we take the view that our students have earned the right to specialise in the Sixth Form and beyond.

3. There is currently a range of curriculum policies at GCSE in GDST schools, which nevertheless reflects the importance attached to humanities as part of a balanced curriculum. Some schools make the choice of either History or Geography compulsory, thus fitting a priori the criteria for the English Baccalaureate. Most, however, require the choice of a humanities subject, but allow Religious Studies (and in some cases other subjects, such as Economics) to be substituted for History or Geography.

4. Our schools' common ground is in making it clear that humanities subjects are valued, that the study of at least one (challenging) humanities subject is generally required (except in special circumstances), and that History or Geography are recommended.

Broad and balanced?

5. Insofar as the English Baccalaureate reflects Government recognition of the importance of a broad and balanced senior school education, measured through rigorous examinations in academically challenging subjects, and including humanities and languages as well as in other core curriculum areas, the Department for Education's initiative reflects the curriculum philosophy in GDST schools.

6. The issue is therefore not with the philosophy, but with the precise specification of subjects required by the English Baccalaureate. In most areas, these do not present a problem, either in principle or in practice. The requirement that a student continues to study science, in a volume equivalent to two GCSE subjects, and the

need to continue with a foreign language, both fit well with GDST curriculum values, and the GDST's definition of a broad and balanced curriculum at Key Stage 4.

7. The issue lies in the arbitrary specification of the components, specifically the humanities component, which currently excludes Religious Studies (RS).

8. For this year's tables, there were also similar concerns about the inclusion of only those IGCSEs that happened to have completed the accreditation process (so, for instance Cambridge IGCSE French was included, but not German; and no Edexcel iGCSEs at all).

HUMANITIES COMPONENT

9. There is some educational basis to the insistence on coverage of History and Geography to 16, and some sense in the argument that RS is already part of the National Curriculum at Key Stage 4—so that requiring it in the EBacc would add little to breadth.

10. However, the value of this line of reasoning is undermined by:

- 10.1 the inclusion of Ancient History in the humanities group: this compromises (and dilutes) the argument for the primacy of Geography and History;
- 10.2 the fact that in reality RS, in its manifestation as a National Curriculum component (as a statutory subject with non-statutory content!), is not delivered as an academic subject with a timetable allocation equal to GCSE subjects; therefore there is very little overlap or duplication between RS as a curriculum subject and RS GCSE; and
- 10.3 a conflation of curriculum coverage and entry for a particular qualification. In principle it would be possible to offer core humanities content within a curriculum without the requirement to sit GCSE.

11. Given that Ancient History is included, and that History and Geography are themselves regarded as alternatives, the issue cannot be one of curriculum content at Key Stage 4. It can only be one of ensuring the inclusion of at least one vehicle for developing that set of skills associated with humanities disciplines. If the latter objective is achievable through other means—such as Religious Studies—then there can be no educational reason for not including it as an alternative subject. There is no evidence that GCSE RS is any less demanding than GCSE History or Geography, or even Ancient History.

12. As far as generic skills and dispositions are concerned, if pupils are not going to be allowed to substitute RS as the humanities subject post-14, the onus should be on the Department for Education to demonstrate that the course fails to develop the same set of skills and dispositions as the “core” humanities.

ELEMENT OF HASTE

13. Ther nis no werkman, whatsoever he be,

That may bothe werke wel and hastily.

Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Canterbury Tales*, “The Merchant’s Tale”.

14. Like the workman in Chaucer, the speed of implementing the EBacc has, to an extent, undermined its credibility, with the retrospective application of new criteria on a curriculum that is already in place. Clearly, decisions on which subjects are included will influence curriculum choices in future, but they have no effect on the cohort measured last year. Policy-makers need to be aware that changing exams and schools’ performance measures can have undue, unintended and unfortunate implications for teaching and learning.

15. By contrast, relatively high-performing national education systems, such as those of Singapore and Finland, tend to deliberate extensively and consult widely before introducing fundamental changes in teaching, learning, and attainment.

16. As a result of hasty implementation, the figures produced will not convey what they are intended to convey, at least in the first two years. Low proportions of students achieving the EBacc might easily reflect not the breadth or standard of achievement, but the failure to meet arbitrary and evanescent criteria. After two years, the data will begin to more nearly approach the Department for Education’s intentions, but this will be as a result of schools amending their curriculum policy.

SCHOOL LEAVING AGE

17. More broadly, we are uneasy about increasing the influence of tests at 16, when the statutory school leaving age will soon increase to 18. GCSE exams dominate education in the middle school years—increasingly so with the introduction of controlled assessment, about which the GDST has already expressed concerns.

18. The term “Baccalaureate” is presumably intended to convey the sense of breadth in a student’s achievement, and this is laudable. It’s perfectly logical, too, to insist on evidence of that breadth at 16, leaving two years for specialisation at school. But the use of the term “Baccalaureate” is itself problematical. Everywhere else in the world, the term denotes the school-leaving qualification, so the EBacc sits uneasily at a standard somewhere below that of other national baccalaureates. Surely this wasn’t intended.

RECOMMENDATION

19. The GDST would recommend that the humanities group be expanded to include Religious Studies, and possibly a limited number of other subjects that seek to develop comparable skills and dispositions.

20. Using GCSE exams to reinforce curriculum breadth as well as rigour pre-supposes that there is consensus on the value of GCSE as currently constituted. The GDST would support the introduction of a less intrusive (though no less rigorous) testing regime at 16; one that supports and reinforces rather than (as at present, to some extent) gets in the way of deep learning and progression.

Thank you again for the opportunity to contribute to this important discussion. We look forward to seeing the outcome of the Select Committee's deliberations.

22 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Cornwall Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE)

THE PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE E-BAC AND ITS VALUE AS A MEASURE OF PUPIL AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

1.1 Cornwall SACRE recognises the importance of having sound educational measures which clearly indicate the attainment of pupils and their schools. In terms of pupils such measures should give to them, institutes of further and higher education and employers a clear picture of attainment by a certain age. In terms of schools such measures should give parents, governors, local authorities, Ofsted and the Government a clear indicator of how well a school is doing for its pupils in relation to other schools both locally and nationally. Cornwall SACRE publishes local results in the context of national indicators for GCSE and A Level every year in Religious Studies as part of its Annual Report and in a technical report as a sign of its commitment to raising standards in religious studies and to public accountability.

1.2 There is a strong belief in government that transparency will help parents to make a choice about the school that is best for their child. The presumption that there is choice appears to be linked to the belief that there is a market place in which parents can exercise such a choice. Whilst this would be true in our only city and some of our larger towns it would not be true for families living in largely rural areas or in a town with only one secondary school. The idea that league tables are universally useful does not resonate with the experience of people in Cornwall. Even where parents can make a choice the number of measures available appears bewildering. In its most recent publication of school performance data the Department for Education sets out 12 measures of attainment per school, see <http://www.education.gov.uk/performance/tables/schools/10.shtml>. How does a parent work out the relative value of each measure that is available to them from the information presented? Cornwall SACRE concurs with the findings of the research funded last year by the Economic and Social Research Council (See: *Britain in 2011* page 25, ESRC) published by Bristol University (www.bristol.ac.uk/cmpo/publications/other/league/tables.pdf) which clearly shows that performance tables are misleading for parents, especially in terms of how a school performs in the future.

1.3 School league tables clearly have an impact on schools and it is well known that schools themselves respond creatively to the lenses through which they will be observed. This is clear from the research which compares schools in England and Wales after the league tables in Wales were abolished; see: www.bristol.ac.uk/cmpo/publications/other/competition.pdf. The Government needs to be clear on what it wants league tables to achieve.

1.4 The intention of the E-Bac as set out in the White Paper, *The Importance of Teaching*, is to be able to measure the academic performance of schools and their pupils. SACRE noted that as an Authority Cornwall was 5% lower in terms of E-Bac than the national average (10.1% compared to 15.1%) but why this is the case is not immediately clear from the data produced by the Department. What is also not clear is why the Department chose certain subjects to be regarded as academic and others not, indeed the choice appears to be based more on the idiosyncrasies of ministers than on evidence. Surely, what makes a subject academically rigorous is how it is taught and examined. Why Music or Religious Studies are not considered academic when English, History and Geography are is not at all clear. If the E-Bac is there to ensure breadth of academic attainment, which is not unreasonable in itself, what matters is less the choice of subjects and more the academic rigour with which they are approached.

1.5 Cornwall SACRE noted sometime ago that there were issues regarding the grades given by different boards and formally asked the QCA to look into this matter. At a recent consultation with secondary schools, where two thirds of Cornwall's maintained secondary schools were represented—including one state sponsored new academy, a discussion took place about the academic credibility of Religious Studies GCSE and A Level relative to different boards and how departments were being encouraged to look for examination boards where they were more likely to get higher grades. If the intention of the E-Bac is to ensure an academically rigorous and broad curriculum for those capable then the Department needs to give serious consideration to the academic nature of GCSE courses and their examinations. It should even consider having a single awarding body so that standards are transparent across all subjects.

THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE E-BAC

2.1 As noted in 1.4 above it is not clear why some subjects were to be included in the E-Bac and others not. In terms of breadth it would seem reasonable that the E-Bac includes English, Mathematics and Sciences. It is also reasonable to include a modern foreign or classical language. Similarly, the White Paper (Paragraph 4.21) makes a case for the inclusion of a Humanities subject “such as history or geography”, although this does not appear to be based on any evidence in *The Case for Change* document (DfE 2010) published to support the White Paper. The positive act of choosing only History and Geography as humanities in the published league tables, though, seems a step beyond the White Paper itself and has had an impact on schools in ways unintended.

2.2 Traditionally, within schools, RE has been situated within the Humanities and SACRE sees no reason why this should not continue to be the case, indeed Cornwall SACRE wrote to the Secretary of State about this issue in December but, as yet, has received no reply to its suggestion. It is also not clear why Art or Music are not included in the Humanities “family” given their importance to cultural education and the development pupils as educationally rounded. As stated in paragraph 2.1 the White Paper gives examples of History and Geography as Humanities but uses only them in its measure of school performance in the E-Bac published by the Department. It would appear that the Department has already pre-judged the situation without adequate consultation or thought.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE E-BAC FOR PUPILS, SCHOOLS AND EMPLOYERS

3.1 At one school in Cornwall pupils are already being selected on the basis of E-Bac and their GCSE options are being shaped by that measure. Whilst the White Paper in paragraph 4.24 states that the E-Bac will be only one measure of a school's performance it is clear that it will increasingly shape the offer that schools make to pupils that they identify as capable of attaining good grades in this “basket” of subjects. To imagine that schools will see this as simply one measure is naive on the part of the Department. In the school mentioned as a result of the school wanting to improve its E-Bac performance it plans to have no religious education in Year 10 for any pupil, despite this being a requirement of the locally agreed syllabus.

3.2 In the consultation with schools noted in paragraph 1.5, above, all but one school noted the impact that the E-Bac measure was having on religious education and that the value of religious education as a subject area and Religious Studies as a GCSE was being undermined. Last year 4,705 candidates sat a GCSE Religious Studies examination in Cornwall's maintained secondary schools. Heads of RE were not confident that this situation could be maintained as the pressure to respond to the E-Bac measure was thought to be greater than meeting the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. No doubt this is one of the unintended consequences of the Department's actions but it is no less profound for that. Hence, the Government's drive to have a broader curriculum measure may have the consequence of narrowing a pupil's entitlement not ensuring its actual breadth at all.

INTERNATIONAL COMPARATORS FOR THE E-BAC

4.1 The difficulty of international comparisons is that they are often not comparing like with like. The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) first done in 2000 has exemplified some of the problems. The PISA 2009 Assessment Framework only covers Reading, Mathematics and Science and only in the latter does it attempt to cover knowledge, as opposed to key competencies. Such an assessment is small in terms of scope when compared with the E-Bac. For a broader comparison government would need to look beyond assessment frameworks produced by the OECD and compare curricular outcomes against similar systems, such as the *Teastas Soisearach* in Ireland or the Standard Grade in Scotland.

4.2 A similar exercise as part of the Bologna Process in relation to higher education has shown that even trying to arrive at a common understanding of standards at tertiary level has been particularly difficult (<http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hoqeronderwijs/boloqna/>) so why would anyone think that it was going to be any easier in terms of secondary education?

4.3 What all international comparisons find difficult is to factor in culture into their measures and what the cultural factors are that make some systems appear to out perform others. This has been the case since the 19th century when comparisons become more and more regularly made across Europe and between continents (see: *Comparative and International Education: An introduction to theory, method and practice* by David Phillips and Michele Schweisfurth—Continuum).

4.4 In the end government needs to ask itself what it would consider to be a good education for young people living in England. If the E-Bac enables pupils to gain access to Higher Education and reduces the gap between the poorest and the most privileged young people in our society, enabling them to have access to study and employment both nationally and internationally, it will have done its job. Trying to see how the E-Bac compares with other systems internationally will be a difficult task because any research model would need to take into account its impact on English education in relation to the impact of specific matriculation modes on other systems. Where we are not comparing like with like we need to be very careful about our conclusions. What Phillips and Schwiesfurth have pointed out is that simply trying to introduce a good idea or model from one system into another does not insure its success in a new context and the danger with crass comparisons is that they have a simplistic view of the relationship between cause and effect.

CONCLUSION

5.1 Cornwall SACRE is not against the idea of the E-Bac per se. It has, though, concerns about its impact on pupils' entitlement to a broad and balanced education and its impact on religious education. SACRE can see no reason why the E-Bac does not allow pupils and schools to count GCSE Religious Studies as part of that measure and believes that it will help RE departments in schools to continue the excellent work they are doing. The alternative is that RE is allowed to wither on the vine as it will have no clear place within the accreditation system and it will become increasingly devalued by schools, especially for their most able pupils.

5.2 SACRE, as noted in paragraph 2.2, has written to the Secretary of State to ask that Religious Studies GCSE be included in the E-Bac measurement for schools. SACRE is awaiting the response of the Secretary of State with interest.

22 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by National Association of Music Educators (NAME)

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This memorandum recommends that the proposed subjects included in the E-Bacc should be expanded so that it includes a cluster of subjects described as "Arts and Humanities", arguing that without this, the E-Bacc will fail to promote the Government's aspiration that schools should offer a broad range of academic subjects to age 16. It draws a historical parallel with the narrowing of the curriculum that was associated with the School Certificate before it was replaced with the General Certificate of Education. It considers how the greater flexibility of the English education system compared with European models requires a less rigid grouping of subjects. It considers the nature of the Arts and Humanities as disciplines, along with the role of creativity in the curriculum. It examines the impact on the school curriculum of excluding the Arts from the E-Bacc, presenting evidence to suggest that this will significantly reduce opportunities for studying music.

2. INTRODUCTION TO NAME

2.1 NAME (the National Association of Music Educators) is the largest subject association representing individuals involved in music education. Its members work in a wide range of capacities across the sector. They include classroom teachers in primary and secondary schools, instrumental and vocal teachers, music advisers, music service managers, lecturers in Initial Teacher Training and community musicians.

3. EVIDENCE

3.1 In defining achievement at secondary school in terms of a specific group of subjects, the E-Bacc is reintroducing a method of measuring school and pupil performance that was last found in English schools in the form of the School Certificate. This was abandoned in 1951 and examinations in separate subjects introduced because of the narrowing effect the School Certificate had on the curriculum. (Compare this with the stated purpose of the E-Bacc, to recognise "those students, and schools, who succeed in achieving real breadth." DfE 2010a, para 4.20)

3.1.1 The School Certificate was introduced in 1917, to be sat by pupils who had experienced five years of secondary education. It was a five-subject examination, with subjects chosen from three groups (English, mathematics and science) in addition to a foreign language. In 1923, in response to criticism, a further group of subjects was introduced that included music and art. (Gordon 2002) The purpose for introducing it was to regulate the number of examinations and the age at which they were taken, reducing the pressures of external examinations that had multiplied since the extension of secondary education by the Education Act of 1902 (Barnard 1963).

3.1.2 The Spens Report of 1938 recommended a move to separate, subject-based examinations; but the War intervened. It was the Norwood Report of 1943 that argued successfully for the grouping of subjects in the School Certificate to be replaced by subject examinations to be chosen by pupils and recorded on the General Certificate of Education (Pitts 2000).

3.1.3 The fundamental reason for changing to separate subjects was the effect that the School Certificate had in narrowing the curriculum:

At present the examination dictates the curriculum and cannot do otherwise... Pupils assess education in terms of success in the examination; they minimise the importance of the non-examinable and assign a utilitarian value to what they study... Teachers, recognising the importance of the parchment to the individual child, are constrained to direct their teaching to an examination which can test only a narrow field of the pupil's interest and capacities, and so necessarily neglect the qualities which they value most highly; they are forced to attend to what can be examined and to spoon-feed their weakest pupils. Originality is replaced by uniformity; the mind of the examiner. (Norwood 1943, p 31)

3.1.4 Narrowing of the curriculum occurred for two reasons. First, the subjects within the School Certificate were considered to be more important than those that weren't. They were therefore allocated more time and resources. Second, the curriculum within these subjects became narrowly focussed on the

requirements of the examinations. This reflected the fact that gaining the School Certificate required passing all the subjects within it. The high stakes associated with failing any one of the subjects resulted in teaching to the test.

- 3.1.5 It is significant that this narrowing of the curriculum occurred despite the best of intentions. When setting up the School Certificate in 1917, the Board of Education saw it merely as a means of testing rather than as a model for the curriculum. A number of circulars stated that “the cardinal principle is that examinations should follow the curriculum and not determine it” (Gordon 2002 p 191). Yet it was precisely the way in which the narrow range of subjects came to determine the curriculum that led to the introduction of separate subjects.

3.2 As a grouped award, requiring the successful completion of several subjects, the E-Bacc (like the School Certificate) is more in keeping with the European mainstream, indeed the global mainstream, of school leaving certificates than the system of individual subjects with which we have become familiar. Indeed, the Schools White Paper makes this connection directly (paragraph 4.21). However, the comparison is flawed for two reasons: the European models apply to a stage of education that is equivalent to our A levels, and they exist within a system of school that generally divides children between academic and non-academic routes.

- 3.2.1 Almost all the European qualifications that might be compared with the E-Bacc—the French *Baccalauréat*, the German *Abitur*, the Finnish *ylöoppilastutkinto*, the Austrian *Reifeprüfung*, the Italian *Marurita*, and others—are associated with matriculation for university and are taken at around age 18. Although the school leaving age in England is (currently) 16 and the E-Bacc is therefore (currently) a school-leaving qualification, it is not comparable with the European model. The legitimate qualification with which to make comparisons between English and European systems is the A level, not GCSE. Whereas the proposed five subjects might represent a broad education at 18 in comparison with the expectation of 3 A levels in England, a focus on five subjects represents a narrowing at age 16.
- 3.2.2 The rules governing the choice and combination of subjects vary from country to country. However, many recognise the diversity of students’ interests and strengths. For example, the *Baccalauréat* caters for three streams, one of which (the *série littéraire*) embraces the arts; the Italian *Marurita* provides different streams (including the arts) corresponding to different branches of upper secondary education; the German *Abitur* permits specialisation in either languages or sciences. Again, all of these are comparable with A level courses, where a greater degree of specialisation might be expected. Yet, they offer a greater recognition of the differences between individuals and a greater breadth of education than the current proposals for the E-Bacc.
- 3.2.3 The European models of grouped subjects apply to a less diverse group of pupils than the proposed E-Bacc because students take more specialist routes through secondary education. Most state schools in England are required to meet the needs of students who have a wide range of interests and abilities. In France and Italy the specialisation in *Baccalauréat* and *Marurita* will reflect the specialisation of the school and in Germany only pupils at the Gymnasium would take the *Abitur*. In England all pupils will, in effect, take the E-Bacc. Unless the range of subjects acknowledged by the E-Bacc is broadened, there will therefore be a significant mismatch between the qualification and the range of pupils taking it, when compared with other European countries.
- 3.2.4 The Schools White Paper specifically mentions the Netherlands, observing that despite the divide between academic and vocational routes, “all young people are expected, whatever their ultimate destiny, to study a wide range of traditional subjects.” (paragraph 4.21). The component that is obligatory and common to the four sectors of the VMBO diploma that is being referred to comprises the subjects: Dutch, English, Social Studies, Physical Education and Fine Arts. Whilst the requirement for all pupils to study the Fine Arts demonstrates the importance attached to artistic thinking, the absence of mathematics and science reflects the way in which the four sectors of secondary education in the Netherlands differ fundamentally from the English system.
- 3.2.5 In his paper, *Could do better: Using international comparisons to refine the National Curriculum in England*, Tim Oates observes the dangers of borrowing policies from other countries without taking into account the cultures and contexts those policies inhabit. Whilst there are, no doubt, elements of a grouped-subject approach to assessment that can usefully be transferred to the English system, the two-stage testing (at 16 and 18) and the flexibility of the English school—that acknowledges pupil diversity without the bureaucracy of separate institutions or pathways—represent significant departures from other European models. In order to reap the benefits of the E-Bacc, it will be necessary to ensure that it does not conflict with this flexible system by introducing undue constraint in the breadth of subjects.

3.3 By excluding Arts subjects, including music, the E-Bacc presents a very limited view both of the Arts and of the Humanities. The proposed collection of subjects results in a very narrow curriculum, both in terms of content and in terms of the disciplines of study.

- 3.3.1 The humanities comprise “Learning and literature concerned with human culture” (Oxford English Dictionary). The European Science Foundation describes humanities research as exploring “the origins and products of the human capacity for creativity and communication.” The proposed content of the E-Bacc recognises just History and Geography GCSEs as Humanities (DfE 2010b). On the one hand,

this recognises the value of choice: history and geography are two different ways of engaging with human culture that focus on different aspects of humanity, require different skills and reflect different interests among pupils. Whilst allowing these differences in principle, however, this choice presents only a very narrow perspective on human culture. Without that subset of the Humanities known as the Arts, pupils will lack a dimension in their understanding of how humans have responded to and manipulated their environment.

- 3.3.2 This exclusion of the Arts from the Humanities is itself symptomatic of a limited conception of what is involved in learning the Arts. Whilst describing the E-Bacc subjects as “traditional subject disciplines” (DfE 2010a, paragraph 4.27), the Schools White Paper characterises music, theatre, and the visual and plastic arts as “cultural experiences” (*ibid*, paragraph 4.31). This conception of culture as a supplement to the core business of learning is inadequate for three reasons. First, it suggests that cultural experiences are immediate and instinctive, without recognising the role that cultural knowledge and understanding of the medium plays in responding to the Arts. Second, it fails to recognise the extent of the disciplined learning that is required to excel in the arts, and the role that this first-hand experience plays in contributing to artistic understanding. Third, it does not acknowledge that the arts are themselves traditional disciplines. Music, for example, was recognised by Plato as an essential element of education, a view that has informed the development of school and university systems.
- 3.3.3 Implicit in the Government’s limited view of the Arts as “cultural experiences” is an assumption that they are essentially practical, vocational subjects. This is most apparent in relation to music, where the focus in the Schools White Paper, as in the terms of reference for the Henley Review of Music Education, was on learning to play an instrument (paragraph 4.31). Whilst performance and composition each contribute about 30% to a GCSE in Music, approximately 40% of the marks derive from study of a wide range of musical traditions from different cultures and different times in history. As well as being a practical subject, Music therefore engages pupils academically not just through the acquisition of knowledge about a range of styles, but in requiring them to think in sound.
- 3.3.4 Creative thinking is valued in all the subjects in the E-Bacc. Indeed, it is the most valued mode of thinking, demonstrating a pupil’s ability not just to recall knowledge but to synthesise new ideas (Anderson & Krathwohl 2001). In the Arts, creativity is the principal mode of thinking. By excluding the Arts, the proposed E-Bacc undermines the potential of these subjects for supporting the development of creative thinking in pupils and fails to recognise the form of thinking that is itself most valued by other traditional academic disciplines.

3.4 The consequences of excluding the Arts subjects from the E-Bacc will be that headteachers, teachers, parents and pupils attach less importance to them and they will disappear from the curriculum. This is contrary to the Government’s wishes as expressed in the Schools White Paper (for example paragraph 4.2), which envisages that the E-Bacc subjects will sit within a broader curriculum that schools are free to determine.

- 3.4.1 Pupils and schools will be under pressure to prioritise subjects that are recognised by the E-Bacc. This is the intention of the Government (Schools White Paper paragraph 4.23). Not only will it be important for schools to be seen to do well in published statistics, but it will be important for individual students to achieve a qualification that will gain public recognition.
- 3.4.2 As a result of this pressure, schools will change their curriculum to encourage students to take the subjects in the E-Bacc. Again, this is the stated expectation of the government (DfE 2010b). Although the E-Bacc does not stipulate a curriculum, and has been introduced independently of the National Curriculum Review, its effect will nevertheless be to influence headteachers in the curriculum choices they make (as was the case with the School Certificate).
- 3.4.3 Given limited time on the timetable, changes that favour subjects in the E-Bacc will have an adverse effect on subjects that aren’t included. This is reflected in a survey carried out by NAME. As early as January 2011 60% of the 95 music teachers who responded indicated that their schools had already taken action that would reduce the uptake of the music GCSE in September 2011. In some cases, this involved reducing the number of subjects that pupils could choose to two; in others, it involved putting music in option blocks against E-Bacc subjects, so that pupils had to choose between them. Several teachers had already been told by their heads that if insufficient pupils opted for the subject, it would not run. Others were finding that more able students who might have chosen music were opting for history, geography or a language.

4. RECOMMENDATION FOR ACTION

4.1 NAME recommends that the E-Bacc should be amended so that it includes a cluster of subjects described as “Arts and Humanities”, music being included amongst the Arts. This amendment would support the E-Bacc in promoting the government’s aspiration that schools should offer pupils a broad range of subjects to age 16 (DfE 2010b).

- 4.2.1 Recognising the Arts alongside the Humanities as part of a broad curriculum will reduce the scope for schools to narrow the curriculum that is on. Widening the pool of subjects that pupils take within one category will likewise reduce the tendency to teach to the test, because failure in one subject will not necessarily result in failure of the E-Bacc. (Thus a pupil may take History and Art and achieve

the E-Bacc if she or he gains a C in only one of them. This is preferable to introducing the Arts as a sixth category, which would raise the stakes of failure even further).

- 4.2.2 Recognising the Arts alongside the Humanities would adapt the grouped-subject approach of the baccalaureate to the English education system by reflecting the system's inherent flexibility. Greater choice of subject in this category would enable pupils with strengths in a wider variety of disciplines to achieve recognition through the E-Bacc. This would be in keeping with an education system that acknowledges that a pupil may be equally strong in Mathematics and Music (for example).
- 4.2.3 Recognising the Arts alongside the Humanities would acknowledge the Arts as a valid form of knowledge in the realm of human culture, promote excellence amongst those pupils for whom this is a preferred form of thinking and support the development of pupils' creativity across the curriculum.
- 4.2.4 Recognising the Arts alongside the Humanities would ensure that Arts subjects remain an option for all pupils within the curriculum. By contributing to public success for pupils and the school in the E-Bacc, Arts subjects would retain an importance for headteachers, teachers, parents and pupils not just at Key Stage 4 but throughout the secondary school.

REFERENCES

Anderson, L W, & Krathwohl, D R (Eds). (2001) *A taxonomy for learning, teaching and assessing: A revision of Bloom's Taxonomy of educational objectives: Complete edition*, New York: Longman.

Barnard, H C (1961) *A history of English Education* (2nd edition) London: University of London Press.

DfE (2010a) *The importance of teaching: Schools White Paper* London: Department for Education.

DfE (2010b) *Statement of intent 2010—Addendum (The English Baccalaureate)* London: Department for Education

Euroeducation (n.d.) Education systems in Europe Website:
<http://euroeducation.net/> (Accessed 25.2.11)

Gordon, P (2002) Curriculum in R. Aldrich (ed) *A Century of Education* London: Routledge Falmer. 185–205.

The Norwood Report (1943) *Report of the Committee of the Secondary School Examinations Council appointed by the President of the Board of Education in 1941* London: HM Stationery Office. Available online at <http://www.educationengland.org.uk/documents/norwood/norwood04.html> (Accessed 25.2.11)

NRP Netherlands (n.d.) National Reference Point, Netherlands. Website:
<http://www.nlntp.nl/current-educational-svstem.html> (Accessed 25.2.11)

Pitts, S (2000) *A Century of change in music education* Aldershot: Ashgate.

Wolf, A (2002) Qualifications and assessment in R Aldrich (ed) *A Century of Education* London: Routledge Falmer. 206–227.

22 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA)

SUMMARY

AQA's submission makes the following key points:

- we support the commitment to a more rounded educational experience, which the English Baccalaureate is intended to provide;
- we support the commitment to benchmark the English Baccalaureate against good practice internationally; and
- we would recommend monitoring of the English Baccalaureate to gather evidence about possible refinement and to identify any unintended consequences.

AQA RESPONSE

1. We welcome the Government's commitment in the White Paper to ensuring an entitlement to a broad and balanced education for pupils in our schools, and can see the English Baccalaureate (E-Bac) as a step towards the full realisation of that vision. We see potential strengths in the E-Bac and would welcome the opportunity to contribute to any refinement of it in the light of research evidence.

THE PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE E-BAC AND MONITORING ITS VALUE AS A MEASURE OF PUPIL AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

2. The purpose of the E-Bac, given in the White Paper, is "to facilitate a more rounded educational experience for all students". We fully support the concept of an essential core of learning for all students, accompanied by additional learning tailored to individual need, and believe this "additionality" is crucially important to

achieving a rounded educational experience. We would recommend monitoring of the E-Bac to provide reassurance that it is meeting Government aspirations for all students.

3. Stakeholders intending to use the E-Bac as a tool for particular purposes, such as, say, progression to further study and selection for higher education, should be encouraged to articulate those intentions and the rationale for them clearly, so that schools and students can make appropriate decisions.

INTERNATIONAL COMPARATORS FOR THE E-BAC

4. We are pleased to note the reference in the White Paper (paragraph 4.21) to the experience in countries where students who are following either the academic or vocational route are all expected to study a wide range of traditional subjects. We support this commitment to benchmark the E-Bac, and our curriculum, in appropriate ways to good practice internationally. AQA has expertise in the development of benchmarking and comparability methodologies and has offered advice to Ofqual to support its international comparisons work at A level. We would be pleased to extend our offer to cover the E-Bac.

5. At this point in the development of the E-Bac, it would be helpful to extend the early research into the curriculum and assessment arrangements in countries judged to share our commitment to “core and breadth” up to age 16. This further research could establish how those comparator systems ensure that the curriculum and its assessment are appropriate for the full range of students, whether they are following a primarily academic or vocational route, or a mixture of both. Such research would support consideration of the impact of metrics and any fine-tuning applied in order to meet Government aspirations.

THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE E-BAC

6. The concept of a broad and balanced curriculum at Key Stage 4, including a core of English, mathematics and science, is appreciated; to ensure stakeholder commitment, we may need to articulate a clear and evidence-based rationale for including a modern foreign language and one of the humanities. Equally, this could provide a helpful way of engaging with certain arguments that are being advanced for the inclusion of other subject groupings which have not been included in the “core”.

7. On the matter of foreign languages, whilst there is undoubtedly value for many students in studying these to GCSE, our experience of assessment in foreign languages suggests that for some students the study in a strictly academic context such as GCSE at age 14–16 is not most appropriate. Our research suggests that equally rigorous alternative models of language teaching and external assessment might be developed to ensure more students can take advantage of this important element of “core and breadth” and build national capability in languages over time.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE E-BAC FOR PUPILS, SCHOOLS AND EMPLOYERS

8. Whilst recognising the importance of speedy implementation, we need to give careful consideration, when making substantial changes, to the possible impact on schools and, in particular, on students who are currently making important subject choices for GCSE.

9. We would recommend that the E-Bac is monitored, to ensure that it meets aspirations optimally and any unintended consequences are addressed in a planned way. Evidence gained from systematic monitoring could usefully inform any refinement of the E-Bac.

10. AQA has research expertise in the area of assessment and the impact of assessment format on students’ experiences and therefore on their motivation and eventual performance in formal assessments. GCSE is a highly valued qualification and we would want to work with the Department for Education and Ofqual to support flexibility and innovation in qualification development, to ensure that the widest range of students who sit GCSE examinations are enabled to demonstrate what they know, understand and can do. To that end, we would recommend that awarding bodies are given the maximum defensible flexibility in qualification design, and would expect them to demonstrate with robust evidence that any alternative qualifications are equally rigorous.

11. It is notable here that current research evidence into the impact of the 14–19 reforms has indicated that students themselves very much value a broad and balanced general education. For that reason it might be helpful, in the refinement of the E-Bac, to seek the views of students themselves.

Written evidence submitted by West Sussex SACRE

1. West Sussex SACRE is in support of the aims of the E Bacc in encouraging a broad range of academic subjects to age 16. However the committee was extremely concerned about the potential impact of the proposed English Baccalaureate on GCSE and A level religious studies.

2. We are reassured that the statutory arrangements for religious education will remain the same but felt there are some important distinctions between statutory or core provision at Key Stage 4 and the option for students to take religious studies as a GCSE full course.

3. In West Sussex almost 4,000 students took a GCSE short course in RS in 2010, thus fulfilling the basic legal requirement for those students. While this is preferable to non-award bearing courses, it is important that students have the opportunity to undertake a programme equivalent to those available in other Humanities subjects that is both rigorous and academically recognised.

4. Around 1,300 students took a GCSE full course in RS in 2010. The GCSE full course is recognised as an academic subject requiring high standards of knowledge, understanding and evaluation of evidence and argument to achieve high grades. This means that substantial numbers of young people have been going out into society with vital knowledge and understanding for today's world. We understand that GCSE religious studies is a qualification that is approved in every English and Welsh university.

5. The GCSE full course in RS should be included in the list of Humanities subjects qualifying for the English Baccalaureate. The consequence of not including it as an option will be disastrous for many schools and students. There is already some evidence of the absence of RE from the English Baccalaureate Humanities list is already resulting in schools removing the full course option for RS altogether or to placing it as an option with a large range of other subjects. This means that the opportunity to take GCSE full course RS currently undertaken by thousands of students will be denied to a great many in the future. This would be a major blow, not just to those students who are keen to study religions and beliefs at a deeper level, but also to our society.

6. The West Sussex Agreed Syllabus requires that every young person should be following an accredited course in RE/RS at Key Stage 4. Some will do so via the GCSE *short* course, but the GCSE *full* course provides the depth and breadth of study needed to continue studies at a higher level. To include RS in the list of Humanities for the English Baccalaureate would be to support our Standing Advisory Councils on Religious Education in ensuring our role in promoting high standards in RE.

7. To reiterate, the unintended consequence of not including GCSE RS as an option in the English Baccalaureate is that in schools young people will cease to have the opportunity to study GCSE which this in turn will have a very negative impact on the number of students taking RS at A level, and therefore on the applications for theology and religious studies at degree level.

8. We ask therefore that you include religious studies in the list of Humanities subjects for the English Baccalaureate at the earliest opportunity.

22 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by the Humanities Association

The Humanities Association welcomes the intention of the English Baccalaureate to ensure that students are encouraged to follow a broad curriculum at GCSE level, which includes a Humanities subject. We believe that it is very important for all students to study a curriculum at KS4, which includes a subject or subjects in the Humanities area of the curriculum, since this covers areas of enquiry which are relevant, topical and challenging and equips students well for an understanding of the 21st century world.

We believe however that the current statement of acceptable qualifications is too limited, since it currently includes only specific GCSEs relating to History or Geography.

This has led to a position where students in schools which have chosen to include a Humanities GCSE qualification in their core Key Stage 4 curriculum at GCSE have not been able to achieve the English Baccalaureate because Humanities GCSE was not included in the first list of qualifying subjects in the Humanities area. We would suggest that this cannot be right, and that Humanities GCSE should be included within the list of acceptable and qualifications.

Therefore we would wish your committee to carefully consider and recommend the need to include GCSE Humanities in the list of subjects which would qualify for inclusion in the English Baccalaureate. GCSE Humanities is currently offered by the OCR, AQA and WJEC examination boards.

GCSE Humanities allows all participating students to study and achieve a qualification which encompasses history, geography, religious education and elements of other humanities areas, such as social sciences. This is therefore a more rounded and academic approach to ensuring that students experienced and achieved a high level qualification in a humanities subject.

RECOMMENDATION TO THE COMMITTEE

The Humanities Association, on behalf of a large number of schools, examining bodies, and members, recommends that GCSE Humanities be included in the subjects approved for recognition in the English Baccalaureate

22 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by from Robert Benzie, Headteacher, Ansford School and Chair of the Somerset Association of Secondary Headteachers (SASH)

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the E-Bac. I do so as Headteacher of an 11–16 rural comprehensive school. I am also Chair of the Somerset Association of Headteachers which represents all 38 state secondary schools in the County, though I write here in a personal capacity.

1.1 Successive Governments have used the curriculum, assessment frameworks, league tables and inspection systems to (directly and indirectly) control what goes on in schools. The weight of accountability systems and measures is significant and affects the behaviours of school leaders as they try to balance the needs of individual students with those of Government and Society.

1.2 As a consequence when a Government pronounces on any one of these accountability measures, schools respond accordingly. When a Secretary of State introduces something which affects three of these things in one go, the system starts doing very strange things (like one school in another Authority, which is now putting its year 11 students through a modern languages course in 14 weeks so they can increase numbers achieving the E-Bac).

1.3 Since control of schools was centralised in the 1980s and 1990s with the National Curriculum, national testing and OFSTED, Governments have not really appreciated the power they have over what goes on in schools. With that power must go equal responsibility—to make sure the impact of policy on teachers, children, school leaders, teacher trainers, are properly thought through, understood and communicated. Until those responsibilities are taken more seriously we will continue to have damaging and ineffective policy. We will continue to have the system lurching after successive initiatives, not because they are of use, but because we will be measured by them.

1.4 The E-Bac is a particularly good example of an outrageous abuse of power, imposing a new curriculum measure which will dramatically affect schools, without any consultation. What is the point of the country developing high quality leadership in the education sector for it to have no say in a major policy change?

RECOMMENDATION ONE

1.5 There should be a review of legislation to ensure the Secretary of State for Education must consult on proposed changes to the education system which affect any of the following: curriculum, assessment, league tables, inspection.

THE PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE E-BAC

2. The E-Bac, as it stands, has no clear purpose but will be damaging if used by further and higher education as an entry qualification. It runs the risk of being the tool used to decide who get access to “high value” courses, when, as it stands, it is little more than a measure of “cultural capital” ie a C grade in French is worth more than an A* in ICT or Design. It will be significantly easier for children from certain backgrounds (who travel and/or who have parents who went to university) to achieve the E-Bac. At a time when we are all concerned about a lack of social mobility, the narrowness of the current E-Bac is strange.

2.1 Over the last 20 years the Government and the education community have been united in shaping an education system which is more inclusive—partly through a broader curriculum and a wider range of assessment tools. We have succeeded in helping more young people appreciate that education has value and that all forms of educational achievement are a cause for celebration. We realise that individuals succeed in different ways.

2.2 However, there may be some value in an overarching qualification which recognises and celebrates breadth and depth of achievement across a range of intelligences. If there is, we need to move beyond the notion of “5 good GCSEs” to something broader, which is more inclusive and at the same time more challenging. The E-Bac has merit as a celebration of breadth and depth of achievement but does not need to be as prescriptive as at present.

2.3 What of the student who achieves eight A grades at GCSE and a D in, say, French? Either the E-Bac doesn't matter and the student will progress to whatever they want to do (so why have it in the first place?), or the E-Bac is a dangerously powerful tool which crushes opportunity for even the most able. Neither is desirable, so the E-Bac needs to be changed.

2.4 At the root of this is a suspicion and mistrust of vocational qualifications. Some are very good, worthwhile and challenging. Others are not. We must not exclude vocational qualifications from the E-Bac

because some of them have little merit or value. We need better systems to ensure they are all high quality with robust assessment regimes that we all trust.

RECOMMENDATION TWO

2.5 The E-Bac is defined as six qualifications at level 2, including English and Maths. It should not include more than one double award to ensure there is breadth to this overarching recognition of achievement. It should include all recognised level 2 qualifications breaking the academic/vocational divide. If a level 2 course isn't good enough for the E-Bac then it shouldn't be offered to anyone.

2.6 It should be seen as both a measure of breadth and depth of study, achievable by a large majority of 16 year olds. If there is a concern about the proportion of students taking a language or humanities subject then make that a curriculum requirement to 16, but don't make the grade achieved a barrier to the E-Bac.

RECOMMENDATION THREE

2.7 If the Committee decide to recommend staying with the current prescription around the curriculum areas included in the E-Bac, they must recommend:

- (a) Broadening the subjects included within modern languages and the humanities, in consultation with teachers and employers (in line with 1.5 above). It must not be in the hands on one person or interest group to decide the subjects included so there is more stability to whatever is agreed.
- (b) Vocational routes within the curriculum areas are permissible qualifications.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE E-BAC

3. The implications of the current E-Bac for students and schools are significant and potentially damaging. As it stands it is likely to entrench a lack of social mobility.

3.1 Introducing the E-Bac without warning or consultation is putting unreasonable strain on schools. Without adequate teacher training numbers in modern languages, schools will either be unable to recruit teachers or will use those we would normally choose not to employ. There are some outstanding modern language teachers, but they are hard to find.

3.2 In the short term, schools in challenging circumstances will find it very difficult to appoint language teachers of a necessary calibre. These schools will then appear less successful on accountability measures which will exacerbate the perceived and/or actual differences in school performance.

3.3 Introducing the E-Bac as an accountability measure retrospectively has undermined the credibility of Government. It is manifestly unfair to measure individuals (and schools) against something that was not part of the system when they started Key Stage 4 courses. The action has damaged morale and left us with yet another accountability measure which is partial in its view of what is to be valued.

RECOMMENDATION FOUR

3.4 The Committee should make clear that the E-Bac as a school measure must not be used until 2013.

3.5 The E-Bac will take up 60–70% of curriculum time at Key Stage 4. This is a lot of prescription at this point in a young person's education. However, whilst students, parents and schools are unclear about the use the E-Bac will have in further education, a vast majority of students will follow it. For some it will be a less exciting and less interesting curriculum. Some will clearly fail to get the E-Bac at the end, as well. Hardly a good way to end five years of secondary education.

INTERNATIONAL COMPARATORS FOR THE E-BAC

4. One of the lessons we have learnt about league tables is not to change what we do on the basis of one year's results and to be very clear about the usefulness of what looks to be comparable information.

4.1 The E-Bac must not be introduced simply because it makes the English education system look better in a league table. That is Government doing exactly what schools have been dragged into—doing things because they lead to a higher placing in a league table, rather than asking whether we actually value what the league table measures and whether we value it enough to base education policy on it.

Written evidence submitted by CILT, the National Centre for Languages

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND INFORMATION ABOUT THE SUBMITTER

1.1 CILT, the National Centre for Languages, is an independent charity working to support policies to improve the teaching and learning of languages and providing independent advice on all aspects of language teaching, learning and use. We have a strong track record of working with local and national government, employers, universities and schools since the organisation was established in 1966.

1.2. Our response to the Select Committee is informed by evidence from the UK and beyond. It covers the following points:

1.2.1 We support the intention of the E-Bac to refocus attention on subjects such as languages which have seen significant declines in the numbers of pupils taking them to the end of compulsory secondary education. We believe that this will provide an incentive for schools to give languages a higher profile within the curriculum and that it will help to close the gap between the best and the worst performing schools which will be of particular benefit to pupils attending schools with higher levels of disadvantage and lower educational attainment.

1.2.2 We strongly support the inclusion of a language among the subjects that will make up the E-Bac and provide evidence to show how successful language learning brings profound intellectual and cultural benefits to pupils. Learning a language is a crucial part of the preparation of young people who will be competing for jobs and representing British interests in the global economy.

1.2.3 We raise concern that the E-Bac could lead to languages being seen as a subject which is only of relevance as an “academic” subject for the more able, and argue for the inclusion within the E-Bac of other types of accreditation in addition to GCSE, providing evidence that this can be equally rigorous.

1.2.4 We also make the case for improvements to the way languages are assessed at GCSE.

1.2.5 We stress the need for high quality continuing professional development for teachers of languages if the benefits of the E Bac are to be realised.

1.2.6 We refer to practice in other countries where considerably more curriculum time allocated to the subject, and pupils begin to study languages in primary school and continue until at least 16.

2. THE PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE E-BAC AND ITS VALUE AS A MEASURE OF PUPIL AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

2.1 Since the decision was taken to make languages optional in KS4, CILT has undertaken annual surveys of Heads of Languages to ascertain the impact of the policy on school policies and pupil take up.

We have found that, in a context in which the proportion of pupils taking a modern language at GCSE has fallen from 79% to 44%,⁵³ the decline has disproportionately affected schools with higher than average numbers of pupils entitled to free school meals, and lower levels of educational attainment across all subjects.⁵⁴

2.2 The unbalanced social profile of language learners in secondary education and impacting on those taking languages at university has also been identified as a cause of concern by the British Academy: 41% of pupils from state schools take a languages GCSE compared to 81% from independent schools and 40% of applicants for language degrees come from the highest social economic group compared to fewer than 30% for all degree subjects.⁵⁵

2.3 CILT has found that the way school performance is measured, against pupil performance at GCSE or equivalent across a wide range of subjects, has been one of the main factors causing this decline. Languages are perceived as a hard subject in which to obtain a good grade. Therefore, there is an incentive on the part of both schools and pupils to take other subjects instead. Choosing a language is often regarded as an unnecessary “risk” even by able pupils, and those who express enjoyment of the subject.⁵⁶

2.4 There is some evidence from responses to the most recent survey⁵⁷ submitted after the publication of the White Paper “The Importance of Teaching” that schools are already starting to restructure their option blocks and are pushing more pupils towards studying a language. We therefore conclude that the inclusion of languages within the E-Bac is likely to reverse the decline in the numbers taking languages to GCSE, to encourage more able pupils from disadvantaged social backgrounds to study a language and to raise the status of languages within the secondary school curriculum overall.

⁵³ DfE exam entry data.

⁵⁴ Annual Language Trends surveys, 2003–2010, CILT, the National Centre for Languages.

⁵⁵ Language Matters, British Academy position paper, 2009.

⁵⁶ Language Trends, *op cit*.

⁵⁷ Language Trends 2010, CILT.

3. THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE E-BAC

3.1 We therefore welcome the inclusion of languages within the EBac. In this section we make the case for the value of language learning for all pupils. Whether they go into higher education, undertake further training or move straight into employment, young people will benefit socially, culturally and economically from the ability to communicate in a foreign language, the knowledge of other cultures, and the acquisition of the skills needed to learn other languages.

3.2 This is evidenced by:

3.2.1 Reports on Education and Skills from the CBI which highlight the need for language skills and wider cultural and international awareness to support British business interests:

“Companies greatly value the ability to develop a rapport with a potential customer in a foreign language, to ease cultural understanding and business access.”⁵⁸

3.2.2 Findings from the Council for Industry and Higher Education that 49% of employers are dissatisfied with university leavers’ foreign language skills.⁵⁹

3.2.3 Indications from a number of sources⁶⁰ that employers are increasingly forced to recruit overseas to meet language skill needs and that British workers are disadvantaged in European and global jobs markets if they do not speak another language.

3.2.4 Qualitative evidence from employers and academics that the value of language learning is not simply in the functional ability to communicate in a foreign language, but in the broader range of analytical, personal and interpersonal skills developed, and in the international outlook that language learning provides:

“If you learn a language, you have to perfect the skill of listening. So many people are great at talking, but they don’t actually stop and listen and that is so important when you go to a new job—that you open your ears and listen.”⁶¹

“The proficiency that graduates with language and international experience bring goes beyond just the acquisition of a single language, demonstrating in addition initiative, motivation, independence and an ability to engage with those who have different backgrounds and experience.”⁶²

3.2.5 A recent extensive review of the literature on the neuroscience of language learning by the University of Jyväskylä, Finland, found widespread benefits including enhanced problem-solving capacity, superior memory function and better performance in cognitively demanding tasks such as abstract thinking and creative hypothesis formation.⁶³

3.2.6 In CILT’s response to the Wolf Review of vocational education we set out our belief that languages have a crucial role to play in supporting our economic recovery, and that all pupils on all programmes, whether academic or vocational, should be able to combine their study with a language, gaining a general qualification such as GCSE or a vocational language qualification such as NVQ.

4. THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE E-BAC FOR PUPILS, SCHOOLS AND EMPLOYERS

4.1 In its present form the E-Bac focuses on rewarding academic success and we are pleased that the intellectual value of language learning has been recognised in this way. We are however aware of a significant risk that languages could be seen as a subject only for the academically more able and an unforeseen consequence of the E-Bac is that it has the potential to exclude less traditionally academic students who would benefit from learning a language.

4.2 In order that the E-Bac is not seen or used as simply another performance indicator based solely on GCSE results and to ensure that languages are not seen as a subject only for the more academically able it is important to consider the position of alternatives to GCSE (see paragraph 4.6.9 below). It is also important to consider different ways of assessing students’ performance in languages—see paragraph 4.6.4 below.

4.3 Whatever the qualification, assessment should be something in which students feel they can actively participate—for example, portfolio-based assessment involving short, sharp, clear objectives, in which pupils understand “why” as well as “what”, active learning, a choice of tasks that are relevant to life outside school. Assessment should be transparent and attractive to both teachers and learners and easily understood by employers in the same way that a high-grade GCSE is acknowledged as a charter-mark of success.

⁵⁸ Ready to grow: business priorities for education and skills, CBI, 2010.

⁵⁹ Graduate employability: the views of employers, CIHE, 2008.

⁶⁰ Eg Graduate skills and recruitment in the City, Financial Services Skills Council, 2006; Talking sense, language skills management in major companies, CILT, 2005.

⁶¹ HR Manager, medium sized company, quoted in Attracting a broader business audience to the Employer Engagement in Language Learning project: Research Findings, EdComs, 2010.

⁶² British Academy, *op cit*.

⁶³ David Marsh, The contribution of multilingualism to creativity, European Commission, 2010.

4.4 *Compulsion or choice?*

4.4.1 Due to the decline in recent years in the numbers of pupils taking a language to GCSE level many languages departments in schools have reduced time-tabled time and staffing. As the E-Bac measure has been introduced very quickly many schools are now looking to rebuild their languages departments. In order to do this it is vital that they have enough expert teachers, that they attract students to choose a language in Key Stage 4 or that they make it compulsory.

4.4.2 If schools decide that languages are optional then it is essential that the “option blocks” system allows pupils a fair choice and is not set up in a way which prevents them from opting for a language.

4.4.3 If languages remain option in KS4 senior leaders and teachers still need to be convinced of the value of languages and promote these both with pupils and their parents in order to bring about change in terms of the numbers opting.

4.4.4 Whether a school decides to make languages optional or compulsory the following elements need to be in place in order to improve numbers obtaining a GCSE or alternative accreditation:

- High quality teaching.
- Sufficient time-tabled time.
- A rich and compelling languages learning experience that addresses the interests of pupils and stimulates their curiosity to learn more.
- A rigorous, highly valued assessment system that reflects what the learner knows and can do.
- Access to information about the value and importance of language learning and its relevance to career choices.

4.5 *Continuing Professional Development and support for teachers*

4.5.1 Whether pupils choose languages or whether they are obliged to take them, they need to be confident that they will be taught well and inspired in their learning. Languages teachers are highly expert linguists. In order to produce excellent teaching and excellent results year on year in a rapidly changing educational landscape they too need to be confident that they can benefit from high quality in-service training as a crucial part of their continuing professional development (CPD). If teachers are to manage the changes that will be necessary to rebuild and reinvigorate languages departments, to look at new ways of teaching and learning, to look at the best ways of assessing pupils so that the E-Bac becomes a tangible reality then they will need CPD in both pedagogy and in leading and managing successful, fast-moving and innovative languages departments.

Good CPD will allow schools to share, reflect on and evaluate best practice in transforming ideas into reality. The outcome must be good results that will contribute to more pupils gaining the E-Bac as a measure of success.

4.6 *Timetabling and international comparisons*

It takes a long time to learn a language and it is important that sufficient time allowed. International comparisons show that other countries are more generous in the time dedicated to learning languages. A recent report by OECD⁶⁴ showed that in England languages take up 7.25% of curriculum time for 12–14 year olds, compared with an EU average of 13.5%. In Germany the figure is nearly 17% of curriculum time, and a language is compulsory for all up to 18.

4.7 *Pedagogy, assessment and accreditation*

4.7.1 The interaction between curriculum and assessment is an important matter. We agree with Tim Oates’ recent statement that “*assessment processes of greater validity and which have beneficial wash back into learning are essential if assessment is to drive learning in a beneficial manner*”.⁶⁵

4.7.2 If we are to devise a languages curriculum that is well taught, rigorous, motivating and enjoyable for learners and that produces high quality results, then it is imperative that we look at how GCSE is assessed and as well as at forms of alternative accreditation that could legitimately form part of the E-Bac, thus encouraging more pupils to achieve well in languages.

4.7.3 Language teachers have made immense strides in recent years to design a curriculum that appeals to the needs and interests of pupils. Authentic materials, ICT, filmmaking, visits abroad, international video conferencing and electronic communication all play their part in this. All of this can happen within the GCSE syllabus and is entirely consistent with the teaching and learning of grammar and detailed attention to grammatical progression and accuracy.

4.7.4 However, the way in which GCSE is examined does not allow for these experiences to be reflected and rewarded. It is important that GCSE assessment recognizes the need to examine not only what has been taught but also how it has been taught in order to get the best out of pupils. It is also important to recognise pupils’ linguistic progression and their achievements both in the language and in blending the language they

⁶⁴ Education at a glance, OECD, 2010.

⁶⁵ Tim Oates, *op cit*.

have learnt with other skills such as the use of PPT presentation, DVD presentation and communication with groups of others and not just with an oral examiner or on paper.

4.7.5 Alternative accreditation to GCSE has been used in schools for many years, particularly since languages ceased to be compulsory in 2004. The percentage of schools offering alternatives to GCSE and A Level in the maintained sector rose from 22% in 2006 to 45% in 2010 and from 8% to 24% in the independent sector.⁶⁶

4.7.6 Evidence presented in Annex 1 shows that alternative accreditation is not being used merely as a way of improving performance tables, but to boost actual performance and motivation, particularly for male students who are often not motivated by languages. It offers learners who prefer a more practical approach to learning the opportunity to achieve and enjoy language learning. This is in line with the recommendations of the Languages Review of 2007.⁶⁷

4.7.7 Assessment systems for languages, whether studied via a vocational or an academic route, should share a common spine or point of reference which is understood by employers, HE and teachers across different sectors of education. The Languages Ladder, and the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, to which it refers, provide a useful basis for this.

4.7.8 Rigour of alternative accreditation

Evidence from schools and teachers (see Annex A) indicates that these qualifications make language learning more attractive to weaker pupils, and are helping pupils to succeed where they might not have done at GCSE. This is largely because of the focus on practical skills, the relevance to the world of work as well as the pupil's own interests, and the assessment methods which put pupils in charge of their own progress.

There is sometimes an assumption that alternatives to GCSE are not rigorous and only teach pupils to produce phrasebook language. Whilst this can occur with any qualification if taught badly, including GCSE, it is a mistaken perception that alternative accreditations have no rigour. Vocational language qualifications such as NVQ languages and ABC awards are based on National Occupational Standards (NOS), which have been specifically developed to meet the needs of employers. The assessment criteria include distinct grammatical and linguistic features which have to be met. For example, at Level 2 in both speaking and writing, pupils have to be assessed on being able to use past, present and future tenses, issue instructions, ask for permission, express feelings and opinions, use connectors and express negative as well as positive forms. Evidence produced by pupils has to be both internally as well as externally verified by the Awarding Bodies. Pupils must achieve in all four skills to gain a Level 2 qualification and for the qualification to be counted in performance tables. Asset language qualifications are set and assessed externally by the Awarding Body.

4.7.9 The Diploma in Languages and International Communication (DLIC)

Although a decision was taken not to proceed with the development of the DLIC but it should be noted that its modules were widely praised by teachers, universities and employers as an example of how it is possible to draw together the academic/creative/vocational/independent areas of language learning in a qualification that could have high status with all interested parties from the worlds of education and business. The language structures and grammar to be learned at all three levels were at least as rigorous as the equivalent levels at GCSE and A Level and each level was supported by a thorough grammar annex which showed how to teach grammar in a contextualised way.

At least one Awarding Body believes that the DLIC “*has considerable potential for tackling the historic difficulties English education has with languages learning and its assessment.*”⁶⁸

6. THE IMPORTANCE OF PRIMARY LANGUAGES

A significant development in the last 10 years has been the inclusion of a language in the primary curriculum. The recent HMI Ofsted report comments on the enthusiasm for language learning and the real linguistic progress made by pupils in Key Stage 2.⁶⁹ In introducing languages at a much earlier age and with a pedagogy that is rooted in the primary curriculum, language learning in England has been brought into line with practice in other countries. If the real learning gains made by younger pupils are to be built on throughout Key Stages 3 and 4 pupils as well as their parents/carers must come to see languages as an accepted part of their everyday learning experience and something that everyone can do and do well. This is indeed the norm in many countries. Taking a language as part of an E-Bac qualification should be the natural conclusion of a learning process that begins at seven and continues at least until the age of 16.

Annex A

This paper contains a selection from many pieces of qualitative evidence available in CILT on the popularity and value of alternative language accreditations, particularly in relation to raising achievement and motivation.

⁶⁶ Language Trends survey 2010, *op cit*.

⁶⁷ Languages Review, Dearing and King, 2007, DfES.

⁶⁸ Awarding body, internal CILT source.

⁶⁹ Modern languages, achievement and challenge 2007–2010, Ofsted, 2011.

1. SCHOOL A—COMMUNITY SCHOOL (*NVQ French & German with Creative and Media Diploma*) School report: (*illustrates consistent benefits*)

“The NVQ course is offered to around 100 students in Years 10 and 11. These students typically have a Fischer Family Trust target of less than a C, or are unlikely to achieve a grade C at GCSE. The compilation of a portfolio of formative assessments and the absence of final exams suits the vast majority of their individual learning needs. In the 2008–09 cohort, 88 students left school with a languages NVQ. In the French and German groups 58 of pupils achieved the equivalent of a C grade. Such levels would otherwise not have been possible. In the 2009–10 cohort, 99 students completed an NVQ in French or German, 74 of these at level 2. Out of a year group of 351, this had a huge impact on results as these students would never have got a C at GCSE.”

Teacher quote: “NVQ offers an excellent opportunity for the less motivated student to have a sense of achievement in languages and to leave school with a credible language qualification.”

Most recent Ofsted report (*illustrating approval of the extra opportunities offered to language learners*)

“The school is aware that GCSE results in modern foreign languages remain below what they should be. Effective strategies and recent appointments are ensuring that better teaching and systems to monitor students’ progress are now in place. Students in Years 8 and 9 experience a balanced curriculum with the addition of extra language opportunities. At present Years 10 and 11 follow a choice of three different pathways and there is an appropriate range of vocational options.”

2. SCHOOL B, EAST SUSSEX (MIXED COMPREHENSIVE)—FRENCH AND GERMAN NVQ SINCE 2007

School report

“All pupils who have opted to take NVQ have achieved a Level 2 to date. In terms of achievement for these pupils it is outstanding as traditionally they would be pupils who probably would not have chosen to study a language or may not have coped with the examination process involved with GCSE languages.”

Most recent Ofsted report (*illustrating effectiveness of the more flexible language curriculum*)

“The curriculum is a strong and exciting feature of the school. It has improved considerably in the last two years. The format of teaching modern foreign languages has completely changed and is now much more appealing to students. Extensive use is made of external providers including colleges, the YMCA and Southend United football club to extend learning. The school is continually adding to its range of accredited courses to cater for the students’ diverse interests, provide them with better future opportunities and keep them engaged with school.”

3. SCHOOL C—TECHNOLOGY COLLEGE—NVQ GERMAN

School report

“One third of the current Year 10 at School C now hold a language qualification, and uptake at Key Stage 4 has doubled with the pupils opting to do Level 2 and the NVQ will help to improve the overall results in Year 11. The NVQ has also provided the school with a reason to cement relationships with local businesses and also the potential for Year 10 work experience placements with a language focus.”

Ofsted report, 2008—*illustrating effectiveness of introduction of vocational courses*

A wide range of vocational courses has been introduced which is meeting the range of students’ needs more fully in Key Stage 4.

Recent changes to the satisfactory curriculum are helping it meet the needs, interests and abilities of all students more fully. In Key Stage 4 there is an increasing vocational dimension and effective links with the workplace. These developments are already increasing students’ motivation and demonstrating capacity to improve achievement at GCSE and equivalent levels. The school’s action to ensure that all groups perform equally well, with a particular focus on improving the attainment of boys is beginning to show improvements in standards and achievement.

4. SCHOOL D—SPECIALIST LANGUAGE COLLEGE

“In 2007 approximately 200 students achieved a Level 1 pass in French, German or Spanish. Approximately 50 achieved passes in the same languages at Level 2, while eight Sixth Form students achieved passes in French or Italian. This qualification has boosted our performance every year.”

Ofsted report 2010—overall effectiveness 1

The curriculum is outstanding in meeting the individual and often complex needs of all groups of students. There is strong emphasis on languages and all students study at least one language through Key Stages 3 and

4. Vocational courses provide teachers with further options on learning styles and help to personalise the offer for students.

5. SCHOOL E SPECIALIST LANGUAGE COLLEGE—NVQs IN FRENCH, GERMAN AND SPANISH

“The introduction of NVQs to our KS4 curriculum has had a considerable impact on student motivation and achievement. Two low ability Year 11 GCSE groups (one French, one German) were converted to NVQ groups after consultation with students and their parents. Very few higher grade GCSE passes were expected in these groups, but over 90% achieved an NVQ at Level 2. Many students achieved their highest point score in the MFL NVQ and the department’s overall results rose by 9% in German (from 77% to 86%) and 10% in French (from 67% to 77%).”

Ofsted Report 2009 pub 2010

Overall effectiveness grade 1

The proportion of students who gain a higher level GCSE or equivalent in a modern foreign language is well above average and improving strongly.

In the school’s specialist subjects, there is a strong trend of significantly higher than average outcomes in German and history and above average in geography, but more variable performance in French, Spanish and religious studies. The latest results in 2009 show improvement in these subjects following challenge and support by senior leaders. The curriculum provision is outstanding. The school has been proactive in designing a curriculum that is imaginative, forward looking and matched to students’ ambitions and personal goals. The range of academic and vocational courses provides a coherent and personalised curriculum.

There are strong relationships developed particularly well through the school’s networks with other secondary and primary schools. Its outreach work in languages is strong with all feeder schools now offering French based on support from School E. Every effort is made by the school to ensure that each student has the maximum opportunity to participate in activities particularly the visits to Europe as part of language courses. The school takes justified pride in the quality of its promotion of community cohesion, which is outstanding. There is a very good understanding of local needs and the school responds to these very well by, for example, helping to meet the language needs of new local residents from Poland. Through its language specialist status there are strong links with schools in France and Germany and all students have the opportunity to visit one of these countries during their school career. The global perspective is further developed with a well established link with schools in Zambia. There is a pattern of student and teacher exchanges which are now being developed to include parents and the wider community.

6. SCHOOL F—HIGH SCHOOL (*NVQ as alternative to GCSE*)

School report

“2007: Candidates who had been predicted grade E at GCSE because they lacked confidence in taking the exam achieved a Level 2 NVQ which is comparable with grade C. The positive experience of NVQ in Year 9 increased option uptake by an estimated 20%.

2010; 4 x level 2 German, plus 16 students who began their portfolios last year are due to complete by October half term 2010. The 4 candidates who have completed were achieving D-G grades at GCSE and had become very de-motivated. The NVQ course empowered them -they all suddenly became keen to come to German lessons again (one girl had actually refused to attend the GCSE group after failing her mock—NVQ German was a significant turning point for her, to the extent that she chose to come back 4 times after finishing her other GCSEs, just to tidy up her NVQ portfolio). 4 candidates may not seem significant but we are a small school (660 students) and the Every Child Matters agenda recognises the importance of catering for the needs of all students. NVQ has been hugely beneficial in our school. For the past three years, we have held twilight German NVQ groups—1 have 22 students on a waiting list to join the next one. For the first time this year, we have managed to persuade SLT to include timetabled NVQ French. We have also successfully taught NVQ alongside GCSE in one class, thus providing the ultimate opportunity for differentiation. Its appeal to different categories of students can be summarised as:

- able students who cannot fit two foreign languages into their timetable choose to attend twilight sessions to boost their employability;
- less able students can suddenly see the point in learning a language. They enjoy the satisfaction of seeing their portfolio improve, without the pressure of a final exam; and
- the chance to develop language skills in a business context (this fits with the School Improvement Plan to focus on work-related learning).”

7. SCHOOL G—COMMUNITY SCHOOL (*The school has removed GCSE from KS4 curriculum & replaced with Asset*)

“The school has benefited from improved MFL exam results through the use of Asset. The scheme is very flexible, allows for differentiation and is ideal in terms of assessment for learning. The focus is clearly on

progress and not simply on final achievement, which makes it more motivating for the students. The flexibility of the scheme also promotes uptake into KS4 and on into KS5 as learners can continue to make progress at their own pace and still get a qualification at the end of the course.”

March 2011

Written evidence submitted by National Committee for 14–19 Engineering Education

KEY POINTS

The Select Committee is urged to consider the potential implications of the English Baccalaureate on productive industry in the UK. Productive industry is vital to re-balancing the economy in favour of more entrepreneurship, more exports, more trade and less dependence on financial services.

The UK is in the business of high added-value, high-technology engineering and manufacturing. In addition it needs to maintain capability in civil engineering, engineering construction, electricity production and distribution, gas, water and sanitation, transportation, electronics, food manufacture, fuels, high-value materials and healthcare services. All depend on technical skills and all are signaling increasing demand.

We recognise and welcome the fact that mathematics and science are already included in the English Baccalaureate as both underpin the practice of engineering. However, the English Baccalaureate does nothing to promote practical and technical experience outside of mathematics and science and as a result does not do enough to support productive industry in the UK, particularly technician routes.

We fear that in times of limited school budgets, headteachers who invest in getting the best teachers, environments and resources for English Baccalaureate subjects will not be able to invest similarly in technical subjects. The student experience will suffer and availability, including at lower and higher key stages, will drain away. We make a case that this will have significant impact on the nation’s skills in engineering and the productive industries.

SUBMISSION

1. The National Committee for 14–19 Engineering Education (the Committee) is convened by The Royal Academy of Engineering and has 65 members drawn from 51 organisations. These include engineering employers, universities, FE Colleges and training providers, sector skills councils, professional engineering institutions, learned mathematical societies and organisations that promote STEM subjects in schools.

2. The Committee has its origins in the Engineering Diploma Development Partnership. The 14–19 Diploma in Engineering has strong support from engineering employers, universities, FE Colleges and schools so when the government support for the Diploma Development Partnerships was withdrawn the Committee was convened by The Royal Academy of Engineering in response to repeated requests from the engineering profession.

3. The Committee is not funded by Government. It operates entirely on voluntary effort and engineering employers have chosen to invest time and effort in it. It is fully independent of any single organisation.

4. The Committee is currently focused on providing a public voice for learners, teachers, schools and colleges that maintain a commitment to the 14–19 Diploma in Engineering. A secondary concern is to ensure that the engineering and mathematics communities are deeply involved in any review or reform of the 14–19 Diploma in Engineering. A wider concern is to ensure the involvement of the engineering and mathematics communities in the development of any other engineering curricula for 14–19 year olds. A first example of this is the emergent *Technical Baccalaureate* being developed at the Baker-Dearing Trust.

5. Productive industries, including those involved in engineering research, design, development and construction, engineering services and low and high volume manufacturing, are vital to the success of the UK economy. The Committee is committed to supporting the development of suitable qualifications for 14–19 year olds appropriate to meet these needs at both technician and engineer levels.

6. Productive industries are important to the UK. For example, the UK is the seventh largest manufacturing nation in the world (ERA Foundation, 2010) slipping recently from sixth position (UNCT AD, 2008) behind the USA, China, Japan, Germany Italy and France. 2.6 million people were employed in UK manufacturing in 2009. According to data from the UK Office of National Statistics this represented 10% of all employees. Manufacturing’s contribution to GDP is a little higher at around 12% and it provides over half of the nation’s exports. It is interesting to note that whilst the proportion of GDP due to manufacturing has fallen by two thirds since 1970 (when it stood at more than 30%) the *output* of the manufacturing sector has actually grown by 25% in that time. It is only because the economy has grown faster than manufacturing output that manufacturing has fallen as a share of GDP (Willman and Evans, 2010).

7. The growth in manufacturing output exemplifies the fact that the UK is in the business of high added-value, high-technology engineering and manufacturing. The post-16 education and skills system is also in the same business: through the 135,000 engineering apprenticeships underway at any given time (half of which are at Level 3), through the 140,000 achievements in Level 3 engineering qualifications taken in the FE &

Skills sector (figures for England in 2008–09) and through the 25,000 people accepted onto engineering and technology degree programmes each year. STEM subjects taken in schools underpin all of this activity and therefore underpin a component of the economy that is vital as it provides jobs and much needed exports.

8. As well as celebrating our manufacturing industries, we would point out the critical dependence the nation has on vital national infrastructure. The UK needs to maintain its capability in civil engineering, engineering construction, electricity production and distribution, gas, water and sanitation, transportation, electronics, food manufacture, fuels, high-value materials and healthcare services. All depend on technical skills and all are signaling increasing demand. To take just one example, the electricity industry is currently expanding its training intakes at all levels from apprentice to graduate in anticipation of investment in low-carbon infrastructure. The newly-formed National Skills Academy for Power anticipates a need for at least 2,000 people per year to enter that industry *just to replace retirements*.

9. Despite the interest of successive UK Governments in promoting productive industry and the national infrastructure, engineering is not actively promoted as a natural and valued consequence of studying mathematics and the sciences nor is it frequently taught as a distinct curriculum subject in English schools. This contrasts with Design & Technology (D&T), taken here to represent the largest contributor to the T in STEM (the remainder being taken to be the computing and digital communications aspects of ICT), which is taught to all pupils up to the age of 14 and remains a very popular option thereafter. In fact recent data from the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) shows that it is the most popular option at GCSE amongst non-mandatory subjects, with 287,701 taking a GCSE in D&T in UK in 2009–10 (JCQ, 2010). D&T is taken by more than 40% of the eligible school population—proving the appetite for it which should be preserved because it provides many young people with their only experience of making things that work and have function.

10. We note the influence of Government signalling on the uptake of particular subjects at GCSE. The rapid rise (albeit from a low base) of triple science is a positive example of this but the collapse in the numbers of pupils taking modern foreign languages since they became optional in the National Curriculum is a negative example. We fear that a similar fate will befall engineering and technology subjects as an unintended consequence of the English Baccalaureate. To be clear, we fear that in times of limited school budgets, headteachers who invest in getting the best teachers, environments and resources for English Baccalaureate subjects will not be able to invest similarly in the technical subjects. The student experience will suffer and availability, including at lower and higher key stages, will drain away. We make a case that this will have significant impact on the nation's skills in engineering and the productive industries.

11. On the choice of subjects included in the English Baccalaureate. The English Baccalaureate will lead to an increase in the number of students taking a specific and limited range of GCSE subjects. However, this will be to the detriment of many young people who would be better served by a different mix beyond the core of English, Mathematics and Science. We highlight the lack of any of the “E” or T from STEM in the suite of GCSEs included. These might include Engineering, ICT, Design and Technology and related qualifications such as electronics or computing. We fear that the exclusion of these from any of the standard measures of school performance will cause them to be marginalized; their popularity with pupils (very high for D&T) will be undermined. We recognize and welcome the fact that mathematics and science are already included in the English Baccalaureate as both underpin the practice of engineering. We recognise that this provides a broad exposure to STEM in schools and that this supports development of disposition towards STEM careers. This is a great place to start but we argue that it isn't enough for all types of learner. That disposition could be the launching point for careers in medicine, accounting, finance, insurance, nutrition and a long list of other important careers. However, not all are linked to productive industry (there is considerable evidence to show that employers beyond the productive industries value STEM qualifications; eg CBI). To get people to say “yes” to productive industry, particularly through technician routes, they need technical and practical self-efficacy on top of a STEM disposition. Whilst this can be achieved by individuals in any number of ways (after school clubs for example) it can only be achieved at scale through practical and technical curriculum subjects. Extra-curricular work, whilst important, cannot be enough.

12. The English Baccalaureate does nothing to promote practical and technical experience outside of mathematics and science and as a result does not do enough to support productive industry in the UK, particularly technician routes.

13. On the implications of English Baccalaureate for pupils, schools and employers. In addition to the implications for productive industry set out above, we highlight that many University Technical Colleges could score zero in the English Baccalaureate where curricula have been designed to focus on technical subjects and don't include history GCSE. We draw attention to the emergent Technical Baccalaureate being developed at the Baker-Dearing Trust as a practical means of avoiding a clash between two Government priorities: the English Baccalaureate and University Technical Colleges. In the Technical Baccalaureate, technical qualifications will be taken alongside the core GCSEs of mathematics, English and science. The twin principles of academic rigour and a good general education are preserved in the Technical Baccalaureate.

14. We highlight the exceptional employer and professional engagement in the 14–19 Diploma in Engineering, obtained because the qualification is recognised as providing an authentic engineering experience for pupils taught in real-world settings, stimulating their motivation to learn and including in associated mathematics and sciences. It enables employers to be involved in supporting the delivery of the qualification

and thus bringing knowledge of up to date practices into the curriculum. Whilst valuable employer engagement with mathematics and science is acknowledged, we fear a reduction in employer engagement in English schools if schools, reacting to the requirements of the English Baccalaureate, choose to focus too greatly on a narrow range of GCSEs, neglecting other practical and technical subjects which readily invite employer engagement. The engineering profession, including employers, values the 14–19 Diploma in Engineering for providing routes for progression to employment, apprenticeships or further and higher education to meet the needs of industry at all levels and for learners to see appropriate pathways into productive industries.

15. We signal our concern that if schools use proficiency in English Baccalaureate subjects to filter pupils away from technical subjects (leaving those to pupils less proficient in English and mathematics in particular) then engineering will be starved of the people who are both academically able and practically minded. We need pupils to be competent in both academic mathematics and science and practical technical subjects such as design and technology. The English Baccalaureate may divide these two, reinforcing unhelpful stereotypes about engineering and placing both our national infrastructure and our productive industries at risk.

16. We signal our concern that if employers and colleges start using achievement of the English Baccalaureate as a filter for recruitment this may result in the selection of a cohort with insufficient motivation towards practical STEM subjects and careers, little experience of learning in a practical setting and no knowledge of the fundamentals of engineering on which Britain's economy needs to be based.

22 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Isabelle Jones, Head of Languages and Teacher of French and Spanish

MY RESPONSE TO THE EDUCATION SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE E-BAC

1. I consider the E-Bac to be a step in the right direction as regards the promotion of foreign language learning in England. As a linguist, I am confident that this will reaffirm the status of languages within the curriculum but I am also concerned that the E-Bac will only encourage the more able students to study languages and not contribute to improving the UK's language capacity as a whole.

2. The E-Bac was unfairly used to report on schools' achievements before they had time to make the necessary adjustments to their curricula. In some ways, this has discredited the award by highlighting some of the supposed political intentions behind it rather than give all schools the time to make suitable arrangements to make it fit with their specific circumstances.

3. I am concerned that some schools are trying to implement emergency plans involving force-feeding languages and humanities to some children who had opted not to study it. This means that valuable curriculum time is wasted on understandably reluctant students and staff overstretched to deliver these subjects to large co-horts, sometimes as twilight lessons, so that schools can say that they provided that "opportunity" for their students—as well as possibly go up in the E-Bac league tables, of course.

4. Although the E-Bac is presented as only one measure of school performance, it is only understandable that no schools want to be seen publicly as making no improvement in their E-Bac percentage indicator. This will mean in practice that schools will feel pressurised into hasty curriculum changes that will be likely to be unsuccessful if not enough specialist teachers are available to deliver them in the short term. Staffing and staff development are major issues which will not be helped by the recent decision to stop the funding of organisations like the Links into Languages Regional Centres.

5. Some more details about the practicalities of the E-Bac must also be shared, such as who is going to award it and its actual recognition by universities and large employers. As a "new qualification", I am also surprised that very little literature is available to introduce it to parents and other stakeholders.

6. I do not believe that the E-Bac should be used as a measure of individual pupils' performance as it does not take into account their level of attainment on entry in Year 7 and for languages in particular, this could be strongly affected by the time allocation and quality of the students' primary languages provision.

7. The choice of the subjects included in the E-Bac is an important question but as many of us will base this on our own perceptions and experiences, this is likely to be a not very rational debate. My own personal view is that the E-Bac should allow for an academic core—with RE as an alternative Humanity—as well as optional subjects like music, Art or PE. Languages should be included in the academic core but GCSE should not be the only qualification available, as only more able students are likely to be successful in it. Indeed, Modern Languages have suffered from a severity of grading that has been documented year on year. http://www.all-london.org.uk/severe_grading.htm

8. As a linguist who also has first-hand experience of the French and Spanish educational system, I am perplexed to see how the E-Bac can be used on the international educational scene. The term "baccalaureate" will be confusing for many as it is used for a post-16 qualification anywhere else. Languages in most European countries are part of a core and might not be certified separately. The level required will be a minimum, likely to be offset by other subjects. This means that nearly everybody will have some knowledge of a language

although it might not be equivalent to a GCSE level. What it also means is that more students will be likely to continue with languages post-16 as it is part of the post-16 baccalaureate broad curriculum offer.

9. As a conclusion, I would say that the E-Bac will only support the increase of the UK's language capacity if it is re-thought to offer different mixes of subjects with languages as a core for all students, although not necessarily at GCSE level.

22 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Frances Hudson

Having read the recent White Paper I am very concerned that the list of acceptable qualifications for the Ebacc does not contain a vocational language course. As a Head of MFL of many years standing I have seen and taught a wide variety of language courses. At the present time I am dismayed by the GCSE syllabi which compared to other subjects are harder to achieve and are not at all engaging. The NVQ in Business French draws upon a whole new vocabulary and demands a different set of skills in language manipulation which are more relevant yet just as demanding.

Having just transferred all but the brightest pupils to an NVQ in business languages I can vouch for the fact that it motivates our pupils in a way that the GCSE completely failed to do. A GCSE in MFL with all the severe grading issues attached to it has become the preserve of the elite and as such excludes those who would normally get a C in other subjects from achieving the Ebacc because of this discrepancy in languages. It has become largely a memory test whereas the NVQ requires application of language that has been acquired rather than just regurgitation of what has been learnt by rote.

The NVQ, which is a much fairer test yet which is just as demanding in different ways and in some respects is harder than GCSE in what it asks the pupils to do, allows all who meet the level 2 standards to achieve without being subject to the arbitrary distribution curves of GCSE pass rates. These pupils who reach an equivalent standard remain at present unable to achieve the Ebacc and I would urge you to reconsider your list of eligible qualifications so as to offer parity of opportunity.

I am going up to London tomorrow to receive an award for the school from the SSAT as we were in the top five schools in the country for improved language results last year. This is because we offered our traditional C grade pupils the opportunity to do a course in which they could achieve a C grade standard rather than make them do a GCSE knowing that they would fail as in previous years. If we feel that we have to now put future pupils back in for GCSE in order for them to have a chance of achieving the Ebacc then this will be a backward step in a lose lose situation.

22 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Clare Stanhope

1. I am an artist/teacher, currently work in an inner London Secondary boys school. I mentor PGCE art and design students, and I also lecture on a part time basis at Goldsmiths University. I have been involved in the creative industries since leaving university 13 years ago.

2. I am extremely concerned by the rushed nature of the introduction of the E Bac. This retrograde approach to education is flawed. The selection of subjects in the E Bac as it currently stands, sidelines important creative and industry-based subjects; this is extremely naive and detrimental to our education system and society.

3. The proposed benefits of narrowing the curriculum at KS4, to provide a more academic based curriculum, is not beneficial for all students. Further more, this is also not a good measure of pupil performance. It is contradictory to say the E Bac will be used as a measure of school performance but on the other hand state that the E bac is not a compulsory measure. Several schools, including the one I work in, have already implemented the E Bac at a cost to both students' and subjects. As the E Bac is academically based, it would be unfair to base assessment of schools on this as it would depend on their intake. It does not allow schools to focus on learning and the individual education of each child in their care, with this emphasis on assessment and league tables the over all aims of the school become mercenary. Pupils should, at this stage in their education, be working towards their strengths and interests. There is a large amount of students that are not academically able or their abilities and desires lie in more vocational aspects of the current curriculum offer.

4. Writing as an art, craft and design educator I am astonished that the Government consider a rounded curriculum, which does not include any creative subject, as a progressive step forward. As the creative industries are the largest growing industry in the country and we live in a visual world, where visual literacy is paramount to surviving in the modern world, art and design, and other creative subjects should be a solid member of any over arching curriculum.

5. Art and design education in Britain, leads international standards. Sir Christopher Frayling in an interview published in the current issue of AD with John Steers General Secretary of the NSEAD, highlighted this through the reiteration of a speech made by a leading economist from the Peoples Republic of China's speech

at Mansion House roughly five years ago. He stated “we rate Britain for two very important reasons, one is financial services and the other is engineering design and the creative industries. You are the best at these two things in the world.” Frayling goes on to point out that China cloned the design council and are currently building 1,200 art and design colleges. China wants to be the force behind their creativity; it does not want to purely export other countries ideas. They are investing in the future; they want a society where creative imagination is central to the development of the country. If other countries can appreciate the value of our art and design education why can't our own government?

6. Art and design enforces a critical pedagogy. This style of teaching and learning is endorsed by leading universities such as the Institute of Education and Goldsmiths. Art and design provides a platform for students to dissect and analyse their ideas and opinions. It provides a safe environment where by students can discuss and challenge socially provocative issues, or difficulties that they face once leaving the safety of the school gates. Art and design, is there to encourage students to make independent decisions and most importantly create an environment where independent and life long learning are at the core. The deep learning that takes place in the creative subjects, and the conceptual, experiential, and visual skills that art and design embeds, makes the subject a vital component for every learner.

7. It is interesting to compare our education system with the International baccalaureate where all subjects are represented giving a truly broad curriculum. It is also interesting to note that the three core subjects of the current education system are not the central foundation to the IB. Social awareness and critical thinking form the overlapping centre therefore making all subjects equal. This truly represents a rounded and thorough curriculum. Although I do not necessarily agree that all subjects should be compulsory in KS4, I can see the benefits of this style of curriculum for some students, and I whole-heartedly endorse the equalization of the subjects. I strongly believe students should be able to form a curriculum that meets their individual needs, mixing academic, creative and vocational. The E Bac prevents this, for example, one of my current students wants to go on to study architecture. Before they would have chosen Art and design and D and T. Now they are restricted to choose only one of these subjects and are forced to take one of the humanities or a language instead, which is not directly beneficial. A student wishing to go into business wanting to take ICT and business studies can no longer do so. This cannot be progressive.

8. This ill designed narrowing of the curriculum will not benefit the student or the school, and it will also have a detrimental impact on society as a whole. This is an amazing opportunity to really enhance education for the better, and push an equal and fair education for all. I urge the Government to listen to the criticisms of the current E Bac and make drastic improvements now.

22 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Tim Manly

1. I am the Headteacher of an Independent School [Hurstpierpoint College] in Sussex with 950 pupils aged 4–18. I also sit on the Governing bodies of two prep Schools [Hazelwood School, Oxted and Dorset House, Bury] as well as being a Non Executive Director on the Main Board of the Harris Federation of Academies and a Governor of the Woodard Academy in Littlehampton, West Sussex.

2. In this memorandum, I wish to comment on the purpose of league tables/target setting in general as well as the content of the EBac and its implications for schools.

3. What are league tables for? I would suggest that their purpose is threefold: First, to calibrate and reveal the relative academic success of schools, second, to inform the market [ie parents] about the quality of the schools available to them, and third, to set and encourage a minimum acceptable target which all children, ideally, should achieve.

4. Are GCSE league tables successful? In a very crude way, yes, they partially meet the objectives set out above. Most importantly, they have focused Headteachers' minds on the Academic agenda [rather than the social, financial ones etc]. However, the current method for ranking schools [5 A*–C at GCSE including Maths and English], is flawed because: (1) The lack of context—it is ludicrous to say that my school is necessarily “better” than a Harris Academy because the results are far superior. (2) The wide range of soft qualifications allowed and (3) because what these tables are really measuring is the ability of a school to get C Grades [as an analogy, think about marginal/floating voters] not whether they achieve every child's academic potential.

5. Is the EBac an improvement? In some respects. At least, it focuses on “hard” academic subjects. This is excellent as too many schools play the system with soft subjects. But why are these so limited and why these particular ones? Others can argue for their pet subjects [eg RS] but it does seem as though the EBac is designed to be aspirational [ie an idealised programme for the reasonably academic pupil] rather than a bare minimum for every child. This is a critical point.

6. I would suggest that the number one priority for every single child is a good grade in English, Maths and possibly Science. Let the market [Universities, Sixth Forms, Employers, Parents, Pupils] and schools decide the rest. I am certainly not going to force a pupil to study the EBac if I do not feel that it is in his or her best long term interests. An example—a grade C in a Modern Language is really of very little practical or, possibly,

educational use. Far better that that child studies another challenging subject which they will succeed at, enjoy and may prove to be a gateway to a career.

7. Governments have a responsibility to ensure that minimum standards are set, monitored and encouraged/enforced. Governments are not good at managing schools. I suggest, therefore, that the EBac is carefully evaluated before schools across the country lurch to play this new system [hiring modern language teachers, firing others etc] with all the unintended consequences that such initiatives usually bring.

8. A simple league table based on the core subjects is what is required—no soft subjects, no wishful thinking about creating global citizens. What we need above all is for every child to be properly literate, numerate with a basic scientific understanding of the world around them. Without these skills, they and the UK are doomed.

ENDNOTE

9. The best thing about the EBac was the lack of warning. I liked the fact that schools had not been given the chance to play a system and jump neatly through hoops. Too many schools are too focused on the league tables rather than achieving what is best for every individual child. Sadly, these two aims can often conflict.

22 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by University Council of Modern Languages (UCML)

UCML is the overarching national organisation which represents the interests of modern languages, linguistics and area studies in higher education throughout the United Kingdom. It counts among its members virtually all University Departments and professional associations concerned with the study of Modern Languages.

1. Given the catastrophic fall in numbers of secondary school pupils studying one or more modern languages, UCML welcomes the public recognition through the English Baccalaureate of the importance of languages. The House of Lords in recent debates, the Government through Ministers' statements, and a number of bodies such as the CBI and British Academy have explicitly recognised the importance of language study both for the national economy and for the personal and intellectual development of future citizens.
2. The inclusion of a modern or classical language alongside English, Maths, two science qualifications and history or geography underlines that a language is a demanding subject of study whose acquisition deserves recognition, and this too we welcome.
3. We expect the English Baccalaureate to encourage schools to offer, and pupils to take, a language GCSE which they might not previously have considered, and perhaps to continue language study into post-compulsory education.
4. However, over recent years, a number of alternative schemes of recognition and accreditation, such as ASSET languages, have been developed and adopted, and we believe that these too play a significant role in encouraging pupils to study—and continue studying—languages. Unless such alternative accreditation schemes are given equal prominence in national rankings, the English Baccalaureate risks undermining the development and adoption of schemes which better match the aspirations and abilities of the full range of pupils.
5. There is already plentiful evidence that languages are becoming the preserve of a social and intellectual elite. Robust annual surveys, most recently *Language Trends 2010* (http://www.cilt.org.uk/research_and_statistics.aspx), confirm very clear geographical and socio-economic discrepancies in provision of language study. Data on Key Stage 3 timetabling and Key Stage 4 take-up show how pupils in the North of England, in less privileged areas, and in lower performing schools have less access to foreign languages than in wealthier areas, in selective schools and especially in independent schools. At GCE Advanced Level this difference is glaring: independent schools represent about 7% of England's secondary school pupils, but 29.7%, 27.2% and 34.2% respectively of A level entries in French, German and Spanish, and 42.9%, 42.5% and 48.5% of top A level grades. Of all mainstream university disciplines, Modern Languages has the highest proportion of students from independent schools. If the English Baccalaureate serves only to accentuate the importance of languages in schools which are already academic high achievers, then it risks widening the division between the elite and the mass of UK youngsters who can also benefit from learning languages and use them to make a fuller contribution to society and the national economy. For this reason, we emphasise the need to balance the English Baccalaureate with measures supporting less academic routes to language study, and not to undermine the many initiatives which are successfully involving the whole range of pupils in acquiring linguistic and intercultural skills which will keep them and the country's future workforce in good stead.
6. If the English Baccalaureate leads to the desired increase of take-up of languages at KS4, resources may be needed to ensure there are enough suitably trained teachers.

Two less significant issues have been raised by UCML members:

7. The English Baccalaureate emphasises academic rigour and objectivity across the curriculum. We

have not conducted a full-scale survey, but members have noticed the lobbying for Religious Education, and some at least feel that its inclusion, which would imply equal academic status with Geography and History, might dilute the profile and undermine the purpose of the English Baccalaureate.

8. It is unfortunate that the word 'Baccalaureate' has been chosen, since it is commonly used with other prefixes (eg Scottish, International) and typically implies a higher-level qualification. One UCML member suggested reviving instead the name "Matriculation" with its historical resonances for English secondary education.

22 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by the Governing Body of St Joseph's RC High School

1. THE PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE E-BAC AND ITS VALUE AS A MEASURE OF PUPIL AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

1.1 The Governors were surprised by the speed with which the E-Bac has become a performance measure, appearing without a great deal of notice in the Performance Tables for 2010. If the intention here has been to broaden the curriculum in KS4, to ensure that the educational experience of 14–16 year olds is more rigorous and to discourage the promotion of vocational courses that the coalition appears not to value, then the outcome makes it appear to have been based more on ideological than educational principles.

1.2 The examination success of this school (71% 5+A*–C grades with En & Ma in 2010) has been based upon a wide choice of traditional GCSE subjects. We have no objection to a core of such subjects being prescribed. However, the emphasis must be upon the E-Bac being a valuable qualification for our young people rather than being a performance measure for the school.

1.3 We do perceive benefits of the E-Bac for both the KS4 curriculum and for individual pupils. In particular, we welcome the emphasis upon Modern Foreign Languages, though counsel against it becoming a compulsory subject for the majority (which may be the consequence of the E-Bac being a performance measure).

1.4 We also await the outcome of the Wolf Report into the vocational curriculum. We hope that the report will recognise the opportunities offered by vocational subjects both for increased personalisation and for the self-esteem that comes with success. We fear that a push for 'traditional/academic' subjects will benefit only AG&T pupils.

1.5 There are still questions to be answered about whether or not FE colleges or University admissions will pay any heed to it as an entry qualification.

2. THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE E-BAC

2.1 We strongly urge the committee to recommend that Religious Studies be part of the Humanities aspect of the E-Bac. This is not only because this is a faith school with a track record of success in GCSE Religious Studies. The current Edexcel GCSE syllabus deals with such issues as peace and conflict, rights and responsibilities, crime and punishment, the environment, community cohesion and medical ethics as well as beliefs and values. We believe that pursuing a course of Religious Studies is a more purely 'Humanities' subject than the somewhat narrower remit of some GCSE History or Geography syllabuses and deserves to be included in the E-Bac in its own right.

2.2 We do not have a problem with the uptake of History or Geography at KS4 at St. Joseph's (around 70% of our pupils opt for one or other each year). This is not necessarily true of other schools and the inclusion of Religious Studies would widen choice for pupils at KS4.

2.3 If this is a qualification for the 21st century where is ICT?

3. THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE E-BAC FOR PUPILS, SCHOOLS AND EMPLOYERS

3.1 Our biggest concern here is that schools will devote a disproportionate amount of time in the curriculum to the E-Bac subjects. The danger is that other subjects will become marginalised and that a measure intended to broaden the curriculum actually achieves the opposite.

3.2 We would have to be careful that emphasis on E-Bac would not limit choice for the more able students, whilst lower ability students might be discouraged from doing these subjects altogether through shortage of specialist staff. There is surely a risk that the curriculum will be narrowed for the most able, whilst those who thrive on practical or creative rather than classroom-based learning will be disadvantaged (bearing in mind that GCSEs may not be the most appropriate route to success for some students).

3.3 As a Governing Body we have always felt that the Arts are the heartbeat of the school and we are strong in Drama, Music and Art. We have a skilled and highly successful Design and Technology Department which offers: Electronics, Resistant Materials, Textiles, Food Technology and Product Design. As a Specialist Sports College of long-standing we have witnessed first-hand the impact of PE and Sport on self-esteem, health and

leadership. A large proportion of our pupils choose to pursue these areas of study post-16. These areas of the curriculum have, we believe, improved the employability of our pupils, not least because the creative and leisure industries in this country are among our largest employers!

We would hate to see these areas of the curriculum relegated to a second-class status because they are not considered important enough to be performance indicators. There is already evidence in discussion with colleagues that the E-Bac in its current form has begun to drive the curriculum in some schools in exactly the same way that previous performance indicators have done in the past. Our impression was that the White Paper intended to discourage the target culture.

4. INTERNATIONAL COMPARATORS FOR THE E-BAC

4.1 As a Governing Body we welcome any measure which rewards pupils who pursue a rounded course of study which includes academic qualifications, personal and interpersonal skills and an element of work-related learning. This is what we understand the Baccalaureate to mean in other countries.

Without considering the above points we are not sure that the E-Bac, as it currently stands, measures up.

22 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by ConstructionSkills

SUMMARY

1. It is understood that the intention is to recognise and reward students who take a broad range of subjects and thereby halt the decline in take-up of less popular subjects, such as foreign languages and history. Whilst we applaud the focus on measures designed to improve performance we have concerns that this may represent a very narrow curriculum model.

2. There is little evidence that the government has consulted or convinced teachers, students, parents, and importantly employers about the E-Bac.

3. Employers in the construction sector would welcome greater clarity about the purpose of the E-Bac. We have seen nothing to suggest advice was taken from employers on which subjects to include in the E-Bac.

4. We support the right of every child to take GCSEs in the five E-Bac areas but it is a narrow selection and not right for everybody.

5. Not all schools will be equipped or staffed to cope with the rise in take up of the preferred subjects.

6. There may be pressure for schools to pull out of all Diploma partnerships, especially with construction and built environment employers, even though these have benefited students.

7. Consideration could be given to incorporating a wider range of qualifications within the E-Bac umbrella.

8. Consideration to complementary E-Bac to reflect other forms of learning.

INTRODUCTION

9. ConstructionSkills is a partnership between the Construction Industry Council, CITB-ConstructionSkills Northern Ireland and CITB-ConstructionSkills, and is committed to delivering industry-led skills and training solutions through the Sector Skills Agreement for construction.

10. We work to negotiate the best partnership and funding deals for the construction industry to help raise standards and we develop the skills products and services employers need.

11. In 2003, we were given a licence to operate as a Sector Skills Council. We set up a partnership so that we could deliver value across the industry, from the trades to professional sectors.

12. We work to:

- reduce skills shortages;
- improve business performance;
- bring a diverse range of people into the industry;
- improve learning for apprenticeships, higher and further education; and
- develop professional occupational standards.

13. We have undergone a stringent government process to renew our Sector Skills Council licence. This process was completed in November 2009.

14. ConstructionSkills is a member of the Built Environment Skills Alliance (BESA), which exists to be the strategic voice on the collective and shared skills agenda across the built environment.

15. ConstructionSkills and its partner Sector Skills Councils have worked closely with employers, local authorities, schools and colleges in order to develop a robust and challenging qualification, the Diploma in Construction and the Built Environment. It gives students a mix of practical knowledge and academic challenges.

16. Previously we have supported a range of qualification developments aimed at 14 to 19 learners including:

17. Vocational GCSEs (the pilot GCSE in Construction and the Built Environment was withdrawn by the qualification regulators when the government at the time decided to develop a range of applied Diplomas).

18. GNVQs (the General National Vocational Qualification, including the GNVQ for the Construction and Built Environment was supported by the government but subsequently abandoned to be replaced in part by vocational GCSEs).

19. We had earlier also provided substantial support for the establishment of a significant number of construction curriculum centres in schools that encouraged the delivery of curriculum in the context of construction. This initiative was supported by a system of certification that was withdrawn when we were asked to support the development of the pilot vocational GCSE and subsequently the Diploma.

RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS RAISED IN THE CALL FOR EVIDENCE

The purpose and benefits of the E-Bac and its value as a measure of pupil and school performance

20. It is understood that the intention is to recognise and reward students who take a broad range of subjects and thereby halt the decline in take-up of less popular subjects, such as foreign languages and history. Whilst we applaud the focus on measures designed to improve performance we have concerns that this may represent a very narrow curriculum model.

21. Schools and a wide range of other partners have spent time, money and resources implementing educational reforms, changing curriculum models, introducing new courses such as the Diplomas, and appointing staff on the strength of their expertise in the understanding of these pedagogies and content. Most have developed curriculum models which offer something to all their students, regardless of ability. They have developed vocational courses alongside more traditional curriculum models.

22. That the E-Bac has been retrospectively applied to schools to judge their GCSE results from last year is understandably controversial. The term “Baccalaurate” is perhaps part of the problem. E-Bac is not a qualification or qualification “wrapper”—it is being used by government as an additional measure of attainment. Neither does it promote a broad programme of study including community action or active citizenship that other models offer.

23. There is little evidence that the government has consulted or convinced teachers, students, parents, and importantly employers about the E-Bac.

24. Concerns have been expressed which we share that pupils may now find themselves directed into relatively narrow pathways at schools. Option blocks may be re-structured and choice could be less. There have already been reports of some schools asking current Year 10 students to change courses now, halfway through the year.

25. Employers in the construction sector would welcome greater clarity about the purpose of the E-Bac. In addition, we would appreciate a dialogue about ways in which the current arrangements can be developed over time so that they provide a sounder and more flexible basis for the measurement of value and avoid promoting a narrow basis for delivery.

The choice of subjects included in the E-Bac

26. This year it is understood that the DfE have identified over 280 separate qualifications across the five subject areas that could count towards the E-Bac. These include:

- English (all listed qualifications are English or English Language in some form).
- Maths.
- Science (includes single and double awards).
- Humanities (listed qualifications include either History or Geography in some form).
- Languages (listed qualifications range from Classical Greek to Chinese Mandarin).

27. We have seen nothing to suggest advice was taken from employers on which subjects to include in the E-Bac.

28. We understand that under the current requirements for the E-Bac, someone doing subjects such as Latin and ancient history is going to get recognition for it, while another doing ICT, engineering or construction related courses will not. Not only are we concerned about the rationale for the rules of combination for the E-Bac but would also question the extent to which this will ensure a fully rounded and broad form of education.

29. There is a case for arguing that if the government believes the E-Bac subjects are absolutely required as a basis for future progression then it should make them compulsory.

The implications of the E-Bac for pupils, schools and employers

30. We support the right of every child to take GCSEs in the five E-Bac areas but it is a narrow selection and not right for everybody. Many feel that it is not a fair way to judge all children and all schools and there is a suggestion or implication that some are second best.

31. There also seems to be some evidence of unhappiness among school leaders and predictions that the new measure is already leading to radical and often controversial, changes in the curriculum offered by some schools. Some have predicted that a number of subjects, including business studies, ICT, sociology, product design, construction, health and social care and catering, will decline in pupil numbers. Some schools, particularly those delivering the full Diploma may have students who have specialised in curriculum areas: but this will now become very difficult given the time the E-Bac takes up.

32. It will constrain the ability of pupils to specialise in areas of the curriculum they enjoy and may therefore have serious implications for the design and delivery of a relevant curriculum that has the potential to engage and motivate pupils and thereby lead to higher levels of achievement and performance. We are aware that some schools are unsure about offering the Diploma qualification which pupils will find almost impossible to take alongside the E-Bac: there may be pressure for schools to pull out of all Diploma partnerships, especially with construction and built environment employers, even though these have benefited students.

33. A consequence of this may be a marked decline in the take up of subjects not deemed worthy of inclusion. This is because many pupils may have just one or two options as opposed to the three or four they might have expected previously.

34. We are also concerned that not all schools will be equipped or staffed to cope with the rise in take up of the preferred subjects. Many schools will not have the quality or depth of staff expertise and this could lead to poor or inadequate teaching. There might also be implications for the engagement of students who may not appreciate having to continue to study subjects they either don't enjoy or have little aptitude for.

International comparators for the E-Bac

35. Wider international references throughout the White Paper, is a belief that we have a lot to learn from other countries. We recognize that the E-Bac is a mechanism aimed at helping to ensure schools offer a balanced core up to the age of 16. However, it doesn't appear to say anything about other forms of learning. Other forms of learning, especially applied and vocationally-relevant, that can be very important may end up being devalued or even more worryingly dismissed altogether. Many high performing PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) countries appear to be looking to add breadth and to encourage greater breadth we would suggest that consideration should be given to incorporating a wider range of qualifications within the E-Bac umbrella.

36. Another option if there is to be a general E-Bac is to give consideration to complementary E-Bac to reflect other forms of learning; we understand that for example the Baker-Dearing Trust is, for instance, looking at one for its 14–19 technical schools. In France for example, and Germany there are vocational alternatives to a general E-Bac and this is something that deserves serious consideration especially, for example, to support delivery in UTCs.

37. As Tim Oates⁷⁰ has stressed, one key problem in using the results of international surveys is the simple, yet difficult, problem of time lag. He rightly points out that it is a mistake to look at the success of a national system in the surveys and then assume that the country's current arrangements should be copied. In reality, we can only use the outcomes of these surveys to make claims about the form of the system which preceded the testing in these surveys—the system as it existed some years ago.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

38. We have a number of recommendations to suggest to ensure that we build on achievements to date and deliver a curriculum that is engaging and motivating for pupils.

39. That there should be a careful and considered consultation regarding the rationale for the future development of the E-Bac including proposals for additional pathways that reflect a more applied basis for learning.

40. That further work should be undertaken to consider which subjects to include.

41. That there should be clarity about our aims and what we want our school achievements to be.

42. That we are specific about how we value achievements and in particular are specific about whether we want to do (equally) well in all subjects.

⁷⁰ *Could do better: Using international comparisons to refine the National Curriculum in England*, Tim Oates, Cambridge Assessment 18 November 2010 p.11

43. That we consider what expected and unforeseen effects would likely result from a policy of pursuing higher performance in science, English, mathematics, humanities and languages have on the overall breadth of the curriculum?

44. That if the current model for the E-Bac is carried forward without change that different contexts (such as the applied and vocationally relevant) should be woven into lessons, and the learning environment.

22 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by the Department of Theology and Religion, Durham University

THE ENGLISH BACCALAUREATE AND RELIGIOUS STUDIES

1. The Department of Theology and Religion at Durham University is dismayed to learn that GCSE Religious Studies (RS) will not be one of the Humanities options (along with History, Ancient History and Geography) for the proposed English Baccalaureate (E-Bac). This exclusion will have a number of deleterious results for the study of religion (including biblical studies, philosophy of religion and ethics) in both schools and at university, and this at a time when knowledge and understanding of religion has never been more important for social harmony and the well-being of society.

2. It is almost inevitable that the exclusion of RS from the Baccalaureate will tempt schools to withdraw some if not all of the resources presently assigned to RS in order to concentrate on Baccalaureate subjects, those subjects that will alone count toward the evaluation of schools and their placing in league tables. One could hardly expect schools to do otherwise, and there is evidence that this is already happening. The National Association of Teachers of Religious Education (NATRE) has recently polled 790 schools, and found that nearly one in three are intending to reduce the amount of time devoted to teaching RS as a direct result of the proposed E-Bac.

3. As you will be aware, the study of religion has become increasingly popular among school students, with increasing numbers choosing to take Religious Studies GCSE and A-Level. But the exclusion of RS from the E-Bac will severely discourage this interest, when instead it should surely be fostered. For when taught well, RS is almost a Baccalaureate in itself, since it involves the study of texts and histories, peoples and cultures, theological ideas and philosophical arguments. When the subject is carried through to university it also involves the study of languages—ancient and modern—and a variety of disciplines and methods, from anthropology to theology. In addition, both media coverage and rigorous research in the humanities and the social sciences have increasingly confronted us with the relevance of religious identity and practices in domestic and global affairs today. Restricting access to or discouraging informed debate on such issues is unwise and suggests a worrying disconnection from current social trends.

4. Religious Studies is almost unique in being both academically rigorous and of vital interest and relevance to young people who, when allowed, are intensely concerned with questions of world-view and life-direction for which RS can provide a disciplined framework. It enables students to discuss and debate a range of viewpoints and philosophies with the care and discretion that they deserve. RS should be at the heart of any well-orchestrated curriculum.

5. We thus urge the Committee to reconsider the Humanities options for the E-Bac and to include RS among them, for when taught properly RS both informs and incites reflection on questions and issues that are vital for personal and social well-being. When included as an option in the E-Bac, GCSE Religious Studies will permit more of our young people to explore and develop interests and concerns that may well lead them to study the subject at A-Level and then at university, where many such students discover a vocation to teach Religious Studies in school. This virtuous circle should not be imperilled by the otherwise laudable introduction of the English Baccalaureate.

22 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Alice Charnley, PGCE Student

I am writing regarding the proposal to introduce the E-Bac. I fully support the Government's desire to reverse the dumbing down of education over the past decade and believe that the E-Bac will be one amongst a number of initiatives required to accomplish this.

1. THE PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE E-BAC AND ITS VALUE AS A MEASURE OF PUPIL AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

The E-Bac will restore academic subjects to the core of the 11–16 curriculum. The recent obsession with pupils achieving five A*–C has resulted in pupils being discouraged from taking academic subjects and pushed towards subjects such as health and social care, hairdressing and sport. These subjects are excellent career paths for some of our pupils. However, there is plenty of time to learn such skills post-16 and for the majority a more academic curriculum would be more appropriate. I passionately believe that the purpose of education is to train brains and academic subjects achieve this if they are well taught. Our pupils **MUST** be taught to

think for themselves and academic subjects are a means to this end. Pupils and parents repeatedly complain that French, for example, is useless to their pupils but this is false. It is true that most people don't use the actual French that they learnt at school in their everyday lives. They do, however, need the skills that language learning provides: the ability to apply knowledge, reasoning, communication skills and higher order thinking skills. Furthermore, learning how to learn any language will help them to learn other languages in the future and this is essential for our workforce. I therefore agree that it is vital that the E-Bac is implemented because it will restore the subjects which, in the long term, are the most useful to most of our children, to the centre of the curriculum.

2. THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE E-BAC

As a languages graduate I will focus on the need for languages to be included in the curriculum. Languages are undoubtedly challenging. This is why so many pupils opt out but it is also why language graduates are so employable. As Richard Hardie, Vice Chair of UBS, remarked about candidates at interview who have a degree in languages: "Apart from anything else, it's difficult to acquire a language so they have proved, as too many young people who come to see us cannot prove, that they've been able to do something difficult". Languages is unique in the extent to which it challenges pupils. In order for it to be exploited to its maximum capacity, however, the KS4 curriculum should be changed so that it focuses more on knowledge of language, grammar and understanding rather than the status quo which is noun heavy and which relies on a pupil's capacity to memorise chunks of text. Memorisation and recitation, if it is never applied in new contexts, is not useful to the pupils.

I therefore believe that languages absolutely must be included in the E-Bac because they train pupils' minds in different ways to other subjects' more factual-based content because of the constant requirement to apply new knowledge.

3. THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE E-BAC FOR PUPILS, SCHOOLS AND EMPLOYERS

The Government should seriously consider moving away from a target obsessed, league table approach to education. This approach means that pupils are no longer responsible for their learning. Teachers can spoon-feed children to allow them to get a C grade but that pupil will sink in sixth form and particularly in the real world where an employer will not do everything for them. If the E-Bac can be implemented without reinforcing the league table approach then I think it could be a positive initiative. If, however, it becomes simply another stick with which to beat teachers, it should be dropped. Pupils must meet their teachers halfway and start to take responsibility for their own learning.

Perhaps the E-Bac could take a more reasonable approach and acknowledge that an E in languages has, potentially, more value than a C a much less difficult subject so that some less academically-gifted children can still benefit from all that language learning has to offer them.

22 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by The Girls' Schools Association (GSA)

1. THE PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE E-BAC AND ITS VALUE AS A MEASURE OF PUPIL AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE.

GSA welcomes the principle behind the introduction of the E-Bac as a means to encourage a broad set of academic studies at age 16 and which recognises the value of modern foreign languages and science. However we have concerns about using the E-Bac as a measure of pupil and school performance. The E-Bac will favour academic pupils and schools and will be less valid as a measure of performance for schools with a high proportion of less academic students or those with some special educational needs for whom an academic curriculum as prescribed by the E-Bac is not suitable. Not all schools will see the combination of GCSEs required to achieve the E-Bac as being the appropriate set of qualifications for their pupils. The E-Bac in its current form could therefore seriously under-represent the quality and performance of many outstanding schools.

2. THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE E-BAC

2.1 *Restricted choice*

The highly prescribed nature of the subjects included in the E-Bac reduces pupils' scope for choice at GCSE level. In order to meet the E-Bac, pupils' choice of additional subjects will be restricted resulting in less opportunity for personalised learning. This could jeopardise the future of many important humanities subjects, both in school and higher education. A restricted choice of GCSE subjects will inevitably lead to a narrowing of choice at A level as pupils who have not studied a particular subject at GCSE are less likely to pursue it at an advanced level. In turn, this could lead to a reduction in applications to a whole range of humanities subjects at degree level. The E-Bac aims to steer schools into a preferred model which sits uneasily with the intentions of the government, as set out in the White Paper, to reduce unnecessary prescription, bureaucracy and central

control throughout the education system. Decisions on curriculum should be left to schools with professional teaching staff helping students and their parents to make decisions about subject choice.

2.2 Humanities subjects

The very narrow definition of a humanities subject is particularly concerning as it completely dismisses a whole raft of valuable and academically important humanities subjects such as RS. We would recommend that the definition of a humanities subject is widened to include a broader range of subject to ensure that pupils are genuinely offered a broad and rounded education.

2.3 Languages

GSA supports any measure that encourages a greater take up of languages, but the current set of GCSE language courses are not suitable for all students and the E-Bac is limited in the courses that it will recognise. Different types of language qualifications should be included to accommodate the needs of a broad range of students, not just those who are more academically inclined. This will ensure that all students genuinely have a chance to pursue foreign language learning to the age of 16.

3. THE IMPLICATION OF THE E-BAC FOR PUPILS, SCHOOLS AND EMPLOYER

3.1 Pupils

The E-Bac as currently defined is likely to lead to a more narrowly defined curriculum at aged 16 for many pupils giving them less opportunity to personalise their learning. It is also likely to limit their choice of subjects at A level and higher education. Careful consideration need to be given to ensuring that pupils who do not have the academic ability to achieve the E-Bac and for whom, therefore, it is not the best curriculum, do not feel less valued as a result of not being able to attain it.

3.2 Schools

The E-Bac is likely to result in schools re-thinking the KS4 curriculum in order to meet the needs of the E-Bac rather than the needs of their pupils. Teaching staff in subjects not recognised in the E-Bac are likely to feel less valued and see their classes reduced or even no longer offered.

3.3 Employers

We are not convinced that universities or employers will necessarily favour students who present with the E-Bac as an assurance of a broad and rounded education without the inclusion of other subjects that are likely to be essential for the future careers of many pupils.

4. INTERNATIONAL COMPARATORS FOR THE E-BAC

We have no comments to make on this issue

22 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Catherine Hynes, Head of Religious Education, The Champion School

This submission is put forward, respectfully, to point out the seriously problematic unintended consequences of the E-Bac.

SUMMARY

1. The Secretary of State puts forward the highly laudable purpose of the E-Bac is to bring up standards by focusing on traditional subjects, while putting less-emphasis on subjects which are not considered to be so academically rigorous, for instance, the GNVQ in ICT. The unintended consequences are:

- (i) that other subjects which are not on the list for the E-Bac are seen to be less important not only by students but also by Head teachers and senior leadership teams;
- (ii) that the knock-on effect is reduced funding for those subjects, and departments;
- (iii) that there will be very serious implications for Religious Education, if removed from its traditional umbrella of humanities, and more widely for social cohesion;
- (iv) if Religious Studies is not included in the E-Bac for GCSE this will affect all students, as funding is cut at KS3 in community schools, teaching time also is being reduced, thus affecting the moral and ethical development of students which in turn will seriously affect society at large. Almost one in three secondary schools is planning to slash the time devoted to teaching RE from September following the introduction of the English Baccalaureate, according to a survey of almost 800 schools;⁷¹ and

⁷¹ The NATRE survey <http://www.tes.co.uk/article.aspx?storycode=6069266>

- (v) that Islamophobia will be more prevalent and of course the concern, too, is that without a requirement to teach about other Faiths, alongside Atheism, extreme views will go unchallenged.

SUBMITTER

2. I am Head of Religious Education in a Catholic Boys' Secondary School of over 1,000 students, with a mixed Sixth Form.

THE PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE E-BAC AND ITS VALUE AS A MEASURE OF PUPIL AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

3. The Secretary of State is right to push for students to attain English, Maths, Science, Languages and the Humanities in order to help students to obtain good jobs, to contribute to society, to help build a thriving economy and in order for this country to compete at its weight, or above its weight, on the world stage.

The exclusion of Religious Studies from this list, however, is unhelpful. In English, Religious Studies aides the understanding of plays like Hamlet, poetry, culture and tradition. In Science, Religious Studies aides the critical analysis of contemporary scientific ethical issues such as issues surrounding cloning. In Languages, Religious Studies leads to an understanding of cultures and faiths which helps the student to get a sense not only of the language but of the cultural identity of those who live within that society. In History teaching, for example, the Holocaust is compulsory at KS3, again Religious Studies helps students to channel their thoughts and feelings so that they can see the dangers of racism and understand, among others, the Jewish faith in order to develop a respect for all people.

4. I agree that school performance must be judged on academic rigour, and Religious Studies certainly has this, but a school which turns out academically bright racists, or bright students who have no understanding of ethics would not, in my view, be worthy of the title of a high-achieving school.

THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE E-BAC

5. As above, clearly Religious Studies must have its place within the English Baccalaureate both for reasons of academic rigour, which is highlighted by Oxford and Cambridge having their own theology departments, and for the development of the whole person both ethically and academically.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

6. To give Religious Studies its rightful place among the Humanities in order to give a student a well-rounded education.

7. Alongside the above I have heard a suggestion that an "E-Bac plus one" might be put forward. This would mean: English, Maths, Science, Languages, Humanities (including RS) and then a particular subject which could be a school's specialism. This would seem fairer and could help with the inclusion of more artistic subjects, such as art or music.

22 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Michael Loveland

EVIDENCE SUPPORTING THE INCLUSION OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES FULL GCSE IN THE HUMANITIES SECTION OF THE ENGLISH BACCALAUREATE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This evidence is in support of including RS GCSE as part of the English Baccalaureate. It covers:

- My qualifications.
- A comparison of RS with history and geography.
- An analysis of teaching and learning in an outstanding school.
- The academic skills and knowledge which RS delivers.
- The career path of those who have taken it.
- The testimony of two students who have taken the subject.

FACTUAL INFORMATION

1. My name is Michael Loveland. I have taught Religious Studies across the age and ability range at secondary level since 1984, and at present, in addition to leading the Teaching and Learning in one of our leading, outstanding Grammar Schools, Wirral Grammar School for Girls, I head the Religious Studies Department, teaching to A level. I have also taught history and Latin in my teaching career. As a long serving practitioner in one of the most successful and academic Religious Studies Departments I would like to submit this evidence to the review of the English Baccalaureate.

2. The first area of evidence that I would like to address is the academic complexity of Religious Studies when compared with other humanity subjects, with a view to showing an academic parity. I would ask you to compare these questions taken from the AQA specification B, which I currently teach:

“As long as people have free will, there will be evil.”

Do you agree? Give reasons for your answer, showing you have thought about more than one point of view. Refer to religious arguments in your answer. (6 marks)

Academic analysis of such a question by the average 16 year old requires skills of evaluation, philosophical reflection and an understanding of basic determinist arguments, as well as an insight into Augustinian thought from the 5th century. It must be taught through didactic insight, a traditional and disciplined study, and the ability of the pupil to listen reflectively and have excellent subject knowledge.

3. Let us compare this with the similar questions in history and geography:

Explain the consequences of Prohibition for the USA in the 1920s. (6 marks)

Using an example you have studied, explain how conservation methods are protecting coastal environments. (5 marks)

4. Note that each question has a similar mark requirement, and whilst the skills under assessment are going to vary from question to question and from paper to paper, the essential standard that is being looked for is certainly comparable. Each paper develops different types of skills in different questions: I have shown the links below if you would find it helpful to look at this.

5. These papers are in the public domain and can be accessed here:

RS: <http://bit.ly/ic0aCr>

History: <http://bit.ly/i9E7jb>

Geography: <http://bit.ly/fOEL2c>

6. As the school leader responsible for teaching and learning I have watched and assessed many lessons in a diverse range of subjects in all academic disciplines. Clearly the way in which the school curriculum is shaped is designed to provide a rounded, structured learning experience which, in a school like mine, seeks to provide stretching, extension work, to give young learners the chance to develop their thinking and critical ability, so that they can become the professional leaders of the future. As a result we have offered a “humanity” GCSE as a compulsory option. This has involved selecting from history, geography and RS, as have many top schools. There is a reason for this, and a reason for half of all our pupils selecting the subject, and this is reflected in the outstanding gradings that our school has received. We would not seek to provide an option that was “soft” or lacking in academic rigour: clearly it would be a nonsense to do so. Even with the negative situation that has effected Religious Studies with it not being included in the English Baccalaureate we have still attracted a third of all our learners to opt for it. I give this information as further evidence that it is a subject which is valued and valuable in academic terms.

7. So what, then, does RS offer which suggests that it should be included in the English Baccalaureate? The summary of the academic advantages might include:

- Knowledge and understanding of our religious heritage which gives a greater commitment to the values that shape our society.
- Knowledge and understanding of our moral structures, allowing the pupils to make morally responsible decisions.
- The ability to evaluate academically the apparent paradoxes which they will have to face in their cultural and moral lives.
- The ability to relate to people with a range of backgrounds and belief systems and to understand their ethos and culture.
- The ability to form ideas about spirituality and morality which are to their advantage and the advantage of the wider society.
- The ability to relate to wider society in a responsible and empathetic way.

8. The destination of last year’s leavers is indicative of the academic profile of the subject. This, obviously, refers to those who have left having taken the subject to A level, as our GCSE students go on to a range of subjects which is too diverse to cover.

Accountancy	1
Architecture	1
Middle Eastern Studies	1
Drama	1
Education	3
Journalism	1
Medicine	2
Modern Foreign Language	2

Philosophy	3
Psychology	2
RS/ theology	2
Science	2
Service Profession courses	3

This shows that the subject has enabled our top learners to access courses of a complex academic nature and, as can be seen, able to access a diverse range of degree courses ranging from intense scientific courses such as medicine, to subjects requiring a very different skills set such as the study of languages at Durham and Nottingham.

9. I have included the testimony of two people. The first is a former student who has taken the subject forward and made it the focus of her academic life. The second is a current A level student who is an applicant for Law at Liverpool University.

10. Barbara Corfield.

In secondary school, I found it increasingly frustrating that despite all of my hard work, my grades were mostly average. I did not excel in any particular area which created its own difficulties in making future decisions regarding further education or career options. I made a conscious decision to choose G.C.S.E. subjects which I enjoyed, and regardless of the final grade achieved, would be most likely to stick at. I found that Religious Studies gave me the opportunity to explore topics relating not only to world religions, but to wider sociological and moral questions which were relevant to decisions made by myself and the wider world every day. This study allowed me to see the benefit of other areas, for example Sociology and Business which I also went on to study at A-level. Religious Studies has been the foundation of my interest in the wider society, and was a catalyst in my involvement with charity work, fundraising, and promoting awareness of minority groups. I am now studying a degree in Humanities with a Religious Studies specialism, with a view to entering teaching. My aim is to empower pupils to explore the subject not only as an educational qualification, but as a gateway to further sociological, political, and economic awareness.

11. Laura Hardman.

From having the chance to study religious education it offers the opportunity to become more open minded and teaches you to understand our society and other cultures' societies from many different perspectives. Every thought you have is valid as this subject teaches you to explain your thoughts further than just a simple statement of opinion. It doesn't just teach about religion, it gives a huge range of knowledge including history ranging from wars to great philosophers who have altered the way we think, to the health care systems. Personally, from studying RS I have not just gained academic skills, but skills that be used in many situations throughout my life. I am also studying Law and English Language and I feel that the academic skills are comparable in all three subjects. I am currently applying for Law at Liverpool University.

12. RECOMMENDATION FOR ACTION

I am aware that one of the arguments that have been put forward for not including RS in the English Baccalaureate is because it is already a compulsory subject. I must stress that the difference between compulsory Religious Education and full GCSE Religious Studies is a major academic difference. This evidence is strongly in support of the full course; it is not my contention that the shorter course should be included. I am therefore recommending that Religious Studies full GCSE be included as part of the humanity component in the English Baccalaureate.

22 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by The Independent School Association (ISA)

1. ISA welcomes the intention behind the introduction of the E-Bac and it does provide a good measure of academic rigour. However, we are concerned that its introduction may lead to a restricted curriculum and a lack of curriculum development. As an association of independent schools we feel strongly that it must be left for individual schools to design both the structure and content of the curriculum to best suit their pupils.

2. We have particular concerns about the narrow range of subjects included in the E-bac. This is especially the case in relation to the definition of Humanities (only ancient history, history and geography). There are a number of other subjects which could be included in this definition, the most notable omission being Religious Studies.

3. The introduction of the E-Bac in its current form is also likely to lead to a reduction in the number of pupils taking creative subjects and we feel that this is a retrograde step.

4. We are in favour of the inclusion of a foreign language within the set of E-Bac subjects.

5. The fact that Edexcel's IGCSE specifications have not been recognised by the DfE will lead to many pupils in the independent sector not obtaining the E-Bac as they may have taken one or more Edexcel IGCSEs.

6. We are opposed to the retrospective introduction of the E-Bac and especially to its use as a performance measure. This will inevitably lead to schools designing their curriculum to assist their league table position, rather than to suit the needs of their individual pupils.

7. As it stands at present the E-Bac is not a qualification and so is not certificated. We would not be in favour of any further development along the lines of introducing some form of certification, as this is likely to lead to even further prescription of the curriculum.

22 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Don Henson, Council for British Archaeology

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The CBA welcomes the introduction of an English Baccalaureate in principle, but a lot of thought needs to go into its structure and content.

2. The Baccalaureate should be clearly stated to be an entitlement of pupils to relevant and useful learning.

3. The Baccalaureate must avoid marginalising vocational subjects as somehow second class.

4. Consideration should be given to a progressive structure for the Baccalaureate that covers all areas of learning while still providing for an academic core.

5. The CBA welcomes the inclusion of humanities within the Baccalaureate. We further believe that history should be a compulsory subject at 14–16, and that this can be achieved while still allowing pupil choice of other humanities.

6. The issue of having adequately trained teachers to deliver the Baccalaureate should be addressed.

7. Consideration should be given to the use of the term “baccalaureate”, implying parity with the Welsh Baccalaureate and the International Baccalaureate, if the structure and content of the English Baccalaureate end up not being comparable.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Government examine the case for a Baccalaureate covering all six areas of learning at 14–16: literacy and communication; maths and numeracy; physical sciences; humanities and social sciences; creative arts; sports and leisure.

2. That history be made a compulsory subject at 14–16 as part of the Baccalaureate.

3. That GCSEs in history be revised to offer greater breadth of study, and that the GCSE History Pilot be made available to all schools.

1. Purpose and benefits

1.1 The purpose of the Baccalaureate as stated in the Schools White Paper 2010 is to provide promote “a broad academic core at 16 and a rounded education”. This is to be welcomed, although there needs to be a consensus on what that broad academic core should be (see below under Choice of subjects). Likewise, there needs to be agreement on what constitutes a rounded education. At the very least it should be an education that enables pupils to follow further education and training at 16+ according to their personal needs. It should therefore be broad enough to allow for whatever choices are taken at 16+ to be based on prior learning at 14 to 16.

1.2 A side-effect of the Baccalaureate will be a means of assessing schools’ performance in delivering a broad and rounded education. It needs to be carefully highlighted that the Baccalaureate is not a performance measure but an entitlement of pupils to relevant and useful learning. It will however be beneficial to move away from a too narrow definition of schools’ effectiveness in previous performance tables.

1.3 The Baccalaureate should help pupils applying to university for mainstream academic courses to identify courses that are relevant for university entry. The danger however of this is to focus attention on a still narrow range of academic subjects, with the implication that practical or vocational subjects are of less value. This problem can be tackled by an adequate definition of the subject covered by the Baccalaureate.

2. Choice of subjects

2.1 We welcome the inclusion of humanities as we believe that education is about more than supplying trained workers, and should be the education of the individual as a rounded and resourceful person. If the aim of the baccalaureate is to encourage a more rounded educational offer to pupils, then it needs to cover all those areas of learning that provide such a rounded education. Attempts to define these areas can be found in descriptions of learning in a range of educational levels and qualifications. For example, Foundation and Early Years Learning in England has six areas of learning: communication, language and literacy; mathematical

development; knowledge of the world; personal social and emotional development; creative development; physical development. The International Baccalaureate has six subject groups and two other areas of learning: native language; second language; maths and computer science; experimental sciences; individuals and societies; arts; theory of knowledge; creativity, action, service. A grouping of subject areas could be created to cover the range of qualifications available at GCSE, e.g. literacy and communication; maths and numeracy; physical sciences; humanities and social sciences; creative arts; sports and leisure. This would be a useful starting point for structuring the Baccalaureate.

2.2 Literacy and numeracy are the building blocks of further knowledge, self expression and life skills, and should be the compulsory core of any baccalaureate. Science provides an essential understanding of the world, and humanities & social sciences offer the essential understanding of people and society, which are both necessary for further employment and adult life. Beyond these, arts and sport/leisure provide the enrichment that makes life more than a mere existence. A good baccalaureate will therefore consist of learning one's native language and maths, learning a second language, at least one science and at least one humanity or social science as the bare minimum. This would have a core of five subjects, to which the student could add others according to their own wishes. A more extended (progressive) baccalaureate could strengthen this with stipulating at least two sciences and two humanities, and at least one creative arts and one sports and leisure subject. This would cover all areas of learning with nine subjects, but still leave the choice of subjects to the student, and allow the appropriate pathway towards further academic study or vocational courses that is suited to the student. If the aim is to ensure a basic academic core of learning then there could be a stipulation that five out of the nine subjects be academic, leaving the choice of which five to the student.

2.3 We would argue strongly that all pupils should learn at least one of the core sciences (biology, chemistry or physics) and that they should all learn history as a core humanity. In either a standard or extended model of baccalaureate this would still allow room for choice of other subjects.

2.4 Why history? The past influences every aspect of the present. Knowing the history of one's own nation is part of the necessary knowledge for informed citizenship. Knowing wider history is the essential for understanding other cultures and Britain's place in the world. Without knowing the past, it is hard to make sense of today's world and we all become prey to unscrupulous demagogues and rogues. More than this, history gives us access to different times and places. It can fire the imagination and inspire. It can also help to develop skills of understanding evidence, marshalling arguments and making sense of abundant and disparate data; all essential skills for life and work. History is a true foundation subject in that it supports a wide range of further subjects, and action and thought outside of itself. One of its most important links is with heritage, an important part of the UK economy with local jobs.

3. *Implications*

3.1 The Baccalaureate will ensure encourage schools to avoid using easy options to raise their position in league tables. The subjects qualifying for the Baccalaureate will receive a boost. This will demand teacher with appropriate skills, and the potential for teacher shortages to be addressed. There will need to be careful thought as to what qualifications are validated for teaching at 14–16, and whether they will qualify for the Baccalaureate or not. Will non-Baccalaureate qualifications be seen as second-rate?

4. *International comparators for the E-Bac*

4.1 Although not an international comparator, we feel the DfE should look at the Welsh Baccalaureate. This is very different in structure to that proposed for England. It offers a possible model to use, but it seems likely that the English and Welsh Baccalaureates end up as quite different in structure and scope. There is potential for confusion between the two. This raises the question of whether "baccalaureate" is the right term to use in England.

4.2 This question of terminology is further emphasised by the existence of the well established International Baccalaureate (IB). Unless the English Baccalaureate carefully structured then it will suffer in comparison with the acknowledged breadth of achievement in learning that the IB offers.

22 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by the Economics, Business and Enterprise Association (EBEA)

THE PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE E-BAC AND ITS VALUE AS A MEASURE OF PUPIL AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

1. The EBEA wholeheartedly agrees with the need to benchmark the nation's education performance against the very best that is available globally. It does not however consider that the E-Bac will enable young people to receive the very best education. It considers that the qualification will be detrimental to the needs of many 14–16 year olds because schools will try to make all children spend as much time as possible learning the narrow range of subjects so that they achieve the best scores possible. Achievement in these subjects will improve but the value added for many young people will be much less than if they were offered broader options at age 14 and a different entitlement curriculum. What is needed is a system which enables 14–19 year

olds to progress into adulthood along different routes according to their abilities, skills and interests. There is a case for some common curriculum assessment at 14 but not at 16.

2. The E-Bac fails to measure school performance. A key purpose of education is to prepare young people for adult working life and for their roles as consumers and as citizens. It helps young people make sense of the rapidly changing and often confusing world they live in, including issues such as poverty, globalisation and sustainability. Only in the last few days David Cameron was promoting the culture of Enterprise and the need to support it. There is therefore a strong case for pupils developing economic and business understanding. Without such learning they will not be prepared to make the most of their abilities, look after themselves economically and make a positive contribution to society.

3. The performance tables for the E-Bac will be used as “league tables”. Grammar Schools and schools with a traditional curriculum with favoured catchment areas will be at the top. The Secretary of State is creating a situation in which schools which have worked hard to improve the curriculum for some children will appear as “failures”.

THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE E-BAC

This question presumes that the E-Bac is the preferred curriculum model at KS4. This is not accepted by the EBEA for the reasons stated above. However if the E-Bac is adopted then our position would be as below:

4. There is clearly value in pupils studying all of the subjects currently included in the E-Bac but it is far too narrow a range of subjects if schools are to be judged by the proportion of pupils achieving all of them. Why not include GCSE Business Studies, GCSE Economics as options and Enterprise education for all young people?

5. There is a danger that if the E-Bac determines “league table” positions schools will drop options such as business studies, which have proved popular and successful, and pupils will end up doing subjects that do not meet their needs. Our informal evidence suggests that many schools are already reducing the availability of business subject options because of the E-Bac.

6. The Government promised to give schools and parents freedoms from government interference. The E-Bac proposal has been imposed without any consultation by the same government and for many outstanding schools puts significant and unwelcome constraints on their curriculum. We would recommend a period of consultation with schools, parents and pupils to ascertain the most effective aggregation of subjects to use in the E- Bac.

7. The extent to which Ofsted uses the E-Bac to judge achievement in schools will be crucial. There is a considerable number of schools (several B&E schools, for example) that have been judged as outstanding by Ofsted, where a high proportion of pupils get 5+ A*-C grades, including maths and English, but where a very low proportion achieve the E-Bac. Will these schools no longer be judged outstanding, even though they can demonstrate considerable success in terms of the progression of students into post-16 learning, higher education and employment? What evidence is there to show that the combination of subjects chosen to be included in the E-Bac are effective in raising economic performance?

8. No attention seems to have been given to the recommended time to be spent on the E-Bac. The choice of subjects depends partly on how much time is available. Schools typically work with 25 hours of teaching a week. Full GCSE subjects typically take about two hours per week. Half GCSEs use one hour per week. There is a case for limiting the time given to the teaching of some subjects to one hour per week allow for a broader entitlement curriculum (E-Bac) and a bigger optional curriculum.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE E-BAC FOR PUPILS, SCHOOLS AND EMPLOYERS

9. For many pupils, the E-Bac will represent a huge narrowing of the curriculum. They will be forced to study subjects that they do not want to study, do not need to study and will achieve poorly in when they are assessed.

10. KS4 options are a milestone for most students, as they empower them and encourage them to start realising the importance of education for the rest of their lives. Introducing the E-Bac means pupils in many schools will have much less choice at age 14. The implication for pupils is they are learning less relevant life skills than they would have if given a choice.

11. There will be several implications for schools. We visited this issue in the 1990's when the Dearing review recommended that foundation subjects should be made optional at KS4 mainly because pupils were so disaffected after having to be taught a lot of subjects that they disliked. One implication of the E-Bac is that more pupils will be disaffected during KS4. Another implication is that staffing will need to be addressed. If all pupils are forced to take a language, there needs to be a significant investment in this area, as historically there has been a shortage of teachers as well as students wanting to learn them. As most schools have a small language department, who is going to be teaching all of these languages? If non-specialist teachers end up teaching KS3 languages, the whole process is devalued.

12. The E-Bac focuses on knowledge and not skills. The implication for employers is that young people will leave school less well prepared for work. In its paper “Fulfilling Potential” in September 2010 the CBI identifies what it sees as essential features for the success of our future system of education. These include enabling all young people to develop a broad range of employability skills, defined as “team working, problem-solving, communication, customer and business awareness and self-management”. The CBI also stresses that a positive attitude is the key foundation for employability. It sums this up as developing a “can do approach”, a readiness to take part and contribute, an openness to new ideas and a drive to make those ideas happen. There is little recognition of these skills in the subjects in the E-Bac.

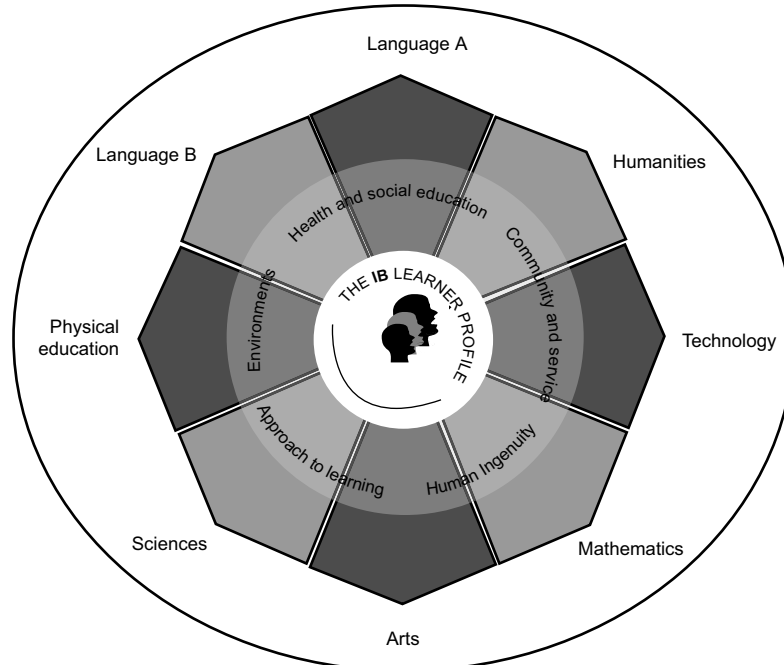
13. There has been heavy investment over the last twenty years to develop enterprise capabilities and enterprising attitudes in schools which are very much in line with those set out by the CBI. More than 50,000 students study a Business GCSE in which “Starting a Small Business” is a major component (Edexcel and AQA awarding bodies). Where enterprise education has been adopted fully it has affected teaching and learning across the curriculum and has influenced the quality of leadership and management. There is strong evidence, particularly in specialist business and enterprise schools, that enterprise education has been an important influence in raising achievement across subjects because it has led to more innovative teaching and made learning more relevant.

INTERNATIONAL COMPARATORS FOR THE E-BAC

14. A first point to make is that international comparators are easy to find but difficult to use effectively. We have several disagreements with the Tim Oates paper “Could do Better” (November 2010) but we do agree with him that it is important to understand the “control factors” that operate in other countries. Engagement in what he calls “crude policy borrowing” is futile. There are three observations that we would draw from this. The first is that the introduction of a system (Baccalaureate) used elsewhere without careful consultation and attention to control factors is crude policy borrowing and is bad practice. Secondly the information below (which provides some evidence from international comparators) needs to be viewed in the context of control factors in those countries. Thirdly an analysis of these control factors is beyond the scope of this paper.

15. Evidence from members who have undertaken research on Bacs internationally suggest that the EBac is likely to be the narrowest of them all. Baccalaureate curriculums can provide a broad curriculum with coherence and progression opportunities. The Middle Years International Baccalaureate for instance is designed for 11–16 year olds and includes arts and technology as well as cross curricular themes and a project. The information below is taken from the IB website <http://www.ibo.org/myp/curriculum/group3/>.

The IB curriculum is illustrated by an octagon with eight academic areas or subject groups surrounding the five areas of interaction. The personal project appears at the centre.



16. The Humanities options in the IB include Geography, History, Economics, Politics, Civics, Sociology, Anthropology and Psychology. We would recommend that the pragmatic offer for UK schools would include RE, Economics, Business Studies and Citizenship with Geography and History.

17. The Core component of the Welsh Bac at both Advanced and Intermediate (ie GCSE) levels includes Community Involvement, Work-Related Education and Key Skills. Most schools and colleges plan and deliver

integrated Business and Enterprise related projects within and without the curriculum in order to attain these aspects.

22 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Association for Citizenship Teaching

1. INTRODUCTION

1(a) The Association for Citizenship Teaching (ACT) exists to further the aims of Citizenship teaching and learning, championing citizenship education to all young people and supporting teachers and schools in delivering the subject. We connect teachers to regional and national networks, offering training, CPD, support and advice. Citizenship education is a statutory subject in secondary schools, with the full range of GCSE and A Level examinations. It should equip young people with the skills and knowledge to exercise their democratic responsibility and engage in public life therefore ACT supports teachers and schools in developing an understanding and appreciation of the three themes of the Citizenship education curriculum: Democracy and Justice; Rights and Responsibilities; and Identity and Diversity, living together in the UK.

1(b) Citizenship is not just about the lesson content it is also about embedding the concepts and practices of democracy into the culture and the school. As well as the Citizenship teacher, ACT therefore supports the whole school in delivering Citizenship education in the classroom and beyond. ACT was founded in 2002 when Citizenship became statutory in schools in England and has some 2000 teacher members across the nation.

2. ACT POSITION ON THE EBAC

2(a) The EBac fails to provide the broad and balanced learning opportunity that defines both the IB and the Welsh Bac and that is inherent in the English National Curriculum. Both the IB and the Welsh Bac reinforce opportunity for young people in taking part in a qualification that truly allows them to demonstrate a wide range of abilities that not only allow the school to measure its success but also fit with the demands of employers and higher education and improve their chances of competing in the global jobs market.

2(b) Incorporating the GCSE Citizenship Studies, which includes an active citizenship project, would ensure the EBac recognises attainment in important political, legal and economic knowledge and values an education that promotes positive and democratic participation in society; an aspect that is to be found within the provision of the best international comparisons. It would also complement the other subjects contained within the EBac and make a link to the National Citizens Service (NCS).

2(c) A “Baccalaureate” is respected for its breadth and balance that values a well rounded education. Both the International Baccalaureate (IB) and the Welsh Baccalaureate (Welsh Bac), have a requirement for civic/community action or active citizenship, which underpins the qualification and enables students to see themselves as active participants in a wider community. This also builds on the existing place of citizenship education/civics in those nations curricula.

2(e) The IB Diploma consists of six subjects (two languages, individuals and societies, experimental sciences, mathematics and computer sciences and the arts) and three core requirements. The IB maintains the concept of a broad and balanced experience for young people in schooling. The three core requirements are an extended essay, theory of knowledge and creativity, action and service (CAS), with the “service” component of CAS being a volunteering placement. These core requirements are intended to “broaden the educational experience and challenge students to apply their knowledge and understanding” and CAS is considered by the IB to be “at the heart of the Diploma programme”.⁷²

2(f) The Welsh Bac, which was launched in 2003 after much thought and research, is similar to the IB in aspiring to a breadth and balance between skills and subject knowledge and consists of a core and options. The core is made up of: key skills; Wales, Europe and the World; work-related education; personal and social education (PSE); and an individual investigation. Options comprise courses and programmes currently offered at GCSE, Vocational GCSE, AS/A levels and Vocational Qualifications (NVQ, BTEC).⁷³ The combination of a core and options means the Welsh approach offers different levels of achievement, breadth and student choice.

2(g) The PSE core component of the Welsh Bac consists of five elements: positive relationships; health and emotional well-being; active citizenship; sustainable development and global citizenship; and activity in a local community. This fifth element requires that candidates spend 15 hours on activity in their community at the Foundation and Intermediate levels and 30 hours at Advanced level.⁷⁴

2(h) The Government has spoken of its desire to raise standards in achievement at GCSE level and also to work with the university sector to streamline the most rigorous subjects that students can take in applying to

⁷² International Baccalaureate. Diploma Programme curriculum—core requirements. Available: <http://www.ibo.org/diploma/curriculum/core/>. Last accessed 25 Feb 2011.

⁷³ Welsh Baccalaureate. The Qualification. Available at: <http://www.wbq.org.uk/about-us>. Last accessed 25 Feb 2011.

⁷⁴ Welsh Baccalaureate. Personal and Social Education (PSE). Available at: <http://www.wbq.org.uk/about-us/personal-and-social-education-pse>. Last accessed 25 Feb 2011.

university courses. Recently Cambridge University Admissions has supplied advice to students considering applying for course there. Citizenship Studies is one the GCSE and A Level subjects that the university acknowledges as being preferable in applying to its course at degree level. To not include Citizenship Studies in the EBac would therefore be at odds with this most prestigious of universities, as well as others.

2(i) Given all of the above, there is still much to commend the idea of an EBac-if created more comprehensively and inclusively and with greater thought.

3. KEY CONCERNS

ACT would like to raise the following points regarding the implications of the EBac for pupils and schools:

3(a) ACT feels that introducing the EBac retrospectively was unhelpful, especially as the Department for Education did not consult with the teaching profession, parents and other stakeholders. In order for the EBac to be successful for students these groups must be taken along on the journey;

3(b) The use of the term “Baccalaureate” is confusing. The EBac is not a pure “Baccalaureate”. It is used by government as an additional measure of attainment and cannot be compared to the ambitions of a true Bac;

3(c) ACT would maintain that the National Citizens Service cannot happen in isolation to Key Stage 4 schooling. A broader EBac including the elements of Citizenship Studies as described above would be an opportunity to ensure that the principle of service is both an academic educational as well as a purely volunteering activity. If included within the EBac, aspects of Citizenship Studies would make that link for students involved in the NCS and provide both continuity and progression.

3(d) The new Ebac measure is potentially exclusive as it only recognises a small range of subjects at GCSE—particularly in the “Humanities” category, which should include other social sciences including Citizenship Studies. This could have a number of consequences: a hierarchy of subjects with some valued more than others; the curriculum in Key Stage 3 being narrowed to focus on attainment in Ebac subjects; and many children feeling excluded or devalued if they don’t achieve the Ebac even though they do achieve in other subjects and equivalent qualifications. In essence, the narrowness of the Ebac fails to exploit the success that many children already find in existing rigorous subjects and it discriminates against the strengths that many schools and students have. Therefore we would argue that results in Citizenship Studies should be included in a broader “School Report to Parents” which embraces performance across a range of subjects and other relevant activities up to age 18 such as volunteering (including for example any measurable outcomes from the National Citizenship Service work undertaken that year).

22 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Park Community School

Please find below my evidence for the E-Bac Inquiry, it is short and mainly a series of questions. I, like many colleagues, am left confused by the purpose of the E-Bac. Some measures are clear and self-explanatory, the E-Bac seems confused. Some subjects included others not. It is described as a qualification when it is a performance measure. It was calculated retrospectively and therefore lacks any fairness if it is to be used as a ‘qualification’ since study for it can only be by chance.

POINTS FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE INQUIRY

1. The purpose is confused, is it a performance measure, or a qualification?
2. The retrospective introduction means a loss of faith in government by the profession and others.
3. The results in 2011 could be even lower than 2010, its retrospective and rushed introduction indicates a lack of understanding about the process of education and attainment measures, courses will already be being studied for examination in 2011. Choices made with advice and guidance based on a different set of priorities.
4. The inclusion of Biblical Hebrew and omission of RE/RS is further evidence of the lack of logic in its rushed introduction. Which of these might provide any use in the work place? What is the academic research which supports the choice of subjects?
5. Is it a measure which all 16 year olds should attain, this is unclear? If it is for all then where are our engineers, computer specialists, artists etc going to come from? If for some, how many and whom?
6. It will increase the number of students taking a language, that is good. It will potentially decrease the number taking other subjects, which for many careers are more important eg arts, technology, IT. Have business leaders really said the E-Bac list is the list of subjects students should study? Or even universities?
7. Some staff will lose their jobs as a result of change to the curriculum and there will be a shortage in certain subjects I expect eg History. Are there any plans to train more? Will the measure still be in place by the time they are qualified?

8. It seems the measure which is most widely despised by the profession. All categories of school have issues with it. There seems to be little support and little clarity. What is its purpose?

22 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by The Curriculum Foundation

1. The Curriculum Foundation is a not-for-profit, member based and politically unaligned organization which aims to support curriculum development projects in the UK and overseas.

2. Its starting point is the conviction that there is a universal core at the heart of every successful curriculum: a core that is common to nurseries, schools and colleges; common to all communities and all nations. This universal core excites young people's imaginations, extends their horizons and equips them with the confidence, ability and desire to improve the world.

3. The Foundation's membership is made up of a range of educational professionals and organizations but the largest single group is headteachers in English schools.

4. It currently advises a number of organisations including British and overseas government departments and non-governmental organisations, local authorities, schools and independent companies to build an understanding of the curriculum's potential.

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 We welcome the Coalition Government's review of qualifications and the curriculum. A review of qualifications at age 16 is essential against a back-drop of change driven by:

- globalization;
- technological advances;
- developing knowledge about the physiology and psychology of learning which is informing pedagogy;
- societal changes affecting cohesion and inclusion; and
- health changes; increased longevity, increased obesity and improved survival of children born with disabilities.

Key Issues

1.2 The E-Bac is of little value as a measure of pupil and school performance because it:

- provides insufficient challenge for all, particularly the most able;
- discriminates against those whose talents lie outside its narrow range of subjects;
- fails to differentiate between pupils and schools performing significantly differently; and
- will skew the curriculum.

1.3 The E-Bac has a limited range of subjects and offers a range that compares poorly with other successful nations because it:

- fails to value the arts, health or technology;
- compares poorly with the IB, which offers business and management, economics, geography, history, information technology in a global society, philosophy, psychology, social and cultural anthropology as part of humanities; and
- is not based upon a sound rationale, vision or set of principles but is merely a basket of individual subjects.

1.4 The E-Bac has potentially damaging implications because it:

- fails to draw on recent independent research about the development of intellect in pupils;
- will encourage schools' to prioritise this performance indicator above the real needs of learners;
- fails to develop employability skills and will have little currency with employers' required skills;and
- is unclear about expected outcome benefits.

1.5 The E-Bac compares unfavourably with other high performing countries because it:

- fails to value the arts, health or technology; important aspects of personal and economic well-being;
- does not embrace the wider competencies valued by HE and employers;
- makes no link to real contexts through elements such as civic participation, entrepreneurship or personal projects; and

- fails to focus on the holistic development of learners.

THE ENGLISH BACCALAUREATE

Memorandum submitted by The Curriculum Foundation a not-for-profit organization which aims to support curriculum development projects in the UK and overseas.

1. *Factual Information*

1.1 The E-Bac is of little value as a measure of pupil and school performance because it:

- provides insufficient challenge, particularly for the most able;
- discriminates against those whose talents lie outside its narrow range of subjects;
- fails to differentiate between pupils and schools performing significantly differently; and
- will skew the curriculum.

1.1.1 The E-Bac is a lever to promote the aspiration that ‘schools should offer pupils a broad range of academic subjects to age 16’. DfE.

1.1.2 A judgement that the E-Bac had been successful in terms of this purpose would not necessarily equate to better outcomes for pupils and the country but we believe it should.

1.1.3 “The Case for Change” identifies the need to make the most of the skills and abilities of its entire workforce. In addition, there is a moral obligation to ensure the life chances of every learner are optimised. Hence a more appropriate criterion against which to judge the E-Bac would be the extent to which it contributes to every individual becoming a successful learner.

1.1.4 As a ‘threshold’ attainment measure (eg 5 A*–C) the E-Bac will differ for learners of different ability levels.

1.1.4.1 Students capable of A* and A grades, are likely to progress to Russell group universities. However, the E-Bac’s 5 ‘C’ grade threshold would not challenge such learners nor provide motivation. More able students may feel that anything above the threshold is acceptable and fail to reach their potential.

1.1.4.2 Those who struggle to achieve lower grades at GCSE would similarly find the E-Bac irrelevant and may be de-motivated if it is promoted as a minimum worthwhile level of achievement.

1.1.4.3 Therefore, the only group for whom the E-Bac could represent a motivating goal is middle range students for whom 5 ‘C’ grades represents a challenge.

1.1.5 With the importance accorded to existing 5 A*–C measures, many schools have developed an “industry” ensuring every possible learner passes the threshold. The same level of energy is rarely devoted outside the C/D borderline group.

1.1.6 Whereas the present focus is on students’ attainment in English, Maths and any three other subjects, the E-Bac would reduce choice.

1.1.7 Just as the E-Bac would fail to distinguish between a student with 10 A* grades and one with 5 C grades, it could present a distorted picture of school performance. A school with 100% of learners achieving the E-Bac might have all achieving 10 A* grades or more or scraped over the 5 C threshold.

1.1.8 The E-Bac takes no account of the progress students have made.

1.2. The E-Bac has a limited range of subjects and offers students a range of study that compares poorly with other successful nations because it:

- fails to value the arts, health or technology;
- compares poorly with the IB, which offers business and management, economics, geography, history, information technology in a global society, philosophy, psychology, social and cultural anthropology as part of humanities; and
- is not based upon a sound rationale, vision or set of principles but is merely a basket of individual subjects.

1.2.1 It is essential that the subjects contained in the E-Bacc are carefully considered because they will determine the focus of learning in English schools.

1.2.2 The range of E-Bac subjects has caused concern amongst many headteachers because it is too narrow to be fit for purpose for many learners, employers or the economy.

1.2.3 Defining the curriculum solely by subjects is questionable. Many curricula describe curriculum coverage with terms such as “skills sets, themes, areas of learning, domains, knowledge, disciplines etc”. Each term has connotations, not least “subject” which implies a narrow form of knowledge. To enable our students to compete in the global economy it is important to examine what is appropriate to the 21st Century. For example, Unesco’s four 21st Century Skills are: Communication, Critical thinking, Creativity and Collaboration.

1.2.4 The subjects identified have caused concern because they are rooted in an obsolete education system inappropriate to the needs of the country now, they are similar to that of the 1904 Board of Education Regulations.

1.2.5 Most successful countries such as Finland, Singapore and New Zealand, base their curriculum on principles, values and aims which the range of learning experiences, including the contribution of subjects, is predicated upon achieving.

1.2.6 In Singapore, for example, the aims of the curriculum include:

- a confident person who has a strong sense of right and wrong, is adaptable and resilient...
- a self-directed learner who takes responsibility for his own learning...
- an active contributor who is able to work effectively in teams, exercises initiative...
- a concerned citizen who is rooted to Singapore, has a strong civic consciousness, is informed, and takes an active role in bettering the lives of others around him.

In Finland, the subjects are asked to contribute to the 'mission' of education through integrating themes such as growth as a person, participatory citizenship and entrepreneurship. Such a link between aims and learning experiences is completely absent from the conception of the English baccalaureate.

1.2.7 Finally choice is essential for developing minds. Not all 16 year olds have developed the ability to succeed in all aspects of a broad curriculum no matter how well conceived, but this does not preclude them from doing so in future years. A young person capable of success in a number of subjects but not in one of the E-Bac subjects should not be condemned as a failure for life.

1.3 The E-Bac has potentially damaging implications because it:

- fails to draw on recent independent research about the development of intellect in pupils;
- will encourage schools' to prioritise this performance indicator above the best outcomes for every learner;
- fails to develop employability skills and will have little currency with employers seeking a broad skill set; and
- is unclear about expected outcome benefits.

1.3.1 Secondary years are a decisive phase in the development of students mental capacity, and a period of emotional, hormonal and behavioral change.

1.3.2 The Foresight report⁷⁵ defined "mental capital" as "the totality of an individual's cognitive and emotional resources, including their cognitive capability, flexibility and efficiency of learning, emotional intelligence, and resilience in the face of stress." It captures how well an individual is able to contribute to society.

1.3.3 New knowledge about the maturation of the brain⁷⁶ informs how teachers encourage engagement. Between 12 and 16 pupils can easily become demotivated if their learning needs are not met: "While motivation is important at other periods of life, it is in adolescence that patterns appear to be established, and where a failure of motivation has the potential for the greatest long-term threat to mental capital."⁷⁷

1.3.4 Where needs are not met, there can be impact on achievement and hence a lack of access to economic, educational or social support, which can affect their mental capital, and emotional abilities. This may include stigmatisation, feelings of shame, hopelessness, victim mentality, stress, lack of control, loss of confidence, and low expectations.

1.3.5 Where pupils experience intellectual challenge and have an element of choice and autonomy within their learning this improves their engagement, commitment to learning and their mental capacity.

1.3.6 Schools need to retain a broad and balanced curriculum and adapt to meet the diverse and fluctuating needs and aspirations of individual pupils. Whilst learning, including literacy and numeracy, develops the intellect, teaching must maintain motivation and confidence to respond to high expectations.

1.3.7 From emerging secondary school practice three aims for the curriculum were developed which are widely welcomed by teachers:

- successful learners who enjoy learning, make progress and achieve;
- confident individuals who are able to live safe, healthy and fulfilling lives; and
- responsible citizens who make a positive contribution to society.

1.3.8 In designing learning which reflects these aims, teachers need flexibility and appropriate accreditation which assesses knowledge, skills and understanding. This is a challenge because it is easier to assess knowledge and understanding than skill acquisition. Awards must have currency with employers and higher education and pupils need to demonstrate capability across subjects, undertake independent study, and apply learning in work-related and community contexts.

⁷⁵ Kirkwood, T., Bond, J., May, C., McKeith, I. and Teh, M. (2008) Foresight Mental Capital and Wellbeing Project. Mental capital through life: Future challenges. The Government Office for Science, London. The aim was to advise the Government and the private sector on how to achieve the best possible mental development and mental wellbeing for everyone in the UK in the future. (www.foresight.gov.uk)

⁷⁶ Paus, T. 2005. Mapping brain maturation and cognitive development during adolescence. *Trends in Cognitive Science*. 9, 60–8.

⁷⁷ Kirkwood, T *et al.*

1.3.9 The 2006 CIPD⁷⁸ survey of 1400 businesses found that employers seek:

- communication skills (40% rank this in top three);
- work ethic (39%); and
- personality (32%).

These rank higher than literacy (26%), numeracy (22%) and formal qualifications (25%). Employers were more likely to stress the need for improvement in intangible skills than in literacy, numeracy and IT.

1.3.10 To improve employability, half of employers ranked improved interpersonal skills in their top three. This was followed by:

- taking responsibility (40%);
- improving communication skills (38%); and
- being better disciplined (32%).⁷⁹

1.3.11 The attributes required by employers are similar to those required by HE but are those most difficult to assess.

1.3.12 Employers⁸⁰ suggest that whilst some knowledge and understanding is important, they also need young employees who:

- take responsibility and show initiative;
- have good interpersonal skills;
- are flexible and adaptable;
- can solve problems and generate new ideas;
- have a good mix of qualifications, practical skills and personal qualities;
- understand how to relate to people;
- understand how to operate in teams;
- understand how to develop other people;
- develop a range of techniques for communicating;
- demonstrate competence in managing relationships; and
- understand, and use, varying means of managing stress and conflict.

1.3.13 If schools are to improve the mental capacity and employability of school leavers then the above is not reflected in the current E-Bac proposals.

1.4 The E-Bac compares unfavourably with other baccalaureates and curricula in high performing countries because it:

- fails to value the arts, health and well-being or technology, which are important aspects of personal and economic well-being;
- does not embrace the wider skills and competencies valued by HE and employers;
- makes no link between learning and real contexts through elements such as civic participation, entrepreneurship or personal projects; and
- fails to focus on the holistic development of learners, but only on a narrow subset.

1.4.1 The Secretary of State gives various reasons for the E-Bac. These include to:

- stop schools “gaming” league tables;
- encourage more students to follow academic subjects;
- ensure more students from poorer backgrounds have access to the best universities and “the most exciting careers”;
- allow school-to-school comparison to inform parental choice; and
- “secure a school-leaving certificate which shares many of the virtues of the European baccalaureate approach”.

1.4.2 In its current form the E-Bac is no more than a selection of five “preferred” GCSE’s identified to form a new accountability measure.

1.4.3 We feel that it is possible to compare the E-Bac in three ways.

- As a programme of learning for 11–16 year olds—comparable with the International Baccalaureate (IB) Middle Years programme or a National Curriculum entitlement for secondary education in other countries.
- As a programme of learning and associated suite of examinations that lead to an “over-arching” accreditation—such as The international Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma programme, The European Bac, The French Bac or the Welsh Bac.

⁷⁸ Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development.

⁷⁹ The full CIPD/KPMG Labour Market Outlook from which these findings are drawn can be found at www.cipd.co.uk/surveys August 2006.

⁸⁰ Hillage J, Pollard E. Employability: developing a framework for policy analysis, Research report RR85, DfEE Nov 1988.

— As a public measure for school accountability.

1.4.4 Most programmes that use the term baccalaureate have been developed as carefully designed programmes of learning. For example, the IB middle years programme sets out its credentials as follows:

The IB Middle Years Programme, for students aged 11 to 16, provides a framework of academic challenge that encourages students to embrace and understand the connections between traditional subjects and the real world, and become critical and reflective thinkers.

1.4.5 The IB seeks to promote the “education of the whole person through an emphasis on intellectual, personal, emotional and social growth.” In addition to languages, mathematics, sciences, humanities it embraces the study of the arts, physical education and technology. Students also engage in a personal project and a community service component requiring action and reflection.

1.4.6 Many educationalists regard the IB as a well-conceived and balanced programme of learning, that builds on the main traditions of learning while at the same time being futures orientated. The IB does stress the importance of developing skills and attitudes. It encourages the study of individual subjects and transdisciplinary areas. It promotes inquiry as the leading pedagogical approach, focuses on developing the skills of learning and promotes civic participation.

1.4.7 By comparison the initial proposals for the English Baccalaureate leave it deficient in many ways. By failing to embrace the arts, technology and PE it does not have a similar breadth of learning. By focusing exclusively on a limited number of academic subjects it is questionable how well it will contribute to develop young peoples’ practical, personal, social and emotional growth. Having no equivalent to the personal project, civic participation or enterprise activities, the E-Bac puts insufficient emphasis on applied learning.

1.4.8 We are of the view that a set of unhelpful false opposites have been introduced into the education debate. Education is becoming a battleground of two camps;

- knowledge versus skills;
- subjects versus multi-disciplinary projects;
- teacher-led versus student-initiated; and
- academic versus vocational.

These are the false opposites that are not seen in the IB, or for that matter, in the curricular of leading jurisdictions as Singapore, Finland and New Zealand.

1.4.9 The Singapore Curriculum places Life Skills at its centre and includes cross-curricular work, community involvement and project work as important components. This is in addition to languages, mathematics, science and technology, humanities and the arts. Singapore Ministry describe their mission as:

“...a holistic education, focused on both academic and non-academic areas...a broad range of experiences...opportunity to develop the skills and values that they will need for life. Besides judging our students’ performance through examinations, we are also looking at other and broader measures of how well they do in education.”

1.4.10 The New Zealand Curriculum lists key competencies as managing self, relating to others and thinking skills. They describe, community, participation and sustainability as important values and areas for learning, in addition to languages, arts, health, PE, mathematics, science, social sciences and technology. New Zealand have a vision for their young people and country that includes:

“Young people who, in their school years, will continue to develop the values, knowledge, and competencies that will enable them to live full and satisfying lives”

2. *Recommendations for action by the Government*

3.1 Develop clear and sound aims, values and principles to include:

- the achievement of all including the most vulnerable pupils;
- the needs of employers, higher education, individual young people, and society;
- the promotion of a wider range of languages; and
- a measure of performance that is helpful in making choices.

3.2 Developing a structure with the following features:

- more than the proposed five subjects;
- more than subjects—work skills, community engagement and personal projects;
- more choice;
- validation by more than GCSE; and
- taken at more than one level.

3.3 Develop an educational experience characterised by:

3.3.1 Increased relevance and engagement:

- starting from the experiences and knowledge of the learner;
- involving pupils in the design of programmes; and
- changing the relationship between teachers and students from one of downloading, to one of constructing learning together.

3.3.2 Improving learning activity and impact by:

- real world experiences;
- being less abstract, with clear purpose and learning goals;
- diversifying ways of learning (doing, observing, improvising) and working in small groups to inquire or problem solve; and
- allowing a greater role for self-reflection and peer feedback.

3.3.3 Encouraging teamwork and collaboration:

- enabling pupils to learn from each other;
- building on skills learned in informal spaces such as the family; and
- providing timetable and physical space for collaboration between learners.

22 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by BCS, The Chartered Institute for IT

BCS, THE CHARTERED INSTITUTE FOR IT

The Institute promotes wider social and economic progress through the advancement of information technology science and practice. We bring together industry, academics, practitioners and government to share knowledge, promote new thinking, inform the design of new curricula, shape public policy and inform the public.

As the professional membership and accreditation body for IT, we serve over 70,000 members including practitioners, businesses, academics and students, in the UK and internationally. We deliver a range of professional development tools for practitioners and employees.

A leading IT qualification body, we offer a range of widely recognised professional and end-user qualifications. (<http://www.bcs.org>)

COMPUTING AT SCHOOL

The “Computing At School” group (CAS) is a membership association with BCS, The Chartered Institute for IT and supported by Microsoft Research, Google, Vital and other industry partners. The Computing at School Working Group (CAS) was born out of excitement with the discipline of Computing, combined with a serious concern that many students are being “turned off” Computing by a combination of factors that have conspired to make the subject seem dull and pedestrian. Their goal is to put the excitement and intellectual rigour back into Computing at school. CAS has institutional support from Microsoft, Google, and the Council of Heads and Professors of Computer Science.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Computer Science (or just Computing) is the study of how computer systems work, how they are constructed and programmed, and the foundations of information and computation. It is a rigorous, intellectually rich discipline alongside Maths, Science, or History. Like those subjects, Computing explores principles, ideas, and techniques rather than training students in technological skills that date quickly. In an increasingly digital, knowledge-based age, Computing is fundamental both to full citizenship, and to our economic health as a nation. Section 1 gives more details.

2. Yet, incredibly, Computing is virtually absent from UK schools. Instead, secondary schools in England currently teach Information and Communications Technology (ICT). Despite good intentions, the reality in far too many schools is that ICT focuses solely upon IT literacy skills, and supporting teaching and learning in other curriculum contexts (see Section 2). ICT is not the discipline of understanding and knowledge of computers and the way they work.

3. The creation of the E-Bac provides the perfect opportunity to send a clear signal to schools and pupils of the importance of Computing. Our key recommendation is that Computing (unlike ICT) should “count” towards the English Baccalaureate (see Section 3). This would have two merits:

- Establishing a clear distinction between ICT and Computing, and a clear “direction of travel” that Computing is to be considered a proper subject on a par with, say, Physics or History.
- Giving head teachers the institutional support they need to devote resources to the subject. Head teachers are driven by league tables, and are unlikely to resource Computing if it is an optional extra that does not count as a league table measure.

4. In the body of this submission, we explain what “Computing” is and how it differs from ICT. The confusion between the two is deeply damaging, because it leads policy makers to believe that the Computing aspect of education in UK schools is adequately dealt with by ICT. In fact, it is widely acknowledged ICT has failed to fulfil that purpose in the great majority of schools; yet Computing is an area that is crucial for our nation’s future.

5. We make a clear distinction between ICT and Computing by defining an exemplary Computing curriculum. A draft of “*Computing: a curriculum for schools*” is available at this URL

It outlines a full curriculum Key Stage 3 and 4 with attainment targets, and has been drawn up in consultation with classroom teachers, business partners and academics in the field of education and Computing.

1. What is “Computing”?

6. To understand why Computing should be part of the E-Bac it is important to explain in what way Computing is a discipline, and distinct from ICT.

7. Computing is the study of how computer systems work, how they are constructed and programmed, and the foundations of information and computation. It is a discipline, like Mathematics or Physics, that explores foundational principles and ideas (such as algorithms for finding the shortest route through a network), rather than focusing on artefacts (such as particular computer programs). Its aspects of design, theory and experimentation are drawn from Engineering, Mathematics and Science respectively.

8. Computing includes (among many other things)

- The study of algorithms and data structures: efficient and ingenious ways to study and solve computational problems
- An understanding of communication and coordination in computer systems and networks: for example, how the internet works, and the decentralised protocols that keep data flowing smoothly.
- An appreciation of the challenges of human-computer interaction, which focuses on the challenge of making computers accessible to people.
- The study of computation itself, ranging from binary arithmetic and digital hardware, through to biologically-inspired computation paradigms. This reflects the richness and forward-looking nature of the subject of Computing.

In all of these areas, there is a fruitful interaction of theory, design, and experimentation. For example, information theory informs the design of compression algorithms such as those used for MP3 digital audio files, whose performance on real test loads is measured experimentally.

9. Computing is an absolutely key discipline for the 21st century. In a world suffused by computation, every school-leaver should have a basic understanding of Computing:

- We want our children to understand and play an active role in the digital world that surrounds them, not to be passive consumers of an opaque technology. A sound understanding of Computing concepts helps them get the best from the digital technology that underpins their world, and to solve problems when things go wrong. Moreover, citizens able to think in computational terms can understand and rationally argue about issues involving computation, such as software patents, identity theft, genetic engineering, electronic voting systems, and so on.
- Computing is of crucial economic importance. Computer and software services contribute approximately £35 billion⁸¹ a year in GVA, and UK businesses spend approximately £70 billion a year on IT products⁸². In addition, BIS figures show there are around 1.5 million Computing professionals in the UK workforce.⁸³ For the UK to flourish we need home-grown graduates that have a deep understanding of computation, and the practical skills of design, abstraction, and programming. The lack of graduates with this background led to the 2011 NESTA report on the £2 billion UK games industry, which concluded “Computer Science should be on the National Curriculum as an essential discipline alongside Maths and Physics”⁸⁴ and also “...Computer Science should be introduced in all schools and recognised, alongside art, within the new English Baccalaureate”
- Computing develops important thinking skills, that are useful to all adults, including logical thinking, problem solving techniques, the ability to think at multiple levels of abstraction, the habit of precision, and so on.

10. The Computing at School Working Group has developed a “Computing: a curriculum for schools”, to give substance to the above brief overview, available at http://www.computingschool.org.uk/data/uploads/BOK_Mar_11.pdf. Throughout this submission, we use “Computing” to mean the same as “Computer Science”

⁸¹ JRC, The 2010 report on R&D in ICT in the European Union, EUR 24320 EN.

⁸² according to 2010 European Information Technology Observatory

⁸³ <http://www.bis.gov.uk/policies/business-sectors/electronics-and-it-services/software-and-it-services>

⁸⁴ http://www.nesta.org.uk/home/1/assets/features/next_gen

or “Computing Science”; the latter terms are typically used at university level, but “Computing” is the term used by school teachers.

2. The difference between ICT and Computing

11. Computing is one of the most exciting subjects on earth. Yet the current arrangements for teaching Computing concepts at school leave many of our students feeling that it is utterly irrelevant and dull. Why is this?

12. Over the last two decades Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has been delivered as a statutory component of the National Curriculum. ICT was intended to teach students to be intelligent *users* of computational tools (i.e. software), while Computing teaches how to be an effective *author* of those tools.⁸⁵ More specifically:

- ICT was intended to deal with the purposeful application of computer systems, including issues such as the identification of business needs, the specification and installation of hardware and software, and the evaluation of its usability.
- Computing is a discipline that seeks to understand and explore the world around us, both natural and artificial, in computational terms. Computing is particularly, but by no means exclusively, concerned with the study, design, and implementation of computer systems, and the principles, ideas, and techniques underlying these designs.

13. In practice, ICT has failed to live up to its original ideal. Because of the lack of a significant Computing core in the curriculum, ICT in schools now consists largely of elementary IT functional skills. While every student should acquire these skills, we should not confuse that with the intellectual excitement and long-term personal and economic benefits of learning the discipline of Computing. We summarise some of the evidence briefly:

- The annual CBI survey shows UK employers are dissatisfied with basic IT skills in their workforce:
 - in 2008—55% dissatisfied
 - in 2009—57% dissatisfied
 - in 2010—66% dissatisfied
- The number of students taking ICT or Computing courses has collapsed over recent years:
 - The number of students studying A level Computing fell 7% from 5,068 in 2008 to 4,710. Over the period 2001–09, the total fell by 57% (10,913 down to 5,610).⁸⁶ Not only is the number declining, but it is very small in absolute terms: just 0.6% of students take A level Computing.
 - The number of students taking A level ICT reached a high of 18,029 in 2003, but has fallen every year since then, to 11,948 in 2009, a fall of 33% in six years.
 - The number of students studying GCSE in ICT reached a high of 109,601 in 2006, but has declined particularly steeply to 73,519, a fall of 33% in only three years. (Uptake of other ICT qualifications has increased, but they are even less intellectually challenging.)

Astonishingly, although there is a host of Key Stage 4 qualifications in ICT, there were *none* in Computing, until 2010 when OCR launched a small pilot.

- The 2007 report “Developing the future”,⁸⁷ sponsored by Microsoft, City University, BCS, and Intellect says “With no GCSE in Computing or Computer Science (only the GCSE in ICT which is not about the subject of Computing) learning to use a computer and learning Computer Science become indistinguishable as far as students are concerned. The skew in emphasis has a direct bearing on a student’s view of the IT industry; one that results in many negative perceptions”.
- The 2008 CRAC report “Do undergraduates want a career in IT?”⁸⁸ surveyed over 1000 undergraduate Computing students and found that “Although the majority were happy with their choice, only 11% of Computing students felt that the discipline had been strongly promoted to them as a degree choice while at school and over 40% felt that it had received very little promotion there.... The Computing students cited a number of reasons for their choice of degree course. The overwhelming majority of male students appeared to be driven by their personal interest or aptitude for Computing (and a lower proportion, but still two thirds, of females).”

⁸⁵ This neat juxtaposition is only part of the truth, because it focuses too narrowly on computers as a technology, and Computing is much broader than that. As Dijkstra famously remarked, “Computing is no more about computers than astronomy is about telescopes”. For example, the intellectual tools of computer science are now being fruitfully applied in Systems Biology to model and predict the behaviour of biochemical pathways in cells. In contrast ICT, as its name implies, is absolutely focused on technology, which dates rapidly.

⁸⁶ Source: Joint Council for Qualifications, <http://www.jcq.org.uk>

⁸⁷ <http://www.microsoft.com/uk/developingthefuture/default.aspx>

⁸⁸ http://www.crac.org.uk/crac_new/pdfs/undergraduates_it.pdf

- The 2008 “IT & Telecoms Insight Report”⁸⁹ published by Eskills UK says “The image of IT-related degrees and careers was that they would be repetitive, boring, and more-of-the-same; for example use of IT office applications such as word processing, spreadsheets, and databases”. The next bullet says “The ICT GCSE had a major part to play in creating their (negative) impressions”.
- A survey of 1000 students in July 2009 by Edge,⁹⁰ an independent educational foundation, found that a majority (56%) were “unmotivated by three or more of their subjects”. This result is not ICT-specific, but the same survey asked what other subjects the students would like to study instead. The most popular choice was computer programming (22%), beating criminology (21%) and film (18%).
- The 2009 report “*ICT for the UK’s future*”, published by the Royal Academy of Engineering states “There is an underlying confusion between IT as a fundamental life-skill and “enabler” in the teaching of all subjects, and Computing as a scientific discipline, with the present balance skewed towards teaching “software use”. Students should be encouraged to explore what goes on behind the IT applications they use, from social networking and messaging tools, to computer graphics and computer games.”... “It is essential that a significant proportion of the 14–19 age group understands Computing concepts—programming, design, problem solving, usability, communications and hardware. It is of particular importance to reform the teaching curriculum in schools to differentiate between the learning of genuine IT and the use of IT. Understanding the basis of the subject is fundamental.
- March 2009 Ofsted report “*The importance of ICT*”⁹¹ has a particularly detailed assessment of ICT. “The assessment requirements of some vocational qualifications may actually be limiting students’ achievement. In many of the schools visited, higher-attaining students were insufficiently challenged...much of the work in ICT at Key Stage 4, particularly for the higher attainers, often involved consolidating skills that students had already gained proficiency.”... “Too many of the lessons seen during the survey emphasised the development of skills in using specific software at the expense of improving students’ ICT capability.”
- The Royal Society is sufficiently concerned that it has launched a major study on Computing in School, due to report in late 2011.
- The 2010 NESTA report⁹² on the UK games industry pulls no punches. “Instead of building on the BBC’s Computer Literacy project in the 1980s, schools turned away from programming in favour of ICT. Whilst useful..., ICT fails to inspire children to study computer programming”... “Bored by ICT, young people do not see the potential in the digital creative industries”.

14. The plain fact is that virtually no one is happy with the current state of affairs, not school teachers, not Ofsted, not employers, not pupils, not parents. The solution is to focus on the discipline of Computing, which underlies ICT.

RECOMMENDATIONS

15. The Select Committee’s review of the E-Bac provides an ideal opportunity to provide a place for Computing in school learning. There are two main things that should be done at policy level.

16. First, we must clearly establish the idea that Computing is a discrete discipline, distinct from ICT, and one that students should have the opportunity to learn in the same way they do Maths or Physics. This will not happen overnight—apart from anything else there is a tremendous shortage of teachers with a background in Computing—but it would be enormously helpful to articulate the destination and the direction of travel.

17. Second, Computing must be one of the subjects within the E-Bac portfolio. The goals of the E-Bac are to increase the emphasis on core subject knowledge and rigour. The plain fact is that Computing is a core discipline, as important to a modern citizen as Chemistry or French.

The consequences of omitting Computing

18. As things stand, Computing is largely excluded from the curriculum, taught by non-specialists, and with a reputation that is low and falling because of its association with IT literacy. If Computing is outside the E-Bac, head teachers are most unlikely to focus resources on reversing its decline.

19. Experience shows that intellectually challenging subjects that are not mandated in some form or other have tended to become sidelined and neglected. For example, since modern languages became optional there has been a subsequent collapse in the students taking them at GCSE:⁹³ only 44% of GCSE students took a language in 2010, compared to 78% in 2001.

⁸⁹ <http://www.e-skills.com/Research-and-policy/Insights-2008/2181>

⁹⁰ <http://www.edge.co.uk/news/gcse-students-disinterested-in-exams>

⁹¹ <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/content/download/9167/101177/file/The%20importance%20of%20ICT.pdf>

⁹² http://www.nesta.org.uk/home1/assets/features/next_gen

⁹³ <http://www.guardian.co.uk/education/2010/jan/20/languages-become-twilight-subjects>

20. This is not just a UK phenomenon. In the US, where ICT or Computing of any sort is optional, only 40% of high schools offer any kind of Computer Science course (CSTA survey 2007).⁹⁴ Indeed, the US is so worried by the lack of Computing education in schools that Congress set up the National Computer Science week in 2010 (<http://www.csedweek.org/>) in an attempt to raise its profile. Conversely, in the EU where countries see a subject as of strategic national importance they tend to make it a compulsory part of the curriculum. For example, a 2004 report from the EC⁹⁵ stated that 20 out of 32 EU countries have computer programming included in their national curricula.

How to embody Computing in the E-Bac

21. The E-Bac currently consists of: English, Maths, a science, a humanity, and a language. We do not argue that Computing should be a compulsory component of the E-Bac, like Maths or English. Rather:

- Computing should be one of the subjects that contribute to an E-Bac. For example, it could be considered as “a science”. Or the E-Bac could consist of “English, Maths, and three out of: Computing, a science, a humanity and a language”
- Schools should be strongly encouraged to offer Computing. But, because of the national shortage of teachers with appropriate qualifications, it would be unrealistic to require them to do so immediately. (This in turn is partly due to the stultifying nature of the ICT curriculum.)

22. The NESTA report⁹⁶ has the following intriguing suggestion: “This direct association of computer science with STEM can generate additional benefits: the Institute of Physics suggests, for example, that physics and engineering graduates may be shying away from a teaching career because the general science syllabus they would typically have to teach currently includes biology and chemistry—subjects they often last encountered in GCSE, but might have to teach when they join a school science department. For them, maths, physics and computer science are a much more natural fit.”

Other relevant documents

- *Computing at School: the state of the nation*.⁹⁷ This report that sets out the challenge and articulates a solution.
- *The BCS/CAS response to the Royal Society Call for Evidence on Computing at School*.⁹⁸ This document gives a useful summary of the issues in question/answer format, with some graphs.
- *Running on empty: the failure to teach K-12 computer science in the digital age*.⁹⁹ This 2010 report from the USA shows that precisely the same issues are arising abroad.

22 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by The Royal Shakespeare Company

1. Summary

Whilst we understand the move to create an E-Baccalaureate, we are concerned that it is possible to get this qualification through achieving a C grade in English Language, which does not currently include the study of Shakespeare.

We believe it is meaningless to say that Shakespeare is a compulsory part of the KS4 curriculum if there is no effective way of mandating practice in schools through the inclusion of Shakespeare in KS4 examinations.

We want to ensure that Shakespeare retains a central and meaningful place in the educational and cultural life of KS3 and KS4 pupils.

We hope the Education Select Committee will support our calls for his plays to have a proper place in the assessment framework for the study of English within the E-Baccalaureate.

2. The choice of subjects included in the E-Bac: what we've seen in terms of the study of Shakespeare since the National Curriculum tests at KS3 were cancelled

Our experiences at KS3 suggest that Shakespeare's removal from compulsory testing effectively removes him from the curriculum.

⁹⁴ The New Educational Imperative: Improving High School Computer Science Education Using worldwide research and professional experience to improve U. S. Schools, CSTA whitepaper 2007.

⁹⁵ Eurydice report “Key Data on Information and Communication Technology in Schools in Europe 2004 Edition”, <http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/eurydice/portal/page/portal/Eurydice/showPresentation?pubid=048EN>

⁹⁶ http://www.nesta.org.uk/home1/assets/features/next_gen

⁹⁷ http://www.computingschool.org.uk/files/CAS_UKCRC_report.pdf

⁹⁸ <http://academy.bcs.org/upload/pdf/royal-society-response.pdf>

⁹⁹ <http://www.acm.org/runningonempty/fullreport.pdf>

- As soon as the announcement about the removal of tests was made on 14 October 2008, we began to receive calls from teachers wishing to cancel places on KS3 Continuing Professional Development courses because managers would no longer release them as “Shakespeare is not a priority anymore”.
- We have seen this trend continue with a 50% reduction in bookings for our KS3 professional development courses for teachers and many anecdotal reports from schools and teachers that Shakespeare is no longer taught at KS3.
- We conclude from this that when Shakespeare is taken out of the formal testing system, the teaching of his work reduces in importance. Developing skills in the teaching of Shakespeare therefore becomes a “nice to have” as opposed to an essential requirement for securing an entitlement to complex culture for all children and young people.

3. *What we know about effective teaching practice*

We—along with other theatre companies—have worked with schools and teachers for many years. We work with around 25,000 students and 2,500 teachers annually and our Learning and Performance Network now covers over 400 schools around the country, chosen because a high proportion of their pupils are entitled to free school meals and have little access to high quality culture.

From the evidence we’ve gained from our experiences, we know that active, theatre based approaches to teaching Shakespeare can engage and inspire all learners. We want to see more theatre based approaches to teaching Shakespeare adopted in classrooms. These approaches combine the rigour of textual analysis with an active exploration of the interpretive choices in the texts.

We are currently conducting research with the University of Warwick into the active teaching methods we use and the results show significant improvements in academic attainment, increased confidence and self-esteem, an extremely positive attitude to Shakespeare and a propensity for wider cultural engagement amongst the students who’ve experienced these methods.¹⁰⁰

Our “Stand up for Shakespeare” campaign, launched in 2008 with a manifesto which called for young people to See It Live, Start it Earlier and Do Shakespeare on your Feet, gained nearly 15,000 signatories and the support of educationalists, theatre artists, academics, teachers and young people across the country.

We know the practices endorsed by our manifesto bring Shakespeare to life for students of all ages and abilities and seed a life long engagement with Shakespeare in children and young people.

4. *The implications of the E-Bac for pupils and schools—what we believe the current risks are*

However, these active approaches depend on teacher confidence in using such methods in the classroom and there are training and prioritisation issues.

We know that teachers already have a very limited exposure to Shakespeare during their formal training. In 2007 we conducted a poll of PGCE students about to enter the English teaching profession. The most that any student spent on the teaching of Shakespeare during their training was four hours and this was primarily focused around the needs of the KS3 National Curriculum test.

If it becomes possible for students to acquire an E-Baccalaureate without learning about Shakespeare we believe the study of Shakespeare’s plays will fall away in many areas, along with any innovations in the teaching practices required to secure a life long engagement with Shakespeare.

If Shakespeare is not included in the English component of the E-Baccalaureate at KS4, the study and enjoyment of his plays could become a thing of the past, rather than a cultural beacon whose work exposes the ever-present dilemmas of the human condition and lights the way for so many young people to a wider cultural engagement.

5. *What we’d like to see:*

We call on the Education Select Committee to ensure Shakespeare is a compulsory part of the English requirement of the E-Baccalaureate.

22 March 2011

¹⁰⁰ An Evaluation of the RSC’s Learning and Performance Network, May 2009. Centre for Education Development, Appraisal and Research, University of Warwick
<http://culturallearningalliance.org.uk/evidence> OR
<http://www.creativitycultureeducation.org/research-impact/explorerresearch/a-study-of-the-learning-performance-network-an-education-programme-of-the-royal-shakespeare-company,90,RAR.html>

Written evidence submitted by Ruth Robinson

I am writing to submit my views to The Education Committee regarding the English Baccalaureate and make the following points;

INTRODUCTION

E-Bac as a measure of pupil and school performance

Choice of subjects included: limiting and narrow curriculum model which reinstates a hierarchy of subject importance.

Implications of the E-Bac on pupils, schools and employers: the whole child, option “choices”, progression, ITT and job security and the creative industries.

1. I am a subject specialist teacher of Art and Design and Head of Department at Durham Gilesgate Sports College and Sixth Form Centre; a split site comprehensive school with a larger than average Sixth Form (1250 pupils on roll). I currently manage 8 members of staff and over 400 students across Key Stages 3–5. I have a first class honours degree in Fine Art and a Masters degree in Fine Art and Education.

2. I recognise the need for a National measure of pupil and school performance but don't view the current E-Bac model as an accurate means of measurement. The subjects currently included in the E-Bac would not give students the opportunity to access a broad and balanced curriculum nor would it measure the work going on in schools, simply part of it. The current model appears to be a narrow one that reinstates a hierarchy of subject importance. I question the value of a curriculum model which values Biblical Hebrew above ICT. In order to sit in line with current curriculum entitlement (including Arts and Technology) I believe that a more appropriate model would mirror that of the International Baccalaureate where by students would benefit from a broader curriculum which could be personalised to suit the individual learner.

3. There are many implications of the E-Bac for pupils, schools and employers. Firstly the E-Bac appears to negate any responsibility we have as educators for the well being of the whole child. The impact of introducing this new measure without a period of transition will undoubtedly increase the pressure that students are already placed under to achieve. The subjects included in the E-Bac fly in the face of what we understand as educators about multiple intelligence.

4. I have concerns about the impact of the E-Bac on GCSE “option choices”. Limiting a pupils choice of curriculum at such a young age, (bearing in mind that many of these young learners will have only studied Art for three years, once in secondary school) severely limits their ability to progress onto “A” Level courses and to be able to maintain that standard of artistic practice once there. In excluding Art from the E-Bac there will surely be wider consequences for the subject as a compulsory part of the Key Stage 3 curriculum and this raises questions about Art departments and Art teacher's jobs across the country. It would seem that recent cuts in ITT places would support this fear.

5. Failure to recognise the impact and importance of Art and Design as an essential part of any curriculum would have a severe and far reaching impact, not only on the coalition government but on the cultural legacy it would leave. Creative industries contributed 5.6% of the UK's Gross Value Added in 2008. Exports of services by the creative industries totaled £17.3 billion in 2008, equaling 4.1% of all goods and services exported.

6. The “UK is the world's 4th largest producer of video games with an industry set to break £1 billion in the next three years”. In a recent independent skills review it was identified that growth of this industry is held back by a lack of specialist skills in computer science, physics, maths and art. “Among the ideas it puts forward are making computer science part of the national curriculum (as it is in the IB) and breaking down boundaries that currently exist between creative subjects like art and maths.”

7. The standard requirement to study Architecture as an undergraduate in a “red brick” University is a selection of either “A” Level Maths, Physics or Geography and Fine Art. Without including Art and Design (or The Arts) in the E-Bac I wonder how the coalition government expect to produce Architects of an International calibre and wonder where this would leave the future of this profession along with many others creative industries.

8. Further considerations and recommendations:

- In October 2010 The Arts were included when Mr Gove spoke about plans for the E-Bac— what is the reasoning behind this change of heart?
- Have the wider implications for Art and culture within our society been considered?
- Recommendation: a much wider breadth of study is required of the E-Bac, one which supports and prepares students for life and work in the 21st century. The current model does not and will have a detrimental effect on the lives of our learners, the damage from which will be evident for years to come.

Written evidence submitted by The Joint Association of Classical Teachers Examinations Committee

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The WJEC Latin Certificate is the same type of qualification as the IGCSE, and so should be included in the English Baccalaureate; it has reached an audience in schools where the Latin GCSE would never have been considered as an option; it is a challenging course in its own right.

2. If Classical Civilisation is excluded from the English Baccalaureate, OCR will effectively have a monopoly over Ancient History GCSE; Classical Civilisation is as rigorous and intellectually challenging as Ancient History, in some respects more so; the Classical Civilisation specifications require a detailed knowledge of ancient history; exclusion from the English Baccalaureate might prove to be the death-knell of Classical Civilisation teaching in schools.

INTRODUCTION

JACT (the Joint Association of Classical Teachers) is the subject body for teachers of Classical subjects in the UK. The JACT Examinations Committee comprises teachers from both the maintained and private sector. The Committee considers issues concerning public examinations, and works with the Examination Boards to reach a resolution.

FACTUAL INFORMATION

1. *WJEC Latin Certificate*

(a) The Government has so far refused to include the WJEC Latin Certificate as part of its list of languages that count towards the English Baccalaureate, although it is allowing the inclusion of GCSE and “accredited IGCSE” Latin. The JACT Examinations Committee would like to point out that there is no such thing as an “accredited IGCSE”; in fact the IGCSE qualifications are Level 1 and 2 Certificates (as stated by OfQual: www.ofqual.gov.uk/for-awarding-organisations/96-articles/379-accreditation-requirements-of-igcse-qualifications-for-pre-16-students)—as is the WJEC Latin Certificate.

(b) The JACT Examinations Committee welcomed the creation of the WJEC Latin Certificate as it made it more possible for students who do not receive time-tabled teaching of Latin to receive an accreditation for their efforts in learning a rigorous and challenging language. Our members report an increase of Latin teaching in the maintained sector, with many students attending twilight classes off-timetable. 117 schools have entered candidates for WJEC certificates this summer. In the January units just taken, over half of the entries for the core language paper were from non-selective maintained schools and for the Roman Civilisation papers it was 80+%. This is evidence of a huge increase in uptake in maintained schools.

(c) The WJEC Latin Certificate is not an easy option. It has been designed for students with limited time to learn the subject, and our members have found that schools are not switching over in the mistaken belief that students will get something for nothing. The flexibility of the course allows students to challenge themselves, and our members are finding that their students are pushing themselves to get the best results that they can. Students are opting for the more difficult language units 9521 (core) and 9524 (additional) language of their own volition. (<http://www.wjec.co.uk/uploads/publications/9031.pdf>)

(d) Schools who teach Latin on-timetable have reported an increase in student numbers when they switched to the WJEC Latin Certificate. One maintained school had seen numbers rise by 92% over the last two years. This is also starting to have a positive impact on numbers opting for Latin at AS level.

(e) Headteachers are threatening to scrap the WJEC Latin Certificates and force departments to teach GCSE Latin instead if the WJEC Certificates are not included as part of the English Baccalaureate. This will lead to a decrease in student numbers (most maintained schools will not be able to allocate the time required by the GCSE course off-timetable), and a return to a virtual monopoly by the OCR Exam Board. Currently very few schools enter their students for the IGCSE (last summer two schools entered).

2. *Classical Civilisation GCSE—currently offered by AQA and OCR*

(a) At present, only OCR offers Ancient History at GCSE level. The assessment objectives for the GCSE (as set out in the specification) are as follows:

AO1: Recall, Select and Organise

Recall, select and organise relevant knowledge of historical events and sources

AO2: Understanding

Demonstrate an understanding of historical events and sources

AO3: Interpretation and Evaluation

Interpret, evaluate and respond to historical events and sources.

The assessment objectives for Classical Civilisation (both OCR and AQA) are as follows:

AO1: Knowledge

Recall, select and organise relevant knowledge of literature and its contexts and/or of society and values of the classical world

AO2: Understanding

Demonstrate an understanding of literature and its contexts and/or of society and values of the classical world

AO3: Interpretation and evaluation

Interpret, evaluate and respond to literature and its contexts and/or sources related to society and values of the classical world.

It would appear that the main difference between the assessment objectives is that the Ancient History specification is asking candidates to consider events, whilst the Classical Civilisation specification is asking candidates to consider literature in its contexts and the society and values of the Classical World.

(b) In order to understand “contexts” and “society and values”, there is an expectation that candidates are aware of the historical background of the topic they are studying. Indeed, reference is made to historical events that the candidates should be expected to know and evaluate, especially in the AQA Classical Civilisation specification: one unit is called “Greece and Rome: stories and histories”. In Topic 1B—Livy, *Stories of Rome*, the specification states that “*In this unit candidates will study Livy’s account of the founding of Rome and her rule by kings. They will examine the reasons for the expulsion of the last king and assess whether the early Republic was a better form of government. Candidates must appreciate what Livy’s aims were and assess to what extent he achieved them.*” In Unit 3—Greece and Rome: Conflict and Carnage, Topic 3A—Herodotus, *The Persian Wars*, the specification states that “*In this unit candidates will study Xerxes’ invasion of Greece. They will examine his motives and the advice he received before setting off, his preparations, the course of his journey and the battles of Thermopylae, Artemisium and Salamis. Candidates will analyse the personalities of Xerxes and Themistocles and assess Herodotus’ aims and methods as a historian.*” (<http://store.aqa.org.uk/qual/newgcse/pdf/AQA-4020-W-SP.PDF>). There are many other examples of ancient history being given precedence throughout the specification.

(c) Whilst the Ancient History specification cites all the sources that candidates are expected to know, both AQA and OCR Classical Civilisation specifications state that candidates will be expected to evaluate a variety of unspecified sources. This activity demands more intellectual rigour than simply learning a set source for the examination, as students are required to use evaluative skills on a source they may not have met before.

(d) Many head teachers will be reluctant to keep Classical Civilisation on their Key Stage 4 (and possibly Key Stage 3) curriculum if it does not contribute to the performance of the school. Some enlightened heads may offer Ancient History as a substitute, but many will see this as an opportunity to “rationalise” the curriculum. This will lead to a narrowing of opportunities for students.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The JACT Examinations Committee recommends that the WJEC Latin Certificates are accepted as a valid language qualification at Key Stage 4 and should form part of the English Baccalaureate. It also urges the Commons Select Education Committee to recognise that Classical Civilisation GCSE matches Ancient History in terms of its academic rigour, and as such should be included as part of the English Baccalaureate.

22 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Joanne Rawlings

1. I am a Head of English and AST in English in a large comprehensive boys’ school in South East London. Currently, my own subject area and other arts subjects are among the highest performing in the school. In the 10 years I have been teaching, I have witnessed and been part of an increase in GCSE results, taking our school to one of the top 30 improved schools in the country. In our last Ofsted inspection, the ethos and cohesive nature of the school were praised and awarded an outstanding judgment. Our curriculum is fully comprehensive, offering our boys the chance to excel in different areas of life. We send boys to college in Year 10 as this helps them secure a permanent place at the end of their time in compulsory education. We have produced boys who have gone on to drama school, music school and also prestigious art colleges. We have hugely successful sporting teams and can count several Olympic hopefuls among our alumni. In the last 10 years, the school has come out of the dark ages: our boys have embraced the arts and all the skills they offer. We are sending more and more of our 6th formers to university. We offer all this to children who come from some of the most deprived postcodes in London. The EBAC in its proposed form will devastate our school.

2. English is supposed to be an arts subject: this is why there is a double award available at GCSE and A level. However, Literature has been removed from the EBAC. English Language **and** Literature encourage the processing of information and analytical skills, which pupils learn to apply to the world around them. However, without the support of other such subjects, like art and DT, the work of English departments will become more challenging. Without the support of drama, English will become a beacon of performing arts. This will also make the targets set for us by the government more difficult to reach. I cannot believe that Literature does not

feature as part of the EBAC. Many universities expect students to have studied English Literature and it is one of the most highly regarded A Level subjects. Why has it been omitted from the list? Where is the recognition of the genius of Shakespeare, the literary canon we so proudly hold as an example to the world? Where is the emphasis on reading for pleasure? On engaging with text? Or the encouragement of thinking for yourself?

3. When comprehensive education was introduced in this country, it was so that all pupils of school age could be afforded the chances of learning and improving their prospects. Why is this government pushing through an agenda, which will take our education system back into the dark ages of elitist Victorian principles? Surely, a pupil who is able to solve problems, think creatively and feels empowered to take risks is of more use to the work force than one who can recite the causes and effects of coastal erosion. I say this because even the subjects who are part of the EBAC are being stripped down of any creativity and becoming an old-fashioned and outdated systems of learning by rote. Any requirement for independent learning and inspirational teaching is being eroded. I do believe that the over-emphasis on taking courses that mean “easy” passes at GCSE, is diluting the education system, but why are we excluding all the other arts subjects from the EBAC? The BTEC craze was adopted in response to harassment to meet targets by the government, who has lost sight of what should be at the centre of education: skills for life, such as problem solving, thinking for yourself and working collaboratively: skills that are the centre of the arts subjects and have been excluded by the EBAC.

4. The Year 9 boys in our school are devastated. To the point where students are saying that they wish they weren't clever “because then I would also get to pick the subjects I enjoy for GCSE”. We are only able to offer our students one GCSE option choice alongside the subjects for the EBAC. Already, we have had to identify students who are “not EBAC material” and they are well aware that they are being excluded. Excluded from university. Excluded from certain professions. Excluded from the comprehensive school that their parents chose for them. For some of these boys, the point of coming to school has disappeared. We have had to decide that they cannot cope with the EBAC. Why? Because of the pressure placed on us by the government and the messages being sent out by Michael Gove, in his “wisdom”.

5. For those of us who spend time in the classroom, teaching pupils and guiding them to meet their goals, we know that not all pupils reach their academic potential by the age of 14. For some of them it takes longer. Many of our boys need the discipline that the other arts subjects offer. They are given room to express themselves, to work collaboratively, to communicate with one another, to feel valued and also to make significant progress. What kind of message are we sending out with the proposed EBAC?

6. Why has the change been made so quickly? The Government is expecting secondary schools to produce a different type of pupil with no support from the primary curriculum and very little evidence for parental support. It is simply an injustice and a catastrophe to suggest that other art subjects have no value. The subjects that have been excluded are at the core of our culture and are areas for which the British have long been admired and even envied. Our artists, actors, designers, architects, musicians, writers and athletes are heroes around the world. What message are we sending by removing the value of these subjects from our British education system? A system that other countries deliver because they believe it carries a prestige and creates individuals that their own education system cannot. I used to teach in a British School in Spain. It was a private institution, but it followed the National Curriculum for England. The parents sent their children to this school, because they thought it offered a sound and diverse curriculum.

7. The Government is in danger of damaging our curriculum beyond repair. Why haven't ministers been into schools and seen what is happening? Why haven't they asked our school pupils their opinions? Why are they destroying the shreds of creativity that exist in a somewhat bleak Britain? The importance of reading and gaining insight about the world have been clouded by a misguided focus on subjects that will fail to place our students ahead of their counterparts around the globe. Modern foreign languages should be more of a focus in the Primary curriculum, they have an important role in education and I support people speaking more than one language, as I myself speak and read Spanish. However, I did not learn this in spite of pursuing arts subjects. MFL and the arts are inseparable. The EBAC will also be placing MFL in peril. Why are we forcing students to pursue only geography or history? Where is ethics, beliefs and cultures? Where is citizenship? These humanities subjects have been demoted and not been awarded the recognition they deserve.

8. What about the job security for teachers who are not part of the EBAC? Where is the incentive for a school to spend money on the arts, when these subjects are losing their recognition? What will happen to schools that have been designated as having arts status? Our own school has been awarded a sport England endorsement, which means little now. Why should those teachers want to continue in their careers when the government has made it publically known that their subjects are second rate and not valued. Is the government trying to force teachers out of the profession? Is this how they will save the children in our schools? In my role as an AST, I work in many schools in the Borough of Greenwich and some of the best teaching I have seen is in arts subjects. This will obviously cease to be in the future as they no longer feel that they are stakeholders in ensuring the success of their pupils or their schools.

9. What I fail to understand is the shortsightedness of the new government. We will be producing a workforce that have very few skills for independent working, who have been let down by the education system and who feel betrayed about not being able to pursue their passions in life. Any creativity has been classed as a negative trait. Any confidence that parents had in teachers is becoming diminished. I dare ministers to come to our schools and explain the reasons for their rash decisions to our pupils. How dare the Government presume that

it is OK to censor the education system in favour of their own agenda and to their own ends? The subject choice for the EBAC has widespread and long-reaching implications for culture in this country. What will happen to the galleries? What will happen to the theatres? Both of these institutions receive great patronage from schools—this won't continue for much longer as their content and tradition has been suggested as worthless by the government. There will be few incentives to take an interest in the arts. We will lose the ability to appreciate and value things for their aesthetic qualities. What is the government thinking in the limiting and pigeonholing subjects suggested in the EBAC? These subjects become this when they are taught without the support of the arts subjects which are no longer taking precedent.

10. Measuring schools in relation to EBAC performance will diminish any progress that pupils make if they do not make this progress in the denoted subjects. Obviously schools in more affluent areas will perform better than schools like mine. Many of our students come to us with reading ages that are below their chronological age. We work hard to move these pupils on, but this is done through a varied and interesting curriculum. The government are sending schools like mine back to the days in the early 90s when many schools were classed as failing because they are moving the “goalposts” and not making the basis for judging performance fair. We have grammar schools in this country and they serve a certain type of pupils well. Why is the government insistent on making comprehensive schools into grammar schools? Is the message that students who can't cope with the proposed EBAC simply shouldn't be educated? The choice of subjects is limiting, stifling and elitist. If it should go ahead in its proposed form the British education system will be decimated. I myself, will have to consider the value of my chosen vocation.

22 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by 157 Group

The 157 Group is a membership organisation that represents 27 large, highly successful and regionally influential further education colleges in England. All our members are key strategic leaders in their locality, who take seriously the role of leading policy development, and improving the quality and reputation of further education.

Providing a national voice on strategy and policy for large, mostly urban colleges in England, we aim to promote change for the benefit of our members and the sector as a whole. Our members' knowledge, capability, experience and commitment brings a unique breadth and depth of expertise to bear on every aspect of further education and skills. We also work together as a peer support network, and are committed to equality and diversity.

We are actively promoting the development of a strong and world-class college sector that not only has a transformative impact on individuals, employers and their local communities, but also makes a real difference to the economic and social well-being of the nation and its global success.

Together, 157 Group colleges:

- turn over £1.6 billion a year;
- serve 700,000 learners;
- employ 39,000 staff; and
- engage with 32,000 employers.

For the purposes of gathering evidence for this call for evidence, we have pulled together the views and evidence of our Members to present an informed view of the E-Bac.

THE PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE E-BAC, THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED, AND ITS VALUE AS A MEASURE OF PUPIL AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

I. The 157 Group believes that if the E-Bac is correctly designed it could be the opportunity to design curricula that are truly “world-class”, drawing on the best of international practice and raising the expectations of all students. This in turn would have an uplifting effect on the FE sector. However, in its current format, the E-Bac falls well-short of achieving these worthwhile aims. There are many reasons for this:

- (a) The choice of subjects is very restrictive—with the omission of the Arts, RE, and Design Technology for example.
- (b) The E-Bac restricts pupil choice. At a Church of England or Catholic School, RE would be compulsory at GCSE level. To achieve the E-Bac in such a school, pupils would have to study two humanities, cutting down the time available for a more rounded set of options, which might include arts or technology subjects. This would have a dramatic impact on the take up of vocational subjects.
- (c) The E-Bac is restricted to GCSE qualification only. GCSE may not be suitable for all learners. There are many rigorous vocational qualifications that students value, and find engaging, and we believe that these should also be included.
- (d) We believe the E-Bac is championing knowledge over skills because of the strong emphasis on

academic GCSEs over skilled subjects such as Technology. This is of grave consequence to our colleges because it potentially hampers the enthusiasm of learners to study vocational subjects later on in life at colleges with excellent vocational provision.

- (e) The range of areas covered is very restrictive. Other baccalaureates around the world require extra-curricular activities such as enterprise skills to be a part of the award. Including subjects such as citizenship into the E-bac will help young people to develop their “soft skills” which will in turn lead to better employability chances in later life and a more successful and rewarding role in society.

II. As a result of the above factors, we believe that the English baccalaureate is not a fair and transparent reflection of a learners’ performance. This could lead to discrimination through less social mobility due to the lack of “soft skills” development in education hampering employment opportunities. The E-Bac may also seriously damage the uptake of vocational qualifications due to schools reforming curriculums which leave out vocational education and this could lead to less engagement at other levels of the education system.

III. The 157 Group is even more concerned about the implications of the E-Bac being presented as a performance measure; as a curriculum initiative it arguably has some merits in defining a core entitlement, albeit that the provision is entirely academic. This reflects confusion over the extent to which GCSEs can be seen as providing a broad general education. In this respect it provides a very narrow curriculum and puts a lot of faith in GCSEs. It retains an essentially two-dimensional national curriculum, which the Nuffield Review¹⁰¹ criticised for the absence of any practical and vocational elements.

IV. School performance statistics will have to be rebased when they are changed to align to reflect the achievement of the E-Bac and there are limits to how much the E-Bac can be used as an accurate “performance indicator”. For example, “many of England’s 164 grammars perform poorly on the measure, with less than half of pupils achieving an E-Bac in 29 of the selective schools. The variation is in marked contrast to grammar schools’ uniformly high performance on the five A*–C GCSEs including English and maths measure, with almost all scoring 95% plus.”¹⁰² This shows that good performance at GCSE level is not necessarily in correlation to having “achieved” the E-Bac. Again “One school spoken to by Education Guardian had more than 70% of its pupils achieving five GCSE A*–Cs, including English and maths, in 2010. This drops to 3% achieving the English bac, caused largely by small numbers of pupils there passing humanities subjects.”¹⁰³ This will create massive confusion among HEIs and even employers.

V. At this stage HE appears somewhat bemused by the performance table changes. HEIs are already getting requests from schools about what import they will attach to detail the “achievement” of the E-Bac, when they are unclear whether they will necessarily know if individual students have “achieved” it as it is not a qualification as such.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE E-BAC FOR PUPILS, SCHOOLS AND EMPLOYERS

VI. The 157 Group believes that the E-Bac is already starting to have an impact on the curriculum.¹⁰⁴ Many schools are reviewing their offers in the light of the government’s stated intention that the E-Bac will form a “leading” measure in school performance tables. This is likely to prompt a move away from vocational provision in favour of more traditional GCSEs.

VII. In some cases schools appear to be making hasty knee-jerk reaction changes, for example to lay on extra classes for Year 11 students covering the E-Bac subjects and to alter Year 10 programmes in mid-year. However the E-Bac is intended to take up only between 50 and 60% of the total curriculum time, which ought to leave space for a range of wider provision. Nevertheless there are already instances of schools dropping arts and performing arts subjects in order to focus on the E-Bac subjects. For example:

In a survey by the National Association of Music Teachers (Name), 60% of respondents said their departments had already been adversely affected by the EBac. Music teachers in 57 out of 95 schools said their schools plan to reduce opportunities to study music from this September.¹⁰⁵

VIII. This reinforces the points set out in Professor Wolf’s Review of Vocational Education,¹⁰⁶ that institutions favour subjects which will boost league table performances. Professor Wolf has reinforced the importance of choice for learners and the implementation of the E-Bac could clash with Professor Wolf’s recommendations.

IX. In some cases schools appear to be making hasty changes, for example to lay on extra classes for Year 11 students covering the E-Bac subjects and to alter Year 10 programmes in mid-year. However the E-Bac is intended to take up only between 50 and 60% of the total curriculum time, which ought to leave space for a range of wider provision. Nevertheless there are already instances of schools dropping arts and performing arts

¹⁰¹ <http://www.nuffieldfoundation.org/sites/default/files/files/Nuffield%20Report28-04-09%20final%20to%20print.pdf>

¹⁰² <http://www.tes.co.uk/article.aspx?storycode=6071793>

¹⁰³ <http://www.guardian.co.uk/education/2011/jan/11/league-table-secondary-english-baccalaureate>

¹⁰⁴ <http://www.tes.co.uk/article.aspx?storycode=6068590>

¹⁰⁵ <http://www.tes.co.uk/article.aspx?storycode=6068590>

¹⁰⁶ <http://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationDetail/Page1/DFE-00031-2011>

subjects in order to focus on the E-Bac subjects. There could also be adverse consequences for FE colleges involved in the provision of vocational programmes that are scaled back.

X. There are worrying implications for the widening participation agenda and concerns that provision will be much less suited to the needs of those at risk of falling into the NEETs category.¹⁰⁷ For instance, those young people who are more suited to perhaps vocational subjects over academic may be discriminated against if they do not “achieve” an E-Bac. This could create extra pressure for our Member colleges in terms of reductions to participation on courses.

XI. In terms of the impact the E-Bac will have on employers, the 157 Group believes that employers value personal, team and enterprise skills, along with the ability to think for yourself and to show initiative. The E-Bac does not encourage these crucial competencies to be addressed. Combined with the recent cuts to entitlement funding¹⁰⁸ which otherwise gave support for learners to develop their “soft skills” the E-Bac could have a damaging impact on employability prospects for learners.

XII. There are concerns about the logistical and resource implications of the E-Bac. Some schools have withdrawn almost entirely from offering modern foreign language teaching and others have adopted timetables that are no longer well suited to teaching single subjects. Another possibility is that schools may follow the model of a three-year KS4, in which students are expected to achieve a minimum C grade in the relevant subjects before moving on. However the C grade threshold risks a relatively high failure rate if all students are expected to pursue an E-Bac programme. It could be seen as a mistake to introduce the E-Bac programme at KS4 without first preparing the ground earlier in the school curriculum.

INTERNATIONAL COMPARATORS FOR THE E-BAC

XIII. It is fundamentally difficult to compare the English E-Bac to other Baccs in the international arena because in other parts of the world Baccs exist as programmes of learning rather than as performance measures.

XIV. The Welsh Bacc¹⁰⁹ consists of a core and options. The core is made up of: key skills; Wales, Europe and the World; work-related education; personal and social education (involving community activity and active citizenship); and an individual investigation. Options comprise courses and programmes currently offered at GCSE, Vocational GCSE, AS/A levels and Vocational Qualifications (NVQ, BTEC). The combination of a core and options means the Welsh approach offers different levels of achievement, breadth and student choice and reinforces our point that many Baccs around the world teach “soft skills” which will make learners more employable in the future.

XV. The International Baccalaureate consists of the below groups of subjects. This shows us that the IB is not as restrictive in the subjects one is allowed to study compared to the E-Bacc:

- Group 1: Language A1
- Group 2: Second language
- Group 3: Individuals and societies
- Group 4: Experimental sciences
- Group 5: Mathematics and computer science
- Group 6: The arts

22 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Ilford Ursuline High School

SUMMARY

1. In this submission, whilst affirming the importance of a broad curriculum, Ilford Ursuline High School strongly urges the Secretary of State to reconsider his proposal to exclude Religious Studies from the E-Bac:

- Religious Studies is a rigorous and demanding academic discipline in its own right. It engenders critical thinking and rigour in the search for truths in uncertain fields. It encourages philosophical thought, decision making skills, collaboration and independent working skills and the search for compromise and conflict resolutions that work. It creates opportunities for young people to develop their skills of dialogue, interpretation and analysis in a coherent context. All these are vital skills in a modern workforce where communication, collaboration and cooperation are core skills. Thus its omission from any measure which seeks to ensure that pupils receive a genuinely broad education is indefensible and therefore strongly urge that Religious Studies be included within the list of Humanities.

¹⁰⁷ <http://www.lsis.org.uk/Services/Policy/Policy-Seminars/Documents/Understanding%20NEETs%20research%20seminar%20final%20report.pdf>

¹⁰⁸ <http://www.157group.co.uk/news/news/fe-news-article-cuts-to-entitlement-could-harm-social-mobility>

¹⁰⁹ <http://www.wbq.org.uk/about-us>

- Religious Studies makes a key and unique contribution to understanding British heritage, plurality, values and futures. It provides an excellent opportunity for young people to engage with contemporary contentious issues, developing social, cultural, political, philosophical and historical awareness. Religious Studies has a multidisciplinary nature, involving textual study, philosophical thinking, ethics, social understanding and the skills of analysis and reasoning, developing core skills of literacy. Thus its omission is a serious error of judgement in the context of desiring to create a broad and academic curriculum.

SUBMITTER

2. The Submitter is Ilford Ursuline High School, an all-girls Catholic comprehensive School of 730 students, serving the London Borough of Redbridge and the Catholic Diocese of Brentwood. The contents of the submission have been principally devised by the Head Teacher, Alex Burke and the Head of Religious Education, Adam Hall.

THE PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE E-BAC AND ITS VALUE AS A MEASURE OF PUPIL AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

3. We give a cautious welcome to the principle of the E-Bac insofar as we are sympathetic to its broad aims. However the very problem which the E-Bac seeks to address viz. children being steered towards “soft” subjects in order most easily to achieve the current gold standard of 5 A*-C including English and Maths is itself a product of a league table culture in education.

4. The E-Bac is a simplistic threshold measure likely to mean that schools will devote more resources to borderline C grade students in order to achieve the highest percentage score in league tables. This policy will unfairly disadvantage both G & T and SEN children. Moreover, an E-Bac “pass” will not tell anyone (including parents) whether a particular grade represents success or failure for a given student. For example, a school receiving a high percentage of pupils achieving the EBac for example at Grade B might actually be seriously underperforming if a significant proportion of these pupils might have been expected to achieve an A or A*.

5. Ilford Ursuline High School shares the concern of the Secretary of State over recent reductions in the number of children studying science and languages to GCSE and regard these subjects as part of a broad curriculum. It is vital that such academic subjects remain an entitlement for all pupils, not only those regarded as high achieving.

THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE E-BAC

6. In principle Ilford Ursuline High School agrees with and supports the Secretary of State’s proposal of English, Maths, Science, Foreign/Ancient Language and a Humanities subject. We question, however, the omission of Religious Studies from the Humanities pillar, especially within the context of a broad curriculum, which the E-Bac seeks to achieve.

7. Religious Studies is regarded at the “heart of the curriculum” in Catholic schools precisely because we consider that it has a claim to be the humanity. In an increasingly confusing world, Religious Studies pupils have the opportunity to engage not only with the most profound questions of meaning concerning human existence and the nature of reality, but also with the most fundamental ethical dilemmas in today’s society. Thus its omission from any measure which seeks to ensure that pupils receive a genuinely broad education is indefensible. In addition we would contend that an omission would have a detrimental effect on the uptake of Philosophy/Ethics and Theology at A level and subsequently adversely affect University options. We therefore strongly urge that Religious Studies be included within the list of Humanities pillar.

FAIRNESS AND FAITH SCHOOLS

8. All Catholic schools in accordance with the policy of the Bishops of England and Wales, we are required to spend 10% of curriculum time on Religious Studies. It is hardly surprising that results should be good. However, it seems that good work in RE in many Catholic Schools would simply be ignored in the E-Bac and worst would be actively penalised. Ofsted recognises that a larger proportion of Catholic schools are consistently judged to be outstanding when compared to schools nationally (73% of Catholic Schools, when compared with 60% nationally). In all of these schools, Religious Studies is an extremely important exam subject; surely an argument for promoting Religious Studies more widely.

Written evidence submitted by Education for Engineering

MAIN OBSERVATION

1. The E-Bac will lead to an increase in the number of students taking a specific range of level 2 GCSE subjects. However, this will be to the detriment of many young people who would be better served by a different mix beyond the core of English, Mathematics and Science. Therefore, other clusters of qualifications need to be identified that are given the same status, which provide different mixes beyond the core and include subjects that are of strategic economic national importance. For example: viewing the current E-Bac as the “E-Bac in humanities and languages” there could also be an “E-Bac in computing, design & technology” and an “E-Bac in computing & the arts”.

THE PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE E-BAC AND ITS VALUE AS A MEASURE OF PUPIL AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

2. The primary purpose of education in school is to ensure all children are able to make a valuable contribution to society by the time they become adults. Additionally, UK businesses will only thrive in the global economy through continual innovation, which depends on the plentiful supply of highly skilled and well educated individuals. The purpose of the E-Bac should be to support these aims. The current composition of the E-Bac may result in an overall reduction in the proportion of children leaving school equipped with the capabilities necessary to make a valuable contribution to society, because of its narrow focus on subjects that are not necessarily suited to the population as a whole. Paradoxically while it may appear to drive up standards in a narrow range of subjects, it may, in fact, exclude many children from following pathways leading to a rewarding professional career.

3. The E-Bac descriptor is a way of showing the proportion of pupils that achieve a particular package of qualifications. However, we are trying to look at the “E-Bac question” independently of the performance table context.

4. It is possible that many schools will become Academies. While it seems likely that many schools will follow the National Curriculum, it will not be mandatory in Academies or Free Schools. We cannot, therefore, rely on National Curriculum adherence as a way of measuring, maintaining and, particularly, increasing achievement in technology-related areas in which we urgently need to compete on an international basis. At the same time, funding will increasingly come from the centre and, as with the funded FE & Skills sector, data from the funding system along with individual learner records, the credit accumulation system, etc. can provide a rich data pool for accountability purposes. The complexity of calculating and reporting “measures” is no longer a barrier and there seems to be no reason why a number of “E-Bacs” should not exist in parallel providing they accurately describe what is “in the tin” of each combination (as suggested above). It seems likely that the range would not be extensive because schools and colleges usually only provide a limited range of option blocks and, as with the current E-Bac, a number of contributing qualifications and/or subjects can be listed under each “top-line” heading.

5. It is also possible that while we are currently seeing this as a GCSE age 16 “measure” it could become an age 13–14 selection mechanism for 14–18 routes that may have few bridges. So introducing the E-Bac in its current form will have significant consequences for 13–18 education. Even introducing parallel level 2 “E-Bacs”, as mentioned in the main observation above, does not resolve the issue about how to recognise the achievements of learners who do not achieve beyond the core (English, maths, sciences) at level 2 or who do not achieve all or any of the core at level 2 (50%+?). Perhaps the most difficult aspects being recognising those with spiky profiles—some level 1 and some level 2—and surety that there will not later be barriers put in place that prevent learners bridging the Level 1–2 divide.

6. Progression to a career in engineering requires Mathematics and English and, often but not always,¹¹⁰ sciences as a core of pre-16 study. Design and Technology and Computing/ICT are also seen as important components:

Many subjects and disciplines contribute to an education for engineering—in particular Mathematics, Sciences, Design & Technology and practitioner aspects of ICT.

(E4E Briefing on Education and Training for Engineering p. 4)¹¹¹

7. Humanities, additional language(s) and Art & Design are also viewed as helpful. Ideally, these will be achievements at level 2 by age 16 but some with level 1 achievement pre-16 will also eventually make the grade and they must not be forgotten, demotivated or sidelined.

8. The engineering profession has consistently argued for “breadth and balance” to at least age 16—seeking to encourage study that can produce creative and practical engineers and technicians able to meet the requirements for professional registration in a wide range of disciplines and multi-disciplines.¹¹² It has therefore

¹¹⁰ For an Advanced Apprenticeship, 4–5 GCSEs at A*–C including English and Maths is the usual entry requirement. Sometimes people with A levels (AS or A2) are preferred, particularly if the apprenticeship is in a very technical area such as defence. [SEMTA: http://www.semta.co.uk/careers_qualifications/apprenticeships/apprenticeships_in_engineering/answers.aspx]

¹¹¹ <http://www.educationforengineering.org.uk/policy/default.htm>

¹¹² <http://www.engc.org.uk/>

eschewed promoting vocational specialism pre- age 16 other than the Young Apprenticeship.¹¹³ We welcome that the E-Bac seeks to encourage some breadth and balance in general GCSE subjects—study of a humanity and a further language will certainly help towards developing “rounded” engineers and technicians. However, the E-Bac package may serve to limit the numbers coming through with the qualifications and Key Stage 1–4 experiences that engineering needs.

9. Worthwhile study of a subject or discipline does not necessarily require taking a qualification in it or even being assessed in it, while performance tables are predicated on the more easily quantifiable—qualifications, grades, test results and so forth. Introducing the E-Bac as a performance measure before discussion of the shape of the National Curriculum or sight of the views of the Wolf inquiry, appears to be very centrally directive and pre-emptive. It is understandable that schools will want to gear their curriculum towards achieving whatever measures are put in place—for their own reputation and, particularly, for the future prospects for their learners. We hear that many schools are already adjusting their Key Stage 4 and therefore earlier Key Stage curriculum offer to optimise their position with respect to the E-Bac. The shape of the pre-16 curriculum is thereby being steered by an un-discussed view of what combination is considered most desirable—and only in qualification terms.

10. The E-Bac is a measure of only level 2 achievements. The KS4 performance tables published in January indicate that 15.1% of pupils in English state funded schools and 15.6% of pupils in all English schools achieved the E-Bac combination of GCSEs at level 2 while 55.4% and 53.8% (respectively) achieved GCSEs in English and mathematics at level 2 and 61.6% and 60.2% (respectively) achieved two GCSE grades at level 2 in science. It appears, at least on the surface, that the addition of a humanity and a further language into the mix reduces the E-Bac cohort to not far off the size of the “university entrance stream” of the 1960s. Perhaps this is because the combination of subjects is remarkably similar. However, at that time, the combination was dictated by university entrance requirements—eg O level in English language, a modern foreign language and classics as entry to most university disciplines. We believe that broadening entry to degree programmes has been beneficial and see dangers in the E-Bac measure of a return to limiting Key Stage 4 level 2 studies and thereby options post 16 and post 18.

11. No doubt the numbers taking the E-Bac combination will rapidly escalate, but there is still a question of whether it is in the national interest to focus on a small proportion whose abilities lie within the E-Bac combination while the vast majority, with different abilities, are apparently to be left to the winds of what may be available to them under funding and other constraints—not least likely, a reduction in provision within non E-Bac subjects.

THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE E-BAC

12. Our evidence suggests that intellectually challenging subjects cease to be offered by the majority of schools unless they are mandated in some form, either explicitly in the National Curriculum or implicitly through accountability measures such as the E-Bac. This means either the current E-Bac must be developed to include all subjects that are regarded as being of strategic national importance, or other clusters that include these subjects are identified and given the same status as the E-Bac.

13. As a measure the E-Bac is likely to (a) set the parameters of combination that is seen as “most prestigious” and (b) emit a message that this combination, on its own, will open all progression doors. A difficulty we see is that progression is often curtailed through what is *not* studied at Key Stage 4. For the E-Bac to have maximum value it should include subjects of national strategic importance, which include the arts as well as technology.

14. Experience shows that intellectually challenging subjects that are not mandated in some form or other have tended to become sidelined and neglected. For example, since modern languages became optional there has been a subsequent collapse in the students taking them at GCSE.¹¹⁴ Only 44% of GCSE students took a language in 2010, compared to 78% in 2001. This is not just a UK phenomenon. In the US, where ICT or Computing of any sort is optional, only 40% of high schools offer any kind of Computer Science course (CSTA survey 2007).¹¹⁵ Note, the US is so worried by the lack of Computing education in schools that Congress set up the National Computer Science week¹¹⁶ in 2010 in an attempt to raise its profile. Conversely, in the EU where countries see a subject as of strategic national importance they tend to make it a compulsory part of the curriculum. For example, a 2004 report from the EC¹¹⁷ stated that 20 out of 32 EU countries have computer programming included in their national curricula.

¹¹³ Young Apprenticeship: a very successful programme in its original form, from which learners progress to a range of pathways post 16 (including A levels, vocational learning and Apprenticeships) but which has no certain future: <http://www.education.gov.uk/16to19/qualificationsandlearning/workexperience/a0013457/young-apprenticeships>

¹¹⁴ <http://www.guardian.co.uk/education/2010/jan/20/languages-become-twilight-subjects>

¹¹⁵ The New Educational Imperative: Improving High School Computer Science Education Using worldwide research and professional experience to improve U. S. Schools, CSTA whitepaper 2007

¹¹⁶ <http://www.csdweek.org/>

¹¹⁷ Eurydice report “Key Data on Information and Communication Technology in Schools in Europe 2004 Edition”, available at <http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/eurydice/portal/page/portal/Eurydice/showPresentation?pubid=048EN>

15. There are popular general (ie not vocational) GCSE (and IGCSE)¹¹⁸ subjects beyond those included in the E-Bac. Notably, in the “top ten” at present at Key Stage 4 there is Design & Technology (D&T), Art, and Religious Studies:

Table A

TOP 10 GCSE FULL COURSE SUBJECTS

(2009 ranking in brackets)	Subject	% of total	2010 Number of candidates
1 (1)	Mathematics	14.19	762792
2 (2)	English	13.12	705240
3 (3)	English Literature	9.55	513523
4 (4)	Science	8.37	449697
5 (5)	Additional Science	6.56	352469
6 (6)	Design & Technology	5.35	287701
7 (7)	History	4.12	221281
8 (8)	Geography	3.62	194599
9 (11)	Religious Studies	3.51	188704
10 (9)	Art	3.50	188193

JCQ 2010: http://www.jcq.org.uk/national_results/news_releases/2010/

16. Achievement at A*–C is broadly similar, particularly when also viewed alongside numbers of candidates (Table A) and range of school types (Chart 1):

Table B

ACHIEVED A*–C GRADE GCSE IN 2010:

Maths	58.5%
English	64.8%
Additional science	64.7%
D&T	63.5%
History	70.0%
Geography	69.4%
Art	77.2%
ICT (GCSE short course)	63.2%

17. There is a clear bias with regard to the subjects that are in the E-Bac with greater value being afforded to some disciplines above others. The E-Bac combination is much the same as the grammar school university stream “O level suite” taken some half century ago. While it no doubt still holds value for progression and some development of the whole person, we now live in a technology-rich and dependent world and we would also expect to see at least like value afforded to technologies and creative *practice*—design and technology, ICT and the expressive/performing arts.

18. It may be argued that there is room in the timetable to take further options beyond the E-Bac range. However, the E-Bac measure and recognition is likely to sit chiefly with those taking, and achieving, around eight or nine level 2 GCSEs *within the E-Bac range*. If depth of study is to be encouraged rather than accumulation of GCSEs, this leaves room, at the most, for one more GCSE or other similar size study outside this range. This lack of study time for additional options could severely limit chances of progression in engineering—for example, to Design & Technology or Computing/ICT A levels if these subjects have not been studied at Key Stage 4 and earlier. Both of these A levels are listed as essential or useful entry to engineering and technology-related degrees in most universities, including the Russell Group.¹¹⁹ Similarly, lack of the study of art & design, design & technology and/or computing and ICT at Key Stage 4 could severely limit the numbers progressing to product/industrial design and media technologies.¹²⁰

19. The current composition of the E-Bac will have impact on recruitment and the first year content of university courses. It will take us back to the relatively narrow A level diet so common in the 1960s. We have moved away from this to a far more flexible acceptance of the most appropriate subjects for particular courses. Returning to the narrow diet will also make “fair access” to universities far more difficult to implement.

20. It is also argued by some that creative and technological disciplines are not “academic” or “rigorous”. In this view, propositional knowledge is seen as more valuable than learning through doing something concrete, drawing on information as needed and dealing with uncertainty and complexity. This is an age-old debate but it seems remarkable that appreciation of what is most intellectually challenging (the latter) has apparently not moved on.

¹¹⁸ eg <http://www.cie.org.uk/qualifications/academic/middlesec/igcse/subjects>

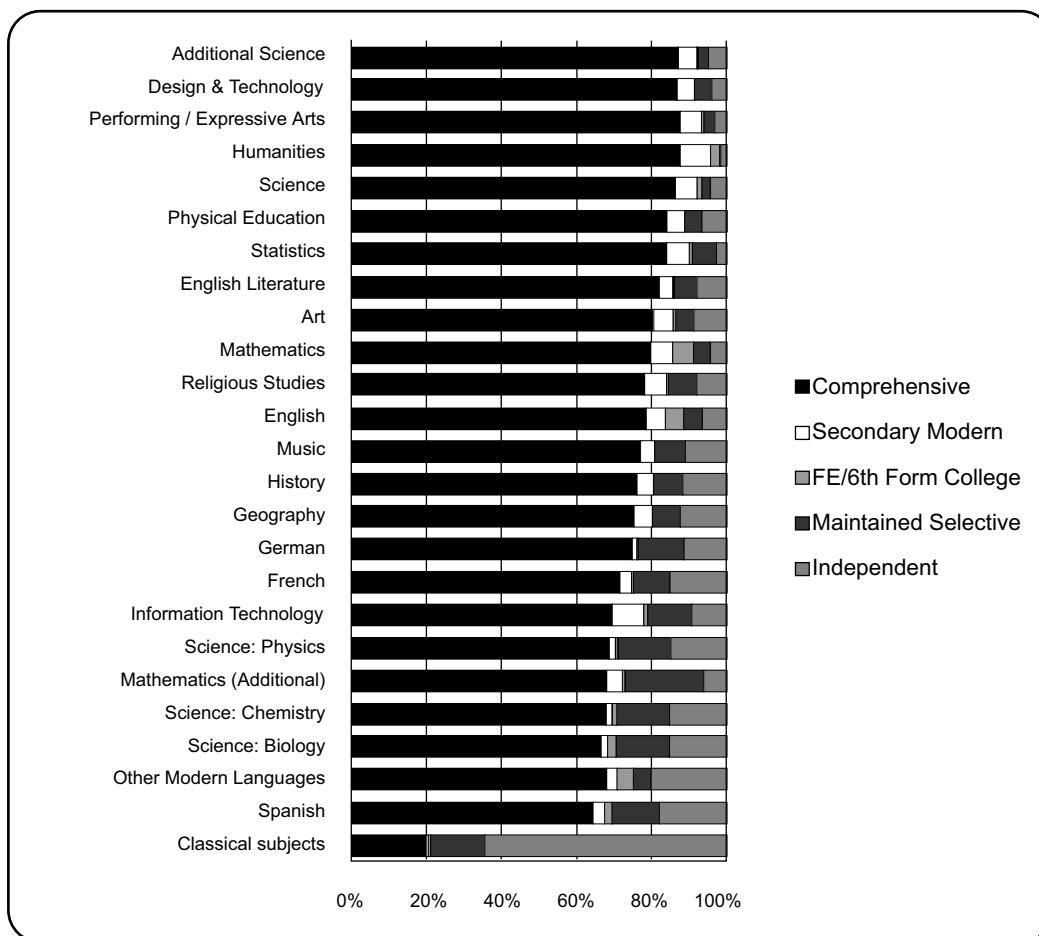
¹¹⁹ *Informed Choices*: <http://www.russellgroup.ac.uk/uploads/Informed-Choices-final.pdf>

¹²⁰ NESTA & Skillsset Livingstone Hope Report: <http://www.nationalstemcentre.org.uk/news/livingstone-hope-skills-review-recommends-major-changes-to-uk-video-games-and-visual-effects-education>

21. Furthermore, data indicates current take up of GCSE subjects differs by school type so the E-Bac selection privileges certain types of school.

Chart 1

GCSE SUBJECT CHOICES BY SCHOOL AND COLLEGE TYPE (2010; JCQ/GUARDIAN)



Source: Guardian/JCQ (Subject choice by school type—selected aspects): <https://spreadsheets.google.com/ccc?key=0AgdO92JOXxAOdHM4WDNTeFJScUdzVkJ0emdPaDR6Vmc&hl=en#gid=6>

22. We believe there should be an in depth analysis and discussion of the “worthwhileness” and progression implications (for *all* learners) of current combinations achieved at GCSE level before a particular or range of E-Bac combination(s) of subjects is decided upon.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE E-BAC FOR PUPILS, SCHOOLS AND EMPLOYERS

23. Please also see our comments under the other headings above.

24. The E-Bac only seeks to encourage some breadth and balance at level 2 and amongst those taking at least six and probably eight or nine subjects within the E-Bac range. It seems likely that at the very least a third* of the E-Bac cohort is likely to progress to A levels and a fair proportion of those to a degree programme [* eg 32.2% of candidates gained A*–B in mathematics GCSE in 2010—England]. However, engineering needs “rounded” people at technician as well as at degree and beyond levels, and what might constitute “rounded” should not have been seen as a predetermined matter.

25. A danger of only applying a “broad and balanced” measure at level 2 is that those (in 2010 over 50% of the cohort) who achieve level 2 in maths, English and two/double sciences but not either or both of a humanity and a language will be seen as somehow “second rate”—even if they also achieve level 2 in non-E-Bac general GCSE subjects. Furthermore, those that achieve maths and English at level 2 (the key to most doors) but not the other E-Bac subjects may be seen as “third rate”, and those that may still have room to achieve, have potential, but do not achieve level 2 by age 16 may be seen as “beyond interest”.

INTERNATIONAL COMPARATORS FOR THE E-BAC

26. We leave this aspect to those with greater research resource in the field of E-Bac subjects and E-Bac type measures.

27. However, beyond notions of direct comparison, and of subjects currently included in the E-Bac, we bring to your attention that many countries have developed design and technology (or similarly named) curricula based on the UK model, often combining (as was intended in England and Wales in 1988)¹²¹ design, technology and application of ICT. These countries include Finland,¹²² Sweden, New Zealand, the Netherlands, Australia, parts of USA, Taiwan, Germany and South Africa. Developments can be traced through, for example, the International Journal of Technology and Design Education (Kluwer) and the IDATER Archive at Loughborough University.¹²³ See also, for example, Kimbell, R (1997; Open University Press) *Assessing Technology: International Trends in Curriculum and Assessment* and Kimbell, R and Perry, D, *Design and Technology in a Knowledge Economy* (Engineering Council, 2001:3).¹²⁴

In the UK we originated the concept of design and technology and we were the first nation to establish it as an entitlement for all children from 5–16. In doing so, we have provided a model that much of the world has followed. In S. Africa, Australia, the USA [in parts], Botswana, Israel, Singapore, New Zealand, Russia and Chile, to give but some examples, our vision of design and technology informs curriculum debate and classroom practice.

28. It is notable that many of the countries that have followed our lead are those countries which, regarding their success in PISA, TIMSS and so forth, we are now aiming to emulate—but we appear to be disregarding our own success.

22 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by the School of Education, University of Southampton

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The School of Education at the University of Southampton is a leading centre for research in primary, secondary and post-compulsory education. Its expertise relates to teaching, assessment, subject areas, particularly Science and Mathematics, and teacher effectiveness. It is also engaged with better understanding and advising on the trajectory of learners throughout their education. Approximately 500 teachers are trained by the School each year. The Head of School, Professor Jacky Lumby, co-directed a QCA-funded national project which assembled a baseline for evidence concerning the effectiveness of 14–19 education. The School is consequently well placed to comment on the proposed English Baccalaureate (E-Bac). The extremely limited timescale given for consultation precludes a fully thought-through and detailed response.

2. FACTUAL INFORMATION AND REPRESENTATIONS

2.1 There has been varying response to the proposal from the education system. This in part reflects the wide range of perspectives from which educators and other communities are considering, not just the stated purpose of the E-Bac, but what its likely effect will be. The White Paper claims that the E-Bac provides for a “broad and rounded” education. Though there may be different viewpoints in relation to detail, there is more consistent widespread concern that this is unlikely to be its effect. Headteachers feel impelled to maintain as favourable a position as possible in the league tables. Consequently, E-Bac is likely to have a defining impact on the choice and experiences open to learners as schools manipulate the curriculum to achieve the “best” result in terms of the league tables.

2.2 Some aspects of the proposal are welcomed. We welcome the implied intention of the E-Bac; to reflect the wider European emphasis on a broad and balanced curriculum for young people. However, the proposed E-Bac is very different from other baccalaureates; other systems are less rigid and have different streams, to account for different types of students (eg those who have an aptitude for sciences, and those with aptitudes for arts subjects). In relation to the E-Bac, schools will try to score as highly as possible on the E-Bac measure. As a result, pupils may be required to study the subjects on the E-Bac, whether or not they have any aptitude for them. Some schools have already changed their curriculum and narrowed the choice of subjects available in response to the E-Bac.

2.3 We welcome the emphasis on Geography and History. These subjects are of great educational value to all young people, who should have both the opportunity and sufficient time to learn about people, society and environment. Geography underpins a lifelong “conversation” about the earth as the home of humankind. It is not a narrow academic subject for the few. It is fundamental to everyone. We also welcome the emphasis on

¹²¹ *National Curriculum Design and Technology Working Group: Interim Report*. (The “Parkes Report”); Department of Education and Science and the Welsh Office; 1988.

¹²² Eg see Rasinen, A (2003). An Analysis of the Technology Education Curriculum of Six Countries. *Journal of Technology Education* Vol. 15 No. 1, Fall 2003; 31–47. <http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/ejournals/JTE/v15n1/rasinen.html>

¹²³ <https://dspace.lboro.ac.uk/dspace-jspui/handle/2134/954>

¹²⁴ available from: http://www.data.org.uk/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=905&Itemid=712

History, but at the same time we are concerned about the assessment system. There is no entry-level qualification in History, so there is concern that the subject will be regarded as suitable only for the more academically able and further embed the growing academic divide currently evident, as shown in the Historical Association reports of the past two years.

2.4 We welcome the review of Modern Foreign Languages in the curriculum. As a subject, Modern languages (MFL) has experienced an alarming decline in status and take-up at GCSE since it was removed from the compulsory subjects in 2004, and it appears that the E-Bac is encouraging schools to re-assess the value of learning a language at KS4. It also appears that some universities will require a foreign language GCSE for entry to any course from 2012. However, the removal of MFL as a compulsory subject was in reaction to difficulties with teaching the subject to all. Reintroducing the requirement without a careful review of how it is taught may just return the subject to the problems experienced up to 2004 and be counter-productive. Additionally, the inclusion of languages such as Polish, Chinese and Turkish is problematic. Schools are almost certain to enter native speakers of these languages for a GCSE examination in the hope of improving their scores in the E-Bac. Such courses will do little to enhance the education of the Polish, Chinese and Turkish students in examining their first language as if it were a second language, but offer a “quick hit” to schools in terms of results.

2.5 There are other aspects of the E-Bac that we do not welcome. The E-Bac is unnecessarily narrow. Because of the importance of the arts to the creative economy, we are particularly concerned that no arts subject is mentioned. There are also omissions, such as vocational subjects, that run counter to the European approach to a rounded curriculum and are likely to be highly divisive. We propose that Computing should be included as a Science option in the E-Bac. We make a clear distinction between ICT and Computing by defining the Computing curriculum in “Computing: a curriculum for schools”. The E-Bac should give pupils with an interest the opportunity to study computing as a science, with the rigour of a subject discipline and a curriculum reflecting the needs of commerce and higher education.

2.6 More generally, an academic curriculum has proved unsuitable for a significant minority of learners, as evidenced by learners themselves. In a survey of Year 11¹ (final year of compulsory schooling), responses indicated that the percentage of Year 11 who had enjoyed school in each case school ranged from 13% to 73%. In only nine cases was there a majority giving a positive response; in 23 cases there was a minority. A significant proportion of young people does not enjoy school or find it worthwhile. Narrowing the curriculum and constraining choice, as the E-Bac proposes, is likely to exacerbate a situation where fairness in education is already less apparent in the UK than in other European countries, according to OECD measures.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

3.1 Retain the current measure of five GCSEs including English and Mathematics at A*–C until such time as an effective consultation and consideration of options has been undertaken.

3.2 Provide further time for consultation.

3.3 Widen the subjects included in the E-Bac and thus the choice available to students, including the possibility of different tracks for those with different aptitudes.

3.4 Include arts subjects within the mix.

3.5 Include vocational subjects within the mix.

3.6 Review the delivery of Modern Foreign Languages in order to better underpin revised delivery and success of this subject.

REFERENCES

¹ Lumby, J (2010) Enjoyment and learning: Policy and secondary school learners’ experience in England, *British Educational Research Journal*, iFirst Article, 1–18.

Gorard, S, Lumby, J, Briggs, A, Morrison, M, Hall, I, Maringe, F, See, B., Wright, H, S and Shaheen, R, with Corcoran, C, Finbar-Fox, J J & Pring, R (2008) *National Report on the 14–19 Reform Programme: Baseline of evidence 2007–2008*. Birmingham: University of Birmingham.

Written evidence submitted by John Johnson, Headmaster, The Champion School

I am writing this as Headteacher of The Champion School in the London Borough of Havering. Ours is a five-form entry Catholic boys' school in the Diocese of Brentwood. Among our former pupils is Lord David Alton.

We follow our Bishops' policy of compulsory Religious Education in all year groups of the school, and accordingly enter our 15–16 year old students for GCSE Religious Studies. We enter 150 students a year for this, and between 85% and 92% obtain at least a grade C each year. We believe that this is an outstanding achievement in a comprehensive school. We were astonished that this qualification was not accepted as a Humanity in the new school information tables compiled by the government under the heading English Baccalaureate. It is demanding, gives insight into many religious and social questions, and deals with moral, ethical and faith issues in considerable depth.

We also offer History and Geography as optional subjects. This inevitably leads to numbers being lower than for Religious Studies, although it still allows for very good numbers taking these subjects on to GCE Advanced level and indeed to university entrance.

We believe that the exclusion of Religious Studies from the list of recognised Humanities is an act of discrimination that is unfair to our students, and could indeed be seen as insulting to members of a faith such as Catholicism. Throughout my life it has always been accepted that it is a Humanity, as indeed Biology is a Science.

I would ask your Committee to consider this representation when considering the new E-bac, and when you make any recommendations.

22 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by VAGA, The Visual Arts and Galleries Association

INTRODUCTION

Visual imagination and learning is a resource essential to society.

The ability to express ideas visually underpins innovation in many spheres of activity that matter to our economy: from engineering, architecture, product design and software development to the creative industries. At a very simple level objects and much innovation and concepts begin life as a drawing in some form of visual communication.

Visual literacy, the ability to interpret, critically reflect upon and use images to create meaning, is increasingly important in a multi-media and global society.

Visual expression and visual literacy are abilities that need to be nurtured from a young age within the education system.

Knowledge and understanding of our rich and diverse visual culture and that of other societies provides insight into our own and others experiences and histories.

If pupils are to continue to have a rounded education that will equip them for life, it is crucial that learning and the status accorded to subjects is not limited to the traditionally academic.

1. THE PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE E-BAC AND ITS VALUE AS A MEASURE OF PUPIL AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

We welcome moves to heighten the aspiration of young people, however

If the knowledge and highly transferable skills, provided by visual arts learning are not accountable towards school status they will attract fewer pupils at Key Stage 4.

Many schools and pupils excel in the arts and this should be recognised in school and pupil achievement.

VAGA is concerned that the limited subject range included within the E Bacc will provide neither parents, nor pupils with an adequate measure of pupil and school performance and present a partial valuation of the achievements of both pupils and schools.

2. THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE E-BAC

Whilst we endorse the need for as many pupils as possible to achieve "good passes" in "rigorous" GCSEs or iGCSEs the limitation to "rigorous" subjects fails to acknowledge the educational benefits derived from subjects such as art and design and design and technology.

The rigour required to think creatively in the arts is no less than that required to think creatively in science, maths or the humanities.

Practical learning—haptic and visual skills, need to be properly recognised and valued in our secondary schools. Art and design attracts pupils from all social backgrounds and there is increasing evidence that visual arts learning can lead to improved engagement across the curriculum¹²⁵ for further information and evidence).

Excluding practical learning from the E-Bacc is a retrogressive move towards provision of a balanced education.

3. THE IMPLICATION OF THE E-BAC FOR PUPILS, SCHOOLS AND EMPLOYERS

The creative industries are vital to the UK economy (contributing 6.2% of the UK's GVA in 2007). The narrowing of focus at Key Stage 4 is a significant threat to the development of the creative thinking required to foster innovation across the economy.

By prescribing the E-Bacc too tightly we are in danger of failing to meet the diverse needs of employers and the economy or equip pupils for the portfolio nature of self-employment and micro- businesses.

22 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Institute of Education, University of London

THE IOE

The IOE is a college of the University of London that specialises in education and related areas of social science and professional practice. It is the leading institution for education research in the UK and is one of the country's largest centres of social science research. This response draws on evidence from several colleagues at the IOE, in particular Dr Tina Isaacs and Professors Sue Hallam, Ann Hodgson, Ken Spours and Graham Welch.

SUMMARY

The main points that we would raise in relation to the E-Bac are listed below.

- As the E-Bac has been introduced as a performance measure rather than as a curriculum reform, it is unlikely to help ensure that all students have access to the E-Bac subjects at Key Stage 4—E-Bac and non-E-Bac streams may emerge.
- As none of the arts subjects are covered by the E-Bac, students' access to these subjects may suffer. The initial response of some schools to the E-Bac has certainly highlighted this as a risk.
- Applied GCSEs in vocational subjects can be robust, at the same time introducing students to subjects that are critical to our economic well-being.
- Modifications that could usefully be made to the E-Bac include: recognising achievement at A*–C and D–G grades; and broadening the range of subjects it covers to encompass the arts subjects and robust vocational options.

THE PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE E-BAC AND ITS VALUE AS A MEASURE OF STUDENT AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

1. It is important to distinguish between the principles that lie behind the introduction of the E-Bac and the particular form in which it has been introduced.

2. In its White Paper, *The Importance of Teaching*, the Government set out its intention to introduce an "English Baccalaureate" in order to encourage schools to offer a broad set of academic subjects to age 16. It would be hard to argue against the principle of all young people between the ages of 14–16 having access to this kind of breadth of study. As the White Paper recognises, in most European countries students are expected to pursue a rounded selection of academic subjects until the age of 16, including those on vocational routes. The E-Bac has ambitions to put in place similar arrangements in England—so that most students will take at least five academic subjects in English, the humanities, mathematics, languages and science. However, as the E-Bac has been introduced as an accountability measure rather than as a curriculum reform, these ambitions may not be fully met.

3. Only those students who achieve a combination of GCSEs at grades A*–C in the five E-Bac subjects will receive a certificate recording their achievement. This could well encourage schools to ensure that their most academically-talented students take on a combination of GCSEs that fulfil the E-Bac's requirements. However, simply encouraging the take-up of the E-Bac subjects through recognition in performance tables may not be sufficient to ensure that *all* students have access to the full range of subjects. It may be that some schools divide students into E-Bac and non-E-Bac groups, with all the associated problems of labelling and early selection at age 14. One means of combining the demand for breadth of achievement in a prescribed set of subjects and a more inclusive and cohesive approach would be to recognise achievement at different levels

¹²⁵ See the work of engage, www.en-quire.org and CCE <http://www.creativitycultureeducation.org/> Creativity Culture & Education found in recent research that students who took part in Creative Partnership Programmes and worked with artists and cultural organisation did better in their GCSEs (see Guardian article on 14 September 2010).

(see, for example, Hodgson and Spours, 2010). Note that the International Baccalaureate records achievement at both “Higher” and “Standard” levels.

4. In addition, because the E-Bac is an outcomes-based measure there is a possibility that schools will concentrate more time and effort on bringing along students at the C/D border, neglecting both their highest and lowest achievers. These so-called “bubble kids” are created when the important prize is the grade/outcome rather than the acquisition of knowledge, skills and understanding of crucial subjects.

5. In the other countries to which the White Paper compares England, it is the curriculum that is crucial, not students’ performance on examinations. Each has its own required set of subjects. For example, in France all students at this age must study French, mathematics, science, history/geography, civics, technology, a modern foreign language, physical education and art (including music). Students in Sweden must study Swedish, English, mathematics, science, a social science, craft, art, music, technology and physical education. Irish students must study language and literature, mathematics, science and technology, social, political and environmental studies, arts, physical education and religious education (INCA, 2010). If the Government is serious in its laudable aim for most students to access a broad and balanced curriculum, it will need either to make more subjects mandatory or to give schools richer incentives to provide a fuller curriculum for all.

THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE E-BAC

6. Any choice of subjects, particularly in what has traditionally been an elective system, will prove controversial. The idea behind the E-Bac is that young people should have access to a minimum core of knowledge as a foundation for what E. D. Hirsch (1988) refers to as “cultural literacy”. The problem is that the E-Bac privileges certain forms of knowledge over others. This will be compounded should reforms to the National Curriculum result in a greater emphasis on the transmission of facts, thereby reinforcing a traditional approach to knowledge and pedagogy.

7. There are many GCSE subjects that are successfully studied by today’s young people that are not mentioned in the Addendum to the White Paper. Of the 4.9 million GCSEs entries in 2009–10, at least 1.08 million were in subjects not represented in the E-Bac, including music and the visual arts. While geography, itself a relatively popular “optional” subject, attracted 170,000 entries, art and design attracted 169,700 entries and design and technology over 269,000 entries across its various strands (see DfE, 2011). The creative industries would no doubt point to the contribution that these industries make to the UK economy, as well as the UK’s leadership in many of these fields. Ultimately, an unintended consequence of omitting arts subjects from the E-Bac could be to put that contribution and standing at risk. The International Baccalaureate, of course, includes arts subjects.

8. The absence from the E-Bac of any subject that has a sense of “craft” about it appears to sit ill with the emphasis within both the Department for Education and the Department for Business, Innovation & Skills on raising the status of vocational learning and craft skills and occupations (eg Gove, 2010; Hayes, 2010). The White Paper posits that the E-Bac will not preclude schools from offering vocational subjects/qualifications alongside more traditional GCSEs. While the curriculum time taken up by the E-Bac subjects will comprise no more than approximately 60 to 70% of the available time (recognising that most students will take two science subjects as well as English and English literature), it is possible that more practical subjects will be prioritised only for those students who schools are convinced will not do well enough in E-Bac subjects. Expanding the scope of subjects within the E-Bac might mitigate that problem.

9. Applied GCSEs in vocational subjects, which must adhere to the same GCSE qualifications criteria as the E-Bac subjects, can be both robust and introduce students to subjects that are critical to our economic well-being. In 2010, almost 77,000 students in England sat these examinations, which unlike other vocationally-related provision, are unavailable in any size larger than two GCSEs (JCQ, 2010). The Government might want to restrict the titles available for E-Bac purposes to business, engineering, ICT and health and social care.

10. One alternative (curriculum-based) approach would be to use domains as a means of balancing choice and prescription across different areas of thinking and knowledge. The example below, of what Hodgson and Spours have termed the “English Bac Plus”, would require students to take one or more subjects from each domain alongside a common Core.

“English Bac Plus”

Seven domains

- Mathematics.
- Science.
- English.
- Humanities.
- Applied/vocational learning.
- Arts.
- Languages.

Core

- Extended project.
- Personal development.
- Community/international service.
- Research skills.
- Summer school

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE E-BAC FOR STUDENTS, SCHOOLS AND EMPLOYERS

11. It is important not to underestimate the possible impact of the E-Bac on schools' priorities and resource allocation. While the 5 A*-C GCSEs measure will remain in place, at least for the time being, the E-Bac measure will be the most prestigious measure. There is already some evidence to suggest that schools are adapting their policies and practice in relation to the E-Bac—for example, encouraging students to change their GCSE subject choices in order to meet the E-Bac requirements. It may be that some schools choose to narrow options choices, or reduce teaching time or resources for non-E-Bac subjects. Parental pressure may in time compound this. Again, schools are already reporting that parents have seen the E-Bac as a qualification rather than as a performance measure and have been confused about its purpose and form. Employers may also find the E-Bac confusing. Furthermore, there is a question about whether it will develop the skills and knowledge that employers need. In a report by the UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES, 2009), for example, there was clear evidence that what employers wanted from young people were what they described as “employability skills”, defined as: self management, thinking and solving problems, working together and communicating, understanding the business and effective use of numbers, language and ICT, alongside a positive approach. It is not clear how the E-Bac on its own will cover all of these “employability skills”.

12. The potential for confusion has been exacerbated by the speed at which the E-Bac has been introduced. Colleagues at the IOE have long advocated the need for the development of an *English Baccalaureate system*, but one that is thoroughly debated, builds on the strengths of the English system and is gradually phased-in (eg Hodgson and Spours, 2003, 2008).

INTERNATIONAL COMPARATORS FOR THE E-BAC

13. The International Baccalaureate for students aged 11–16 consists of eight subject groups integrated through five areas of interaction. In this way, the IB is an integrated curriculum-based programme that seeks to develop links between subjects.

The subjects:

- mother tongue;
- a second language;
- humanities;
- sciences;
- mathematics;
- arts;
- physical education; and
- technology.

The areas of interaction:

- community and service;
- human ingenuity;
- approaches to learning;
- environments; and
- health and social education.

In the final year of the programme students also engage in a personal project, which allows them to demonstrate the understandings and skills that they have developed throughout the programme.

14. In a major study *The Baccalaureate: a model for curriculum reform* (Philips and Pound, 2003), a range of contributors drew on international comparators to argue for an English Baccalaureate that both fits with the history and features of the English system while at the same time challenging some of the limited thinking that has bedevilled the 14–19 curriculum. The E-Bac in its current form does not meet the criteria developed in this volume. The resources available in the volume will be of particular use to the Committee in its deliberation of the E-Bac.

15. While moves to ensure that most 14 to 16 year old students are provided with a curriculum that will put them in the best position to progress to further and higher education—and will allow them to become productive citizens and contributors to the economy—are laudable, the selection of subjects for the E-Bac is arguably too

narrow. Ultimately, the approach to Key Stage 4 should be driven more by its curriculum than by the outcomes of particular qualifications. At the very least, further study of the ramifications of the E-Bac, both positive and negative, should be embarked upon immediately.

REFERENCES

DfE (2011), GCSE and Equivalent Results in England, 2009–10 (Revised), Table 11: GCSE results of pupils at the end of Key Stage 4 in schools, by subject and grade,

Michael Gove, speech to the Edge Foundation, It's not simply an academic question—why we need radical reform of vocational education, 9 September 2010,

John Hayes, speech to the Royal Society of Arts, “The craft so long to lerne”: skills and their place in modern Britain, 26 October 2010,

Hirsch, E D (1988), Cultural literacy: what every American needs to know, New York: Vintage Books.

Hodgson, A and Spours, K (2003), A baccalaureate system for the English context, in G Phillips and T Pound (eds) *The Baccalaureate: a model for curriculum reform*, London: Kogan Page.

Hodgson, A and Spours, K (2008), *Education and Training 14–19: curriculum, qualifications and organisation*, London: Sage.

Hodgson, A and Spours, K (2010), *Baccalaureates and curriculum frameworks in the English 14–19 system: a scoping paper for the Sixth Form College Forum*,

INCA (international database of curriculum and assessment) (2010),

JCQ (Joint Council for Qualifications), Provisional GCSE Results June 2010, 24 August 2010,

Phillips, G and Pound, T (eds) (2003), *The Baccalaureate: a model for curriculum reform*, London: Kogan Page.

Pring, R, Hayward, G, Hodgson, A, Johnson, J, Keep, E, Oancea, A, Rees, G, Spours, K and Wilde, S (2009), *Education for All: the future of education and training for 14–19 year olds*, London: Routledge.

UKCES (UK Commission for Employment and Skills) (2009), *The employability challenge*, London: UKCES. 22 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by the Institute for Education Business Excellence

SUMMARY

1. Education must enable all young people to develop a range of knowledge, skills, abilities and attributes, and to find a route to further learning and work which nurtures their interests and ambitions.

2. There is a risk that the English Baccalaureate could shift the balance of secondary education towards a narrow, subject-based measure of success at the expense of these broader aims. Accordingly, the English Baccalaureate should not be used as the sole measure of school success. Schools should also show how they develop young people's wider abilities, including skills for employability and personal learning and thinking skills.

3. In this submission, the Institute for Education Business Excellence provides evidence from England and other countries around the world which illustrate the contribution which employers make to support the broader aims of education, by enabling young people to learn *through* work, *for* work and *about* work.

THE INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATION BUSINESS EXCELLENCE

4. The Institute for Education Business Excellence is the professional body for everyone working to connect employers with education. This gives us an insight into the needs and ambitions of young people, their teachers and their future employers.

OUR EVIDENCE

5. In statements about the English Baccalaureate, the Secretary of State has emphasised the importance of pathways to the best universities. For example, he has said

We introduced our English Baccalaureate ... to encourage more children—especially from poorer backgrounds—to take the types of qualifications that open doors to the best universities and the most exciting careers.¹²⁶

¹²⁶ Michael Gove, 20 January 2011, <http://www.education.gov.uk/inthenews/speeches/a0073212/michael-gove-to-twfyord-church-of-england-high-school>

6. This is supported by the Secretary of State's views on the national curriculum. He suggests that subject knowledge should be set out by Ministers, leaving everything else to the discretion of teachers:

It is the Government's intention that the National Curriculum be slimmed down so that it properly reflects the body of essential knowledge all children should learn ... The National Curriculum should have the following aims at its heart:

- to embody rigour and high standards and create coherence in what is taught in schools;
- to ensure all children have the opportunity to acquire a core of essential knowledge in the key subject disciplines; and
- beyond that core, to allow teachers the freedom to use their professionalism and expertise to help all children realise their potential.¹²⁷

7. It is self-evident that knowledge matters a great deal. It is valuable both in itself and as a passport to future opportunities. We therefore agree that all young people should have the opportunity to study English, maths, science, a humanities subject and a foreign language, if this is what they wish to do.

8. However, neither knowledge in general, nor the English Baccalaureate in particular, will provide young people with *all* of the skills, aptitudes and abilities they need for success in adult life.

9. There is a considerable degree of consensus about the wider skills which young people need to develop before they leave school or college. For example, the CBI has set out a seven-point employability framework¹²⁸ covering:

- Self-management.
- Team working.
- Business and customer awareness.
- Problem solving.
- Communication and literacy.
- Application of numeracy.
- Application of information technology.

10. Employability skills overlap with Personal Learning and Thinking Skills, which help young people become:

- Independent enquirers.
- Creative thinkers.
- Reflective learners.
- Team workers.
- Self-managers.
- Effective participants.

11. These skills are valuable in all aspects of adult life, including further and higher education, Apprenticeships, lifelong learning, the world of work, and family life.

12. Employers provide a great deal of support so that young people can develop skills of this kind. In 2009–10, for example, over 500,000 young people aged 14–16 had work experience placements and over 400,000 employers helped by hosting placements, carrying out mock interviews, supporting CV workshops and so on. These are examples of learning *for* work.

13. Furthermore, it is not just employers who want these skills to be built into the school curriculum. According to the British Social Attitudes Survey the public are attaching increasing importance to the practical purpose of education:

Views on the content of compulsory education indicate widespread support for the increasing emphasis over the past decade on non-academic areas including practical and life skills ... Nearly three quarters (72%) say schools should be judged on how well they teach children skills for life, even if this means that less emphasis is placed on academic subjects.¹²⁹

14. The case for the English Baccalaureate would therefore be stronger if Ministers recognised the need for young people to develop these “soft skills” *as well as* acquiring facts.

15. Soft skills *can* be developed in the context of the English Baccalaureate. The key is to help young people understand how knowledge is applied in a variety of contexts, one of which is the workplace. Employers help bring knowledge to life by showing how it is used in the modern economy. They help develop curriculum

¹²⁷ Department for Education press release, 20 January 2011
<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/curriculum/nationalcurriculum/a0073149/national-curriculum-review-launched>

¹²⁸ Time well spent: embedding employability in work experience, CBI 2007.

¹²⁹ British Social Attitudes 27th Report,
<http://www.natcen.ac.uk/media/606949/nat%20british%20social%20attitudes%20survey%20summary%203.pdf>

materials, make classroom presentations, host workplace visits, take part in special events (eg on science and enterprise), and support team and individual projects across a range of subjects. These are examples of learning *through* work.

16. However, this support is not—and should not be—limited to English Baccalaureate subjects. In the modern economy, we need people with knowledge and skills in many different areas. We are concerned that the English Baccalaureate devalues subjects such as Design and Technology, ICT and Business Studies, which can serve equally well to develop an inquiring mind and foster teamwork and problem solving skills. The same is true of Diplomas (which are work-related qualifications) and vocational qualifications, which have become increasingly popular in recent years.

17. Indeed, access to vocational subjects can contribute to improved performance in core subjects such as maths. Ofsted’s Chief Inspector said:

The opportunity to apply learning in a realistic work environment, either through well-structured assignments or through employment, brings vocational learning to life. This also applies to teaching the key skills of literacy and numeracy. Historically, these have been isolated from work-related aspects of learning and have suffered as a result. Young people have been disengaged and failed to see why these skills are important or how they can be applied. The most successful providers have broken down this false distinction and, by integrating key skills provision fully within a vocational context, are gaining better engagement and higher achievement.¹³⁰

18. She also noted that in the strongest examples of school and business partnerships:

- The focus that businesses place on enterprise, problem-solving and investigation encourages pupils to become self-reliant and develop work-related skills.
- When managed well, the extended work placements offered by businesses help to re-engage disaffected students and increase the number continuing into post-16 education, employment or training.
- Business partnerships can contribute to improvements in examination pass rates and the proportion of students gaining higher grades.

19. The “equivalence” of vocational qualifications to two or more GCSEs at A* to C has been hotly debated. We agree that the debate needs to be settled so that we can focus on a different question: the extent to which vocational subjects motivate young people and help them prepare for further learning and work.

20. This is important because a place at a Russell Group university is not the only route to success. Children from all backgrounds should be able to aim for a place at a top university if that is what they want to do. However, we also believe that children from all backgrounds should be able to aim for an Apprenticeship or a place at a further education college if that is what they want to do. A place at university may come later.

21. Here, the key is to enable young people to find out about the vast range of opportunities that are open to them. This is partly about access to top-quality, impartial advice and guidance, and partly about giving young people the chance to see and hear for themselves. Again, employers can help, through careers presentations, visits, work shadowing and mentoring. These are examples of learning *about* work.

INTERNATIONAL COMPARISONS

22. The following examples show that other countries attach a great deal of importance to helping young people develop a broad range of skills, abilities and attributes. They also encourage learning through, for and about work.

23. All of the countries (or in the case of Canada, provinces) quoted here perform well in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), which the Secretary of State sees as a benchmark of success.

24. In **Finland**, work-related learning helps bring the curriculum to life by showing how knowledge and skills are used in the workplace. The national curriculum states that:

The [school] curriculum must include a description of how cooperation with the local labour market and business community is implemented at the level of the entire school’s activity. Classroom visits by labour market representatives, visits to workplaces, project work, the use of different sectors’ informational materials, and introduction-to-working-life periods make up the central part of this cooperation. The instruction in the different subjects is to include modules that connect the knowledge and skills provided by the subject to the demands and possibilities of working life.¹³¹

25. In **Norway**, there are long-term, binding agreements on co-operation between education and employers. These agreements encompass a range of areas of collaboration, including:

- Company representatives as resource persons in the education.

¹³⁰ Chief Inspector’s Annual Report, 2009–10, Ofsted: <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/Publications-and-research/Browse-all-by/Annual-Report/2009-10/The-Annual-Report-of-Her-Majesty-s-Chief-Inspector-of-Education-Children-s-Services-and-Skills-2009-10>

¹³¹ National Core Curriculum for Basic Education, Finland http://www.oph.fi/download/47671_core_curricula_basic_education_1.pdf

- Structured company visits.
- Case and project work.
- Work experience for pupils.
- Teacher placements in business and industry.
- Teacher participation in internal company courses.
- Company representatives as permanent consultants for pupil enterprises at school.¹³²

26. In **Australia**

Workplace engagement while at school provides many benefits, including the development of employability skills, confirmation of skills and interests, specific experiences in preferred jobs, which can confirm or deter entrance to that career, and the potential for gaining permanent employment at the same workplace, or through contacts made at work. The broader the range of workplace experiences, the more options appear to open up for young people.¹³³

27. Career development is one of the three goals of the education system in **British Columbia**. When students complete secondary school they should have developed:

- Competencies to be self-directed, responsible individuals who can set and meet career goals.
- Knowledge of a range of career choices, and actions needed to pursue those choices.
- Employability skills required to work effectively and collaboratively in a workplace.

Learning outcomes across subject areas are designed to support career development. In addition, all students are expected to meet career development-related learning outcomes.¹³⁴

28. **Ontario** has adopted a comprehensive Student Success/Learning to 18 Strategy. Schools are expected to

- Equip all students with the skills they will need as lifelong learners.
- Accord equal respect to all secondary school programs and postsecondary destinations, including immediate post-secondary employment, apprenticeship and other forms of training, college study, and university attendance.
- Provide all students with opportunities to explore the connections between what they learn in school and future employment or study.¹³⁵

CONCLUSION

29. Education must support a broad set of aims and routes to success. It must enable all young people to develop a combination of knowledge, skills, abilities and attributes, and to find a route to further learning and work which nurtures their interests and ambitions.

30. Our concern is that the English Baccalaureate will shift the balance towards a narrow, subject-based measure of success, at the expense of these broader aims. We are concerned, too, that the Secretary of State intends to define the future National Curriculum by reference solely (or largely) to the *knowledge* that young people should acquire at each stage of their education, leaving everything else to the discretion of teachers.

31. We believe the National Curriculum should set out the wider aims of education. Education policy should also recognise that young people can choose a number of equally valid routes to success.

32. As we have made plain in evidence from England and other countries around the world, the key is to show how knowledge is applied in the adult world. In this context, links between employers and education already support this aim, by enabling young people to learn *through* work, *for* work and *about* work.

33. Accordingly, the English Baccalaureate should not be used as the sole measure of school success. Schools should also show how they develop young people's employability and personal learning and thinking skills, and help them find the right path to success.

22 March 2011

¹³² Leonardo da Vinci member report, Work Package 1b—Education- and Business Personnel Involvements, Telemark (Norway) 2006: <http://www.gotland.se/imcms/24465>

¹³³ How workplace experiences while at school affect career pathways, by Erica Smith and Annette Green (National Centre for Vocational Education Research) for the Australian Government, 2005: <http://www.ncver.edu.au/publications/1606.html>

¹³⁴ British Columbia Ministry of Education: http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/policy/policies/career_development.htm#

¹³⁵ Evaluation of the Ontario Ministry of Education's Student Success / Learning to 18 Strategy, by Dr. Charles Ungerleider, Canadian Council on Learning: http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/teachers/studentsuccess/CCL_SSE_Report.pdf

Written evidence submitted by Cultural Learning Alliance (CLA)

1. The Cultural Learning Alliance (CLA, www.culturallearningalliance.org.uk) is a collective voice working to ensure that all children and young people have meaningful access to culture in this difficult economic climate.
2. The CLA was created to develop and advocate for a coherent national strategy for cultural learning. We work alongside the main cultural and learning bodies, the relevant government departments and their national agencies, and regional and local partners.
3. The CLA includes a range of organisations working across the cultural and education sectors, including non-departmental public bodies, philanthropists, umbrella organisations, cultural partners, education specialists and schools. We are supported by a wider membership of nearly 5,000 (3,552 individuals and 1,369 organisations).
4. The CLA believes that:
 - (a) Cultural learning transforms the lives of young people and the families and communities that surround them.
 - (b) Cultural learning inspires civic engagement, raises aspiration and is key to helping neighbourhoods to make positive changes. It equips young people with the skills and experiences to drive forward our creative industries and contribute to our economy.
 - (c) Cultural learning takes place within and beyond learning institutions. Schools, colleges and universities, and youth, arts and cultural organisations are critical partners in delivering work at a local level.
 - (d) Young people who have the opportunity to learn through and about culture are better equipped to achieve across the curriculum, and to take responsibility for their own learning. Attendance and attitude are both improved by engagement with culture.

THE PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE E-BAC AND ITS VALUE AS A MEASURE OF PUPIL AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

5. The English Baccalaureate was introduced to ensure that all children and young people receive a “properly rounded academic education” to GCSE level.
6. For the following reasons, the Cultural Learning Alliance (CLA) does not believe that the English Baccalaureate (E-Bac) represents a rounded education for all students as it stands:
 7. The CLA believes that the current changes in policy and the on-going curriculum review present the opportunity for a wide public debate on the broader purpose of education, and that any baccalaureate or subsequent policy change should be based on the resulting vision and principles.
 8. All children and young people should have access to high-quality arts and cultural learning experiences as part of a rounded education, regardless of class, gender and geographical location. We know that some children are supported in engaging with and learning through the arts and culture outside of school, but for those without this support, schools provide a vital baseline of provision.
 - (a) If the arts are not included as part of any E-Bac it will lead to inequality of access, with some schools prioritising their resources to support the subjects which count towards their performance tables and neglecting or reducing their arts and cultural learning offer.
 9. The Secretary of State has indicated that one of the drivers of the E-Bac is to ensure that young people gain the knowledge, skills and understanding that will equip them for the 21st century workforce. The arts and cultural learning should be central in preparing young people for work in the creative and cultural industries, and in other professions. Problem solving, communication skills, creativity and emotional intelligence (all prized by employers) are key outcomes of cultural learning. It is also essential that our top universities and businesses in the arts and creative industries are able to draw on young people who have been enabled to fully develop their arts and cultural practice at school level.
 10. The English Baccalaureate appears to stem from a binary approach to “academic” and “vocational” learning—an assumption backed up by early reports of conversations on the development of a “technical baccalaureate” to run alongside the E-Bac. The Cultural Learning Alliance does not subscribe to this binary model, but believes that all children and young people should be supported to gain a broad education which equips them to succeed across a range of platforms and measures. This broad education must include access to the arts and cultural learning. Therefore, should any further baccalaureates be developed, the arts must also be included within these structures.
 11. Evidence suggests that the E-Bac is already limiting options for children and young people (see below). Therefore it should not be used as the primary measure for school and pupil performance.

THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE E-BAC

12. The decision to develop the E-Bac appears to have been predicated upon a perceived hierarchy of subjects, with some classed as “academic” and others as “soft” or “less taxing”. The arts curriculum (including, but not limited to music, drama, art and design, dance and English literature) is rigorous, and builds knowledge, skills and understanding essential for young people’s rounded education. These subjects have an established canon, stretch children’s abilities and should be immediately recognised as part of any E-Bac. We recommend that these subjects are immediately included within a new “arts” strand of the E-Bac.

13. The arts and cultural subjects contribute to a range of social and personal outcomes for children and young people, as well as being key drivers for well-being, community engagement and engagement across the curriculum. As is set out below, evidence suggests that the E-Bac is already leading to a narrowing of curriculum options in some schools, with fewer arts and cultural options on offer. A narrower curriculum will lead to a narrowing of opportunity right across the school.

- (a) The broad and balanced curriculum and cultural development that schools must currently support will be significantly affected and diminished if resources for the arts and culture are cut. This will impact across the whole school, not just Key Stage 4 as there will be fewer teachers and resources, leading to a lessening of expertise, drive, and passion. Many of these teachers hold the relationships with the community partners in the voluntary and professional arts sectors and creative industries which enrich and support schools on a daily basis.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE E-BAC FOR PUPILS, SCHOOLS AND EMPLOYERS

14. If the range of subjects in the E-Bac remains limited, then young people with skills, talent and interest in the arts will be disadvantaged. Their achievements should be validated alongside those whose inclinations happen to co-inside with other baccalaureate subjects, an opinion also held by the Institute of Education.

15. The E-Bac does not appear to have been developed as an inclusive qualification, and risks disadvantaging and disempowering disabled young people, and those at risk, by creating a benchmark which does not necessarily validate their talent, learning and achievement.

16. Several surveys have been undertaken by subject specialist associations working within the arts which show an immediate impact on school curriculum offers.

- (a) In both a survey by the National Association of Music Educators, and a survey by the National Society for Education and Design 60% of schools indicated that the E-Bac had already led to a negative impact on arts and music options at Key Stage 4. (Approximately 100 schools were surveyed in each case).

17. There is a possibility that some schools will channel their resources to the E-Bac subjects to the exclusion of the arts in order to achieve against performance tables. As stated at the beginning of this document, this will lead to an inequality of provision.

- (a) This was evidenced when the statutory obligation to follow the programmes of study for arts, design and music was removed from primary schools at the introduction of the numeracy and literacy strategies.

18. Similarly, the E-Bac could have a negative impact on the provision of a broader range of options and qualifications such as BTEC—a route that is valued by both universities and businesses specialising in the performing arts.

19. In March 2009 the CBI published a report: , which highlights the need for graduates entering the workforce to be innovative and creative—this is backed up by many other research papers on this subject. These skills are supported and developed through a broad arts and cultural education.

INTERNATIONAL COMPARATORS FOR THE E-BAC.

20. The International Baccalaureate middle years programme consists of eight subject groups integrated through five areas of interaction that provide a framework for learning within and across the subjects.

21. Students are required to study their mother tongue, a second language, humanities, sciences, mathematics, arts, physical education and technology.

22. In the final year of the programme, students also engage in a personal project, which allows them to demonstrate the understandings and skills they have developed throughout the programme.

Written evidence submitted by The Chafford School R E Department

“In order to encourage and facilitate a more rounded educational experience for all students we will create a new way of recognising those students, and schools, who succeed in achieving real breadth... The English Baccalaureate will encourage schools to offer a broad set of academic subjects to age 16”—*Education.gov.uk*

1. THE ACADEMIC VALUE OF RE

The aim to focus the Baccalaureate on academic subjects risks being undermined by excluding a discipline with the rigour to match that of other humanities subjects. The GCSE exam is particularly demanding for students, which students often observing that RE is particularly demanding in terms of the knowledge required, its application and the high order thinking skills required to be successful at GCSE level.

The perceived value of the subject has also transformed with more students than ever before, often from very secular backgrounds, opting for a GCSE that drags them from their comfort-zone and demands that they consider some of the most difficult and challenging issues of 21st century Britain.

2. BIG SOCIETY

“The ‘big society’ is David Cameron’s Big Idea. His aides say it is about empowering communities, redistributing power and fostering a culture of volunteerism.”—*bbc.co.uk*

No subject more than RE explores the notions of our humanistic obligations to each other, our culture, our society and our country.

RE promotes understanding of English heritage and culture and contextualises historical and political developments in belief systems.

RE is an antidote to insular thinking, particularly in homogenous areas where populations can become self-interested or prejudicial in their outlook.

3. THE SOCIAL IMPERATIVE

There can be no doubt that RE performs an integrative function in society that no other organisation or subject on the curriculum does. By encouraging respect based on knowledge and understanding, RE is at the forefront of a harmonious multi-cultural society and world.

No other subject on the curriculum contributes to the spiritual, moral, cultural and social development of our young people and these functions must remain at the forefront of education for our students.

RS GCSE promotes understanding of UK culture, heritage and the law and the central role that religion continues to play in British society.

22 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by The Royal Society

ROYAL SOCIETY SUBMISSION

1. The Royal Society is a Fellowship of more than 1,400 outstanding individuals from all areas of science, mathematics, engineering and medicine, who form a global scientific network of the highest calibre. The Fellowship is supported by over 140 permanent staff with responsibility for the day-to-day management of the Society and its activities. The Society is committed to an evidence-based approach to supporting responsible policy-making within science and education, drawing upon high quality information and advice from its Fellows and Foreign Members, the wider scientific and education communities and others to achieve this.

We are working to achieve five strategic priorities:

- Invest in future scientific leaders and in innovation.
- Influence policymaking with the best scientific advice.
- Invigorate science and mathematics education.
- Increase access to the best science internationally.
- Inspire an interest in the joy, wonder and excitement of scientific discovery.

2. The Society has over the last four years undertaken a review of the “state of the nation” in science and mathematics education which has resulted in the publication of four reports. The most recent of which *Preparing for the transfer from school and college science and mathematics education to STEM higher education* advocates a post-16 type of Baccalaureate qualification for England (<http://royalsociety.org/State-Nation-Increasing-Size-Pool/>). We would welcome the opportunity to explore this further as there are clearly links and implications which relate to the introduction of the English Baccalaureate at age 16.

3. We welcome the importance given to science in the English Baccalaureate. In terms of the increasing numbers of students entered for all three separate sciences at GCSE (biology, chemistry and physics), there is a concern that schools may:

- (a) move students from triple to dual award science GCSEs eg “core” and “additional” for the wrong reasons; and
- (b) only concentrate on the two sciences for which they have specialist teachers and evidence of the best prior attainment.

The effect of both could be to reduce the numbers taking triple science. We would therefore urge the Select Committee to seek an immediate review of this specific measure.

4. We also welcome the importance given to mathematics in the English Baccalaureate. However, there is a risk that the English Baccalaureate will provide additional incentive for schools to “get mathematics out of the way” through early examination entry in order to leave more time to concentrate on other English Baccalaureate subjects—this needs to be discouraged. The Advisory Committee on Mathematics Education (ACME) will be publishing a paper on Early Entry in Mathematics soon.

5. The use of the word “baccalaureate” may be misleading given that international usage refers to a passport for HE study.

6. The impact of the English Baccalaureate will on student performance in science and mathematics, particularly any grade C/D borderline strategies which may be implemented by schools and colleges, should be closely monitored.

The Royal Society is a partner in SCORE (Science Community Representing Education) and this response is in addition to the SCORE response that we are joint signatories to. Attached is the SCORE response to ensure that you have a complete Royal Society view.¹³⁶

22 March 2011

**Written evidence submitted by Dr Angela Gallagher Brett and Liz Hudswell, Higher Education
Subject Centre for Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies, University of Southampton**

1. We welcome the introduction of the E-Bac and believe that the inclusion of Languages and Humanities confers an improved status on these subjects. In particular, we think that it will provide schools with encouragement to support language learning and it will result in an increase in the number of students following a language to GCSE.

2. We agree that the study of a language is an important part of a good education and that it provides students with excellent communication skills and improved intercultural understanding, which are of great benefit to individuals and to the wider society.

3. We feel that it is important for the Department of Education to recognise that the introduction of the E-Bac may provide challenges for schools in recruiting sufficient numbers of good quality languages teachers. Schools will, therefore, need to be supported as they develop plans for its implementation. In addition, the transition from GCSE to A-level is regarded as problematic in languages. If a wider range of students are to be encouraged to engage in further language study, we would argue in favour of the need for further research and development activities in this area.

4. We would also like to express our support for all the work that has been carried out in recent years on developing alternative qualifications to the GCSE in Languages as this has enabled students of a wide range of abilities to experience enjoyment and satisfaction in learning a language. We believe that this work is important and should continue. As representatives from higher education, we are also somewhat concerned that the definition of both Languages and Humanities may have been interpreted somewhat narrowly in the E-Bac. We think that there is scope for including a wider range of GCSEs within these two disciplines.

5. We feel that there is a lack of clarity in the name of the qualification as Baccalaureate qualifications usually involve 18 year old students. We think that this could cause confusion for both UK and international employers. Overall though, we think the introduction of the E-Bac brings England much more into line with our European neighbours (and competitors) in strongly encouraging the study of a language to the age of 16.

22 March 2011

¹³⁶ The written evidence received from SCORE can be found on Ev w

Written evidence submitted by Paul Scarsbrook, Greg Tatton and Jason Warner

WHY WE DISAGREE WITH THE EBAC

We are six staff who work in a large comprehensive boys' school in South East London. Currently our subject (Business) is one of the highest performing in the school. Business is supposed to be a subject that gives students an insight to the world of business and prepare students for either the next academic step or a move into a role.

The Government has said that entrepreneurs will be the savior of our country but we would ask where these fantastic young people can develop and cultivate their ideas and really learn how to move them into the real world.

The EBAC has forced us to only able to offer our students 1 GCSE option choice alongside the subjects for the EBAC. How will those young entrepreneurs who "could" save the country be a able to do so without access to the knowledge and understanding to kick start their ideas into the real business world.

So many students need a vocational route on offer but the EBAC, putting the emphasis firmly away from BTEC's, has negated the possibility of some students ever reaching their full potential.

What the Government has said time and time again is that the private sector will help carry this country out of the recession. By making business studies a second rate subject, or at least inferior to the EBAC subjects, you have demoralized and disengaged a group of teachers who could be the 1 thing that these students need to get them interested in business and supporting our country's economy. Where is the security for teachers who are not part of the EBAC? Where is the incentive for teachers to go above and beyond the call of duty to help their students when every day we are waiting for the next installment of what the government will do to restrict and undermine our subjects. Why should those teachers want to continue in their careers when the government has made it publically known that their subjects are second rate and not valued. Is the government trying to force teachers out of the profession and back into the private sector because their time would be better spent educating the work force of tomorrow and assisting them in achieving their potential to get us out of the mess that our economy is currently in.

Without BTEC qualifications I certainly wouldn't be where I am today. The BTEC National I completed enabled me to develop over time and even though it took an extra year to complete, it was certainly worth it.

I have seen many hundreds of students benefit from vocational qualifications. The highest percentage of students going to University from our school, are students who have studied vocational qualifications. These students have gone on to successful jobs and now contribute to society in a way they never dreamed possible.

The business department has the highest percentage of students in the 6th form. The fact that students can now only choose one option, will affect our intake into the 6th form. Students will no longer be able to follow through from their 2/4 GCSE qualifications straight into KS5. They won't be able to specialize in a subject which they wish to go into as a future career.

Vocational education has provided a route into higher education and employment for thousands of young people over the years. Vocational qualifications in their present format do have their imperfections; however the down grading of BTECs could have serious implications for a whole generation of young people. I believe our young people whom maybe suited to vocational subjects maybe stigmatised because they do not hold an EBAC. This in turn will create a two tier system where BTEC qualifications are viewed as second class.

The EBAC subjects seems to represent a step backwards in terms of offering our students real choices at KS4. In our increasingly competitive, globalised economy I believe it is essential that pupils should have access to a curriculum that develops skills. I am not convinced that a move to a more antiquated ethos (Latin, history, geography) will engage young people today and offer them the employability skills that they will require in order to compete.

I am for academic subjects but I also believe we have a duty to include learners of all ability and not leave young people behind. Academia must be championed but not at the expense of vocational education that will be more accessible and valuable to many young people.

22 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by ADS

1. AIDIS is the trade organisation advancing the UK AeroSpace, Defence, Security and Space industries. Farnborough International Limited (FIL), which runs the Farnborough International Airshow, is a wholly-owned subsidiary. AIDIS has offices in England, Scotland, Northern Ireland, France and India. AIDIS was formed from the merger of the Association of Police and Public Security Suppliers (APPSS), the Defence Manufacturers Association (DMA) and the Society of British AeroSpace Companies (SBAC) in October 2009. AIDIS also encompasses the British Aviation Group (BAG). Together with its regional partners, AIDIS represents over 2,600 companies. AIDIS also supports SC21, Sustainable Aviation, Defence Industries Council, RISC, Flying Matters, Defence Matters and hosts the AeroSpace & Defence Knowledge Transfer Network.

2. AIDIS is a member of ASD, the trade association that represents the European Aeronautics, Space, Defence and Security industries. It has strong links with relevant Trade Associations in many countries including the USA and has signed MOUs with its Russian and many other national Trade Associations.

3. This memorandum is AIDIS's response to the Education Select Committee's short inquiry into the English Baccalaureate (E-Bac).

4. AIDIS welcomes the Government's principle of seeking to raise overall standards by encouraging more "rigorous" qualifications as we believe there has been a drift to study some soft qualifications. We also welcome this opportunity to comment on the E-Bac.

INTERNATIONAL COMPARATORS FOR THE E-BAC

5. AIDIS is concerned with the current configuration of the E-Bac. The International Baccalaureate and the Welsh Baccalaureate are recognised qualifications for entry into university and represent a particular standard of education for 18 year old students. Conversely, the E-Bac is a qualification awarded at age 16 and represents a lower standard of education. There is a danger that the E-Bac will be considered as equivalent to the International and Welsh Baccalaureates, and will discourage students in England from further study. In addition, the International and Welsh Baccalaureates contain elements of personal development and service to society that are not in the proposals for the E-Bac. AIDIS believes this is contrary to the aims of the Big Society.

THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE E-BAC

6. AIDIS welcomes the Government's choice of including maths and sciences in the E-Bac, but is concerned that there is an emphasis on humanities and modern languages and that technical subjects are not included within the E-Bac.

7. AIDIS supports the Royal Academy of Engineering's plan for a Technical Bac variant of the E-Bac, which would allow a combination with the Engineering Diploma. We wish to stress that any technical equivalent should have the same status in terms of league tables and to parents in order to avoid the adverse distinction that vocational and technical routes seem to have acquired.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE E-BAC FOR PUPILS, SCHOOLS AND EMPLOYERS

8. AIDIS believes that the E-Bac is too prescriptive in its current configuration and we believe that it may have a potentially adverse impact on engineering and technology qualifications and vocational pathways. The E-Bac will be used for constructing school league tables. Past experience of league tables indicate that schools will prioritise those subjects included in league tables to the detriment of other subjects. The E-Bac does not include technical subjects and so we are concerned that these subjects will receive less support, particularly for students taking an "academic" rather than a "vocational" pathway through schools.

9. AIDIS has already received reports that schools are already responding to the E-Bac by closing Design and Technology departments, dismissing staff and reducing budgets. We believe that this is in direct response to including the E-Bac in league tables without any consultation with schools. Unless a Technical variant is included immediately, we believe that these facilities will be permanently lost to the school network.

10. AIDIS believes that as there is not enough curriculum time for both the Engineering Diploma and the E-Bac, this is likely to lead those students wanting to study engineering at university to ignore the Diploma. AIDIS has fully supported the Engineering Diploma since its inception and we have received excellent reports from our members regarding the quality of students who have studied the Engineering Diploma. Students at all levels have a better grasp of engineering methods and are better equipped to begin work as apprentices at 16 and 18 and to enter engineering degrees. Neglecting the Engineering Diploma and allowing it to wither on the vine while schools concentrate on an E-Bac that has no technical content is a retrograde step.

11. AIDIS believes that an E-Bac without engineering or technical subjects does not appear to support the Government's objective of rebalancing the economy and increasing manufacturing output in the UK. It is imperative that there are enough young people studying engineering and manufacturing at all levels from apprenticeships up to higher degrees in order to ensure we have a skilled engineering workforce in the future. We are concerned that young people studying the E-Bac will not have received the necessary grounding in technical subjects that will allow them to become the effective apprentices, technicians and engineers required by the UK in the future.

Written evidence submitted by Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL)

INTRODUCTION

1. ASCL has over 15,000 members working in leadership roles in schools and colleges which have students in the 11 to 19 age range. All our members working in England have therefore been affected by the introduction of the English baccalaureate (E-bac). ASCL has rarely received such a high level of communication from members expressing concern and dismay about a government initiative.

2. The evidence below has been discussed by ASCL Council and is based on the views and experiences of school and college leaders. They are not of one mind about the concept of the E-bac, but they are united in expressing their anger about its hasty introduction without any consultation, and by the use of performance indicators to push ill-thought through curriculum change. There is also considerable annoyance at the uncertainty about the details of the measure, and at learning about it from the media without having any clear information about how it would be implemented. Communication with school and college leaders about changes which they were expected to implement was insufficient, and too late.

3. On the other hand, our members are very interested in taking part in a debate on the development of a genuine baccalaureate for England that would ensure that all students received a well-rounded education in preparation for life and work in the twenty-first century. ASCL has long argued for just such an award. But education history is littered with examples of awards and qualifications which have been introduced too hastily, without proper consultation and discussion, and which then disadvantage those students who have been used as guinea pigs. Our young people should not be used in this way as they only have one experience of the secondary school system and the qualifications which they gain will stay with them for life.

4. The E-bac is not a qualification, despite its name, but a performance indicator. And all performance measures are likely to have perverse consequences; they therefore need to be carefully considered before introduction. ASCL recognises that recent measures have had an undue effect on the curriculum for some students and would have been happy to contribute to a discussion of how to avoid such perverse incentives in the future.

5. The E-bac is not a qualification or award for students and therefore offers them no benefits. As a performance measure, it threatens to introduce negative consequences for learners, if schools believe that they have to alter their curriculum and push young people into changing their choices in order to meet the government's preferred performance measure.

THE PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE E-BAC AND ITS VALUE AS A MEASURE OF PUPIL AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

6. When the Secretary of State first spoke about the E-bac, he described it as a performance measure and a certificate for pupils. It has since become clear that no planning had been done on the introduction of a certificate for young people and no time scale for its introduction has been announced. Indeed, it is difficult to imagine how such a certificate could be produced since the relevant qualifications will have been achieved through different awarding organisations, possibly at different times, and there is currently no process for the collation of awards to individual 16 year olds. If such a certificate were to be introduced a costly process (such as that introduced for the awarding of the diploma) would be needed.

7. Since there seems to have been no discussion with higher education institutions or employers to find out whether this would be a certificate or even combination of subjects which they would value, it is clear that the measure has no particular value for students but is simply a school performance measure.

8. It would appear that the E-bac was introduced as a school performance measure in order to nudge schools into changing their Key Stage 4 (KS4) curriculum. Regulations currently state that all KS4 pupils must follow the national curriculum in maths, science and English and that they have an entitlement to study a humanity subject and a modern foreign language. All students in England therefore already have the opportunity to follow the subjects included in the E-bac, but since the decision to make languages and humanities an entitlement rather than statutory subjects there has been no reason for schools to push students into choosing these subjects against their will; indeed many parents have resisted such moves by schools. Schools have made clear to students through their information, advice and guidance programmes that highly selective universities and employers would be looking for a range of GCSE results at very high grades and, in our members' experience, provided that students have English, maths and science, universities are more interested in the students gaining a number of GCSEs at A or A* than in the specific subjects. Some medical schools even advise students to drop a subject if they expect only to gain a grade B. ASCL shares the concern about the smaller number of students taking a modern language but does not believe that this measure will strengthen languages overall as it encourages schools to drop language courses other than GCSEs and focus their language teaching on a smaller number of students.

9. Schools were rightly angry to be told that for their 2010 results they would be judged on criteria which were not known in advance and which depended on the choices made by their students in 2008 or by the school's specialism. Not surprisingly, schools specialising in languages averaged 30.9% in the E-bac table while for schools specialising in maths and computing the figure was 16.5%.

10. So the E-bac is a measure that provides information about student choice in 2008 but tells us nothing about school performance. The rather arbitrary nature of the qualifications included exacerbates the problem. To take just one example, it was not possible to foresee in 2008 that a Cambridge certificate in French (which does not follow the national curriculum programme of study) would be considered more valid than a GCSE in Applied French.

11. ASCL can see no benefits to students in the current arrangements for the E-bac. They do not receive a certificate nor has any university or employer stated that possession of this list of subjects at grade C or above will be an entrance requirement.

THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS IN THE E-BAC

12. The range of subjects included in the E-bac, either as a genuine qualification or a performance measure, is extremely narrow and reflects the needs of the past rather than the present. There are a number of specific anomalies which are of concern: the omission of religious studies, humanities, classical civilisation, economics, and business studies from the 'humanity' category being the most obvious.

13. If the intention really is to create an English baccalaureate rather than simply a performance measure then we would argue that this is not a baccalaureate as understood internationally. The term is usually taken to be an award which provides evidence that a student has followed a broad and balanced education, including both basic subjects (such as maths, science, their own language and a second language) and then a range of other options which would include subjects representing the arts and technology as well as the humanities. A baccalaureate usually also demonstrates achievement in both knowledge and skills in a range of contexts, both academic and practical, giving credit for learning in class and in the wider community.

14. The omission of subjects in the areas of creative media and the arts, design, technology, information technology, engineering and business is particularly worrying to our members since they are aware that many young people are intending to take up careers in these areas of high demand. Students need to sample these subjects at KS4 so that they can decide whether to pursue further study in them post-16.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE E-BAC FOR YOUNG PEOPLE, SCHOOLS AND EMPLOYERS

15. ASCL has already heard from many school leaders that they feel obliged to change their curriculum plan for KS4 from September 2011 as a response to the introduction of this performance measure. Many are taking this step, not because they feel that it is in the best interests of the students, but because they are worried that in future their school will be judged on this measure by Ofsted and others and found wanting. Schools have become used to such a culture in recent years and are angry that they are having to make these decisions now about the curriculum when the government has not yet made clear its future intentions in terms of performance judgements.

16. Students in year 9 (Y9) aged 13 and 14 are currently engaged in choosing their options and therefore decisions have to be made quickly. In some schools parents and governors, who are also unclear about the Government's intentions and the nature of the E-bac, have put pressure on school leaders to change the curriculum. Some parents are under the impression that in future students will have to have the E-bac in order to progress to university. ASCL has had no indication from universities that this is likely to be the case nor is it clear that they were consulted about the E-bac measure.

17. Some school leaders are so concerned about improving their performance in the E-bac measure before future inspections that they have felt it necessary to encourage Y10 students to change the GCSE subjects which they have already been studying for six months. Examples are students being pressed to take part in after school sessions for GCSE history and geography, and students studying two modern languages being asked to drop one and take geography instead.

18. Where Y9 students do move towards E-bac subjects and away from those not included (whether because of school, parental or media pressure) schools will have to change their staffing structure for September 2011. This is not easy to do for a variety of reasons: the timescale for redundancy processes and the lack of high quality language teachers being the most significant.

19. There is already evidence from subject association surveys that music, art and business studies teachers are being warned of reductions in their number to enable the employment of more humanities and language teachers. Even leaving aside its rights or wrongs, any change to the curriculum needs careful introduction over time, especially when resources are scarce. There are also a curriculum review and a review of vocational qualifications under way, which are likely to influence curriculum decisions made by schools and colleges. It is surprising that the E-bac was introduced in such haste before the outcomes of these two reviews are known. Schools are likely to be making costly changes to their staffing structures which they may have to alter again in line with future proposals. If Britain is to compete with the best in the world, we need coherent education policies not piecemeal changes of this sort.

20. For all of these reasons, but above all in the interests of the students, ASCL has advised its members against hasty change. However, given the punitive culture of accountability and the uncertainty of future

developments in this area it is not surprising that school leaders and governing bodies feel threatened by yet another performance measure and feel that they have to take whatever steps they can to improve their statistics.

21. ASCL believes that young people currently in Y9 and Y10 (and in subsequent years if this measure is maintained) will be disadvantaged by being pushed into option choices which are not based on impartial information, advice and guidance (IAG), but on the school's need to meet a performance target. One of our members recently wrote "The changes we made to our KS4 curriculum have increased the flexibility available to us, ensuring a personalised curriculum pathway for each and every one of our students. This focus has increased the range of learning opportunities open to our young people and presented them with positive options where success and progression are achievable. The introduction of the E-bac, in which students will be measured on whether they achieve a set of very narrowly defined subjects, is a real step backwards."

INTERNATIONAL COMPARATORS FOR THE E-BAC

22. We are not aware that other countries use a similar accountability measure but would welcome a genuine debate about a possible move towards an English baccalaureate as an overarching award. There are many international examples of baccalaureates which provide such awards. Most of these ensure that young people gain knowledge and understanding as well as skills and attitudes through a broad and balanced curriculum which includes the main traditions of learning whilst also being future orientated. Our young people deserve to have a baccalaureate which compares favourably to those on offer elsewhere.

23. As an over-arching qualification, the E-bac is seriously wanting. It is too narrow in its scope, fails to include the arts or technology and over emphasises one approach to learning. It has not been piloted, or undergone any of the tests that would be required of a new qualification.

CONCLUSION

24. ASCL proposes that, if there is a genuine desire to ensure that our young people can compete with those from other countries, we should look carefully at the structure of 14–19 education in those countries which appear to be performing at a very high level and consider and compare their awards and qualifications before making hasty changes to our own. Above all, our young people should no longer be subject to change which cannot be sustained and which is damaging to their future prospects.

25. ASCL is therefore involved in the *Build a Better Bac* campaign and will be included in the joint submission from that group.

26. ASCL is willing to be engage in any discussion aimed at improving the education of our young people, and trusts that it and its members will be fully consulted before further changes to the curriculum or the accountability regime are introduced.

22 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by the Church of England Board of Education and the National Society

1. The Church of England is a major provider of schools within the public education system. There are over 4,500 Church of England primary schools and 260+ secondary schools including 42 (first wave) academies. Over 1 million pupils are educated in Church of England schools and academies.

2. The Church was the first provider of mass education in the late 18th century, founding the National Society in 1811 to raise money for grants to local groups wishing to build a school. From those beginnings the Church pioneered all aspects of the system including school buildings, teachers and their training and curriculum content and materials. When the state entered the field with the 1870 Education Act much of the development of Board schools followed the pattern of the National schools established by the Church.

3. From the beginning the Church was absolutely clear about the paramount importance of religious and spiritual education as the foundation and heart of all education. The place and form of religious education (RE) was a constant theme in educational debates of the 19th century, influencing schools and systems up to the present day.

4. The Church of England still places religious and spiritual development at the heart of education, whether in schools, colleges or universities. It is our strong conviction that the building of character through spiritual and moral growth and training is what distinguishes education from information warehousing.

5. The Diocesan Boards of Education Measure 1991 recognises that the Church of England, through its diocesan structures, has a concern and responsibility for RE in all schools. The provisions in the Measure state that one of the functions of the Diocesan Boards of Education is *To promote or assist in the promotion of religious education ... in schools in the diocese*¹³⁷ whatever the foundation of those schools.

6. This response therefore will focus specifically on the place of RE, or, in its examined form, Religious Studies (RS), in the English Baccalaureate. It is with grave concern that we see the subject making the single

¹³⁷ DBE Measure 2 (1) a

most important contribution to pupils' spiritual development being threatened by the actions and policies of the current administration.

7. We are clear that excluding RS from the English Baccalaureate is *already* having a serious impact on the quality, resourcing and status of the subject in secondary schools and its continued exclusion will so damage the subject that it is hard to see how it might recover.

8. We recognize that there is no intention to remove the statutory requirement that all pupils (unless withdrawn) shall continue to study RE at KS4. The repeated commitment to the compulsory nature of RE by the Secretary of State and the Ministerial team is reassuring.

9. It can be taken as read that there is an understanding of the critical importance of RE for all students today:

- To help them understand the impact of religion and faith on history and politics, personal and public morality, art and culture.
- To enhance their knowledge of their neighbours, both local and global, and to contribute to social and community cohesion.
- To provide opportunities for exploring and enlarging their own beliefs and commitments.

10. We are concerned that there is a view that RS is somehow “easier” as a subject, and would refute that entirely. Comparative studies of different GCSE subjects do not reveal that RS is any “easier” or “softer” than other humanities subjects. Indeed the subject matter of the study of religion is intrinsically more demanding, dealing as it does with questions of ultimate importance and continuing debate. Arguments for the existence of God, for example, have daunted more experienced students than the average 16 year old.

11. We do understand that the exclusion of RS from the English Baccalaureate stems rather from the Ministerial desire to increase the take-up of History and Geography and not to diminish RS. However, it is already clear that this will be the end result if the current policy is continued.

12. There is mounting evidence that the status and resourcing of RE/RS is being affected. We have reports of changes being made to exam options in some cases for the current year 11 students removing RS from the humanities stream altogether and replace it with History. Opportunities to pursue full course RS are being dramatically reduced.

13. Once a subject is removed from the exam options the resources and timetabling are reduced. It is not as pressing to recruit specialist staff, and the subject budget is cut. Students realize that it is not important in the scheme of things and whatever their own intrinsic interest will not be inclined to take their study further.

14. This will have a knock on effect on A level and AS level RS courses, on short course GCSEs and on the quality of RE taught at KS3. Returning to the days of non-specialist RE teaching is not likely to be a fair deal for students and will certainly not improve the issues in RE identified in the last Ofsted Report on RE.¹³⁸

15. Church of England schools, many of which maintain a commitment to full course GCSE RS for all students, are now faced with an impossible choice. Keeping RE as part of the core for all students may well be seen as too risky. At the very least there will be extreme pressure on the timetable if RE is to be maintained alongside the acceptable English Baccalaureate subjects.

16. We are confident there are solutions to this problem. We understand that simply adding RE as a third Humanities subject within the EBacc could possibly work against the intention to boost History and Geography. It is suggested that as RE is compulsory anyway it would become the default Humanities GCSE. We are not convinced that would be the case, and would urge some proper research to be carried out to test that.

17. If schools did report that they would be unable to increase the numbers of students taking History or Geography there may be other ways of signaling that RS counts towards the E Bacc. It may be that requiring two Humanities subjects becomes the standard. There are plenty of timetabling experts in the schools who could be canvassed for solutions.

18. There are a range of other threats to the place of RE in our schools:

- Failing to include it in the current review of the National Curriculum will further marginalise the subject.
- Local determination of syllabuses is likely to simply fade away as Local Authority funding disappears so there will be no curriculum development.
- The greater than necessary cuts in places for the training of RE specialists will diminish further the pool of expertise and subject knowledge in schools.
- The lack of primary legislation securing RE in academies does not ensure the future of the subject in what will be the majority of schools.

19. It cannot be the Secretary of State's intention to preside over the demise of high quality RE during his term of office. Unless the English Baccalaureate decision is reversed and some of the other threats are addressed that is what will happen.

¹³⁸ *Transforming Religious Education*, Ofsted, 2010.

20. During 2011 the Church of England is celebrating the 200th anniversary of the founding of the National Society and its commitment to public education. It would be a grave outcome if 2011 were the year that RE was lost to the majority of pupils.

22 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Henry Gowland, Vice Principal (Academic), The Kings Academy, Middlesbrough

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The English Baccalaureate has the possible benefit in drawing schools back to a strong academic curriculum offer, particularly where schools have used vocational qualifications to distort their position in the school league tables. However, a number of schools that currently offer a rigorous academic curriculum are considering a reduction of their offer of academic subjects such as a second Foreign Language, Separate Sciences, Economics and Religious Studies so that they can meet the current narrow definition of “Humanities” subjects as defined in the English Baccalaureate.

2. This memorandum makes recommendations that Religious Studies and Economics are included in the definition of Humanities subjects for the English Baccalaureate and that the government monitors the uptake of Double Language and Separate Science options at GCSE level following the imposition of the English Baccalaureate. A recommendation is also made that any change is announced quickly so as to allow curriculum planners and headteachers to modify their plans accordingly.

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

3. I am a Vice-Principal responsible for Academic Standards and Curriculum at The King’s Academy in Middlesbrough. The King’s Academy has been open for seven and a half years and results in the school have improved from below an average of 20% (in predecessor schools) 5 A*–C including English and Mathematics to the current figure of 51%. The Academy specialises in Business and Enterprise and Special Education (the Academy has a significant number of children who are Deaf or have a Hearing Impairment, who are blind or have a visual impairment and a number of pupils who have Moderate Learning Difficulties). In achieving sustained improvement over time, the Academy has maintained a rigorous academic offer for students and where vocational subjects have been offered, these have been supported by a strong academic core. (The 5 A*–C figure over the time that the Academy has been open has risen from 22% to 87%). The Academy has a current NEET level of 4.7%¹³⁹ for 16–17 year olds against a Middlesbrough-wide figure of 9.3%¹⁴⁰ and a national figure of 5.8%.¹⁴¹

FACTUAL INFORMATION

4. The impact of the English Baccalaureate on schools that already offer a rigorous academic curriculum is likely to be that there is a reduction in opportunities for students to study for a second Foreign Language, Economics, Separate Sciences, Religious Studies or that there will be fewer opportunities for pupils to study more practical and creative (but equally rigorous) subjects such as Fine Art, Engineering, Technology subjects and the like. This is likely to happen as the pursuit of the “Humanities” subjects as prescribed by The English Baccalaureate replace other options. This will arise because a number of schools have a core of compulsory subjects in line with their specialism (in the case of schools holding specialist status) or with their ethos (Schools with religious characteristics) or both.

5. The impact on my school is that if we follow the English Baccalaureate we expect to halve the number of pupils studying Separate Sciences for next year. This will allow us to continue to offer Double Languages and Economics whilst partially meeting the government’s demand for the English Baccalaureate. If we fully follow the curriculum prescribed by the English Baccalaureate, we will not be able to offer Separate Sciences, Double Languages or Economics, as we cannot remove either Religious Studies or Business Studies from our core curriculum since these underpin our ethos and specialist status.

6. The inclusion of Religious Studies in the English Baccalaureate would give many schools the flexibility to still offer a broad range of rigorous academic and creative subjects.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

7. The Government should add Religious Studies and Economics to the list of subjects included in the definition of “Humanities” subjects to be included in the English Baccalaureate.

8. Any announcement of change in subjects to be included in the English Baccalaureate should be made quickly, since schools have almost finished their curriculum planning for the forthcoming academic year.

¹³⁹ Source: Middlesbrough Borough Council monthly statistical return to the Academy.

¹⁴⁰ Source: Middlesbrough Borough Council figure submitted to DFE, February 2011.

¹⁴¹ Source: Labour Force Survey Q4 2010 time series.

9. The Government should monitor the uptake of Separate Sciences and Double Languages in the wake of The English Baccalaureate.

22 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Dormers Wells High School

THE PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE E-BAC AND ITS VALUE AS A MEASURE OF PUPIL AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE;

1.1 Whilst we agree wholeheartedly that able students should be challenged academically and their various talents stretched and enhanced, we believe that we are able to do that in schools within the existing GCSE framework and without the framework offered within the English Baccalaureate. Our concern is that the E-Bac is suited to the educational and future employment needs of a relatively small minority and is not a value for money initiative.

1.2 We regard the model of the E-Bac as based on the curriculum of a 20th Century Grammar School rather than suited to the needs of young people in the 21st Century. A grammar school curriculum enabled a selected group of students to access universities now identified as the Russell Group universities. I believe that only 67% of students in grammar schools achieved the E-Bac last year. The implication is perhaps that even highly academic schools offer a broader range of subjects to students in preparation for adult life in the 21st century.

1.3 E-Bac is likely to be considered an exclusive curriculum, well suited to the academic student. Most secondary schools however cater for a wider range of students and success in a wider range of subjects leads to improved self confidence and better self esteem increasing the likelihood of these students being confident and productive adults in the economy. To use the E-Bac as a measure devalues the achievements of students not following the EBACC. This is not acceptable in a modern society where excellence across all areas of the curriculum should be our aim as educators.

1.4 Whilst we recognize that some schools used the BTEC style qualifications in KS4 to raise achievement the issue seems to be more related to the possible non equivalence of BTEC to GCSE and this could have been rectified by ensuring that BTEC accreditation equalled GCSE rather than the introduction of a prescribed curriculum such as E-Bac. The BTEC style of assessment does suit some students and should be on offer to schools, however the equivalence issue could be reassessed. The danger is that the E-Bac is a sledge hammer to crack a nut and that the nut could be dealt with in a more productive and more cost effective way.

1.5 In addition we recognise that as many students as possible should have access to top universities, indeed we are proud when our students gain these places, we are however, providing an education for a wider cohort of talent and ability. Whilst the E-Bac subjects are valuable to those who will benefit from a highly academic Higher Education, to use this as a measure for schools who have a wide spread of ability within them seems unjust.

1.6 I want to finish this section with a concrete example from last year. A young man in Year 11 last year gained an A* in A level maths and the following grades at GCSE. The exam board wrote to tell us his exam paper was the second highest in the whole country for GCSE English Literature. This student is highly able and a good all rounder, I expect that he will be offered a place to study mathematics at Cambridge in due course. However although he studies a language he did not choose a humanities subject and thus would not have gained the EBACC. None the less he is without doubt a high flyer, an extremely talented young man with an enormous amount to offer the university of his choice. I do not feel he is likely to be held back in his education or career by not having the EBACC. Is the E-Bac value for money in a time of economic difficulties?

THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE E-BAC

2.1 Traditionally this school has for many years offered students in Year 9 an open choice of options for KS4 including the chance to study History/Geography and Languages in addition to the core of English, Maths and Science, whilst closely monitoring choices to ensure there is a balanced programme. Our curriculum has been guided by student and parental choice in our final curriculum offer. We are very proud that we have been able to build up a highly effective Modern Languages Department and last year French for the first time became the most popular option at this stage. If we use the E-Bac as a measure of school performance there is a real danger that students will be persuaded to choose subjects which may be unsuited to them or which may limit their chances to excel in other areas such as the arts/drama and music.

2.2 The choice of subjects currently listed for the English Baccalaureate is very limiting for students and for schools. The humanities offer should also include Religious Education as long as the syllabi continue to reflect a study of both Christian and other beliefs.

2.3 Many of our students are already bilingual and yet there are not always GCSE's offered in the relevant languages for example Tamil and Somali and would therefore request that "Asset Languages" were also in the approved list of language qualifications. Likewise, we are currently offering Latin though the WJEC certificates and would ask that serious consideration is given to including this qualification in the languages section.

2.4 We would also suggest that English should be counted from a success in either English Language or English Literature.

2.5 With regard to science we believe that a C or above in the GCSE qualification in core and additional science or two separate sciences should be sufficient.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE E-BAC FOR PUPILS, SCHOOLS AND EMPLOYERS.

3.1 The broad implications for schools if the E-Bac is a key indicator of school performance is that there must be sufficient high quality teaching staff available in all the E-Bac subjects. Whilst the E-Bac may be a position to aim for the first priority is still to ensure a suitable supply of well qualified and well trained future teachers in all subjects. We are lucky to have excellent languages staff but this will not be the case universally.

3.2 Likewise as schools travel down this E-Bac route some staff will become surplus to requirements and it takes time to shrink some curriculums and expand others with appropriately well qualified staff. We have identified real shortages of capable geographers especially whilst geography staff have been on maternity leave.

3.3 As an employer I believe that employers are well skilled at identifying the qualifications they seek. If they wish to attract personal with humanities and languages qualifications in addition to the core subjects they can identify this from the list of GCSE's that the potential employee indicates they have. The E-Bac is a costly way of telling an employer the same information twice. It is unnecessary.

THE INTERNATIONAL COMPARATORS FOR THE E-BAC

4.1 With regard to international comparators I believe that the PISA indicators are not sufficiently statistically valid to be a valuable comparison. Whilst I have not been able to make a detailed study of the data I suspect that the international comparators also reflect rapid growth in the education systems in a range of developing countries rather than a necessarily intrinsic decrease in the success of the English system.

4.2 In addition following the needs of business considerable input into developing students beyond the purely academic to enhance soft skills to extend employability on the world stage have also been successful in the UK and are not reflected in the PISA data.

22 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Creative and Cultural Skills

1. ABOUT US

Creative & Cultural Skills is the sector skills council representing craft, cultural heritage, design, literature, music, performing and visual arts. Our goal is to enable these creative and cultural industries to reach their economic potential through relevant skills and training, working strategically with partners and employers.

2. THE GROWTH OF THE CREATIVE AND CULTURAL INDUSTRIES TO 2020

Despite difficult economic conditions, employment in the UK's creative and cultural industries is forecast to grow by an average of 3% per year between 2010 and 2020 and have an overall increase of 32%. In contrast, the whole UK economy is predicted to grow in employment by 6% in the same period.¹⁴²

Overall, the proportion of employment in the creative and cultural industries that is in the public sector is forecast to reduce over time, from 10% in 2010, to 7% in 2020.¹⁴³

As such, the creative and cultural industries are key to economic growth in the UK over the next decade.

3. OUR APPROACH TO QUALIFICATIONS, INCLUDING GCSEs

We have a formal role to play in the qualifications system, approving vocational qualifications, ensuring the system meets employer needs and rationalising provision. Our work in this area is guided by our Sector Qualifications Strategy (SQS), which states that general qualifications, including GCSEs, whilst falling outside our formal remit, are valued by our employers.

4. THE PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE E-BAC AND ITS VALUE AS A MEASURE OF PUPIL AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

5. THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE E-BAC

We believe that the choice of subjects to be included in the assessment measure proposed for the E-Bac would have a detrimental effect on the creative and cultural industries that we represent. GCSEs in music, art & design, drama and design & technology are important breeding grounds for our industries' future workforces.

¹⁴² Creative & Cultural Skills. (2011). Creative and Cultural Industry: Occupational, Skills and Productivity Forecasting.

¹⁴³ Ibid.

Whilst English Language, English Literature and History are important subjects for our industries (in particular literature, cultural heritage and performing arts), they are at their best and most relevant when taken alongside practical creative subjects such as drama, art & design and music.

By contrast, increased importance of maths and science may help build basis for better business skills for future creative practitioners. However, the lack of ICT may have an adverse affect on the increasingly important digital skills needs of the industries.

6. THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE E-BAC FOR PUPILS, SCHOOLS AND EMPLOYERS

With an increased emphasis on the significance of results in a small number of subjects, other subjects such as Music, Art & Design, Drama and Design & Technology are likely to be marginalised, or further marginalised, not just at Key Stage 4 but also at Key Stage 3, as schools seek to prepare their pupils for future. This would continue to the 16–19 sector and beyond, reducing the supply of graduates that the creative economy relies upon to survive and grow. The less young people that discover their creative talents at school, the smaller the eventual talent pool for which the UK is rightly world-renowned.

We are also concerned that there would be a negative knock-on effect on other routes for level 2 learners, such as those considering Young Apprenticeships, which are already under-appreciated and little known about.

The proposed E-Bac could also have a negative impact on diversity in the creative industries, in which ethnic minorities are already significantly under-represented. With creative subjects being taken increasingly taken out of the classroom into the private paid-for lessons, particularly in music and drama, lower socio-economic groups would find it harder to break into industries, which are notoriously difficult to enter. Combined with the culture of unpaid internships in a time of high graduate unemployment, this is a potent recipe for the creative industries being the preserve of a privileged elite.

The marginalisation of music within schools and the likely effect that graded exams would be more widely used presents a particular problem, as migrating them to the QCF has been especially problematic.

7. INTERNATIONAL COMPARATORS FOR THE E-BAC

Making a like-for-like international comparison with the E-Bac is problematic due to the lack of clarity about the purpose of the E-Bac.

In its current form, the E-Bac appears little more than a new accountability measure based on a selection of a five “preferred” GCSE’s. It is certainly not a well-considered programme of learning in the usual sense of a baccalaureate in other countries where a broader range of subjects as well as extended projects and enterprise skills are part of the course of study.

8. OUR CONCLUSIONS

The creative and cultural industries are key areas of growth in the UK economy, even in these difficult times, and the education system must be designed to support their future success. The narrow focus of the proposed E-Bac has the potential to damage the supply of creative people that our thriving creative economy, the largest in the EU, relies upon.

22 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Kent County Council

1. OUR VIEW

Kent County Council would like to affirm that the English baccalaureate will offer a rigorous academic pathway for our academically able young people but it does not suit all students.

2. BACKGROUND

The EBacc was announced in the autumn’s schools white paper. It will celebrate pupils’ attaining A*–C passes in five subject areas namely, English, Mathematics, Science, Ancient or Modern History, Geography and an Ancient or Modern Language. The select committee should consider the subjects to include—there has been much discussion on the inclusion of Religious Education. Students will receive certificates rewarding their performance on this measure of traditional academic achievement.

3. ITS PURPOSE

As a structure the EBacc is an efficient way of framing academic learning and success. It is interesting that the Russell group is looking at EBacc as a prerequisite for university entrance.

4. THE BACCALAUREATE STRUCTURE

The Ebacc will run alongside other variants of the baccalaureate genre:

- the International Baccalaureate (IB) with its emphasis on academic learning combined with CAS—creativity, action and service opportunities—and a dissertation;
- the International Baccalaureate Careers Certificate which is being piloted in Kent and which is an appropriate follow-on to Ebacc;
- the European Baccalaureate (EB) used by European schools in England; and
- the Welsh Bacc with its core of key skills including an individual investigation and options which consist of GCSE, Vocational GCSE, AS and A levels and NVQ and BTEC, thus offering different levels of achievement, breadth and choice not present in the Ebacc, which is a significant omission and devalues the baccalaureate genre.

5. POTENTIAL BACCALAUREATES

Programmes of learning which could well be deemed baccalaureates but are not also include foundation learning—vocational study, personal and social development and functional skills numeracy, literacy and computing—and the rapidly disappearing Diploma programme—principal learning, the project (similar to the IB dissertation), functional skills as above and additional subject learning to complement the principal learning. We strongly recommend the development of a Technical Baccalaureate to include applied learning opportunities.

6. THE PERFORMANCE MEASURE AND NATIONAL AND REGIONAL DATA ASSOCIATED WITH IT

The Ebacc as a performance measure has already found its way on the recently published school league tables, applying the benchmark to exams taken before the new measure was announced (up to summer 2009). There have been no consultations, no published detailed plans, no opportunities for transitional change, no space for internal discussion, and no chance of developing implementation time and guide lines. What there will be, will be coercion for students to take certain subjects, as the pressure continues for schools to perform through league tables.

The 2010 national performance tables have shown around one in six students hitting the benchmark, a statistic which might well have been presaged by the fact that uptake and success in modern languages—decreasing annually since 2004 when the previous government allowed pupils to drop the subject—have been already included in the league tables.

In Kent 31 out of 101 schools achieved 35%+ in the Ebacc measure, all of these grammar schools. It is worth noting that 2 grammar schools dropped off the end of this list. However, 37 schools achieved 35%+ level 2 MFL.

59 schools had 9% or fewer students achieving Ebacc and 25% or fewer students achieving level 2 MFL.

If we look to academies to support improvement 12 out of 35 had more than 35% of students achieving the Ebacc with 13 only reaching 35% MFL level 2.

7. ITS IMPACT

High schools (Kent is a selective authority) where students and teachers have worked hard to meet National Challenge targets—35% five A*–C including English and maths—and to develop programmes of study matched to individual learner needs find themselves overnight labelled underperforming. This is a retrograde step.

The academic curriculum predicated on the Ebacc which might have been perceived to offer little to fear by our grammar schools reverberates in those institutions' tables, their offer to students of course not yet reflective of these changes.

In response to a policy which wanted a broad range of options offered to students, schools redesigned their curricula to allow for a wide range of qualifications working on the principle that a one sized curriculum does not all students' needs. So, religious studies, level 1 language courses, construction and the full range of vocational courses for example found their place successfully in Kent schools. Over 8,000 learners in Kent are actively engaged in a broad range of vocational courses, which offer students appropriate progression routes and employability skills. Our vocational offer was cited in the Wolf review as an example of innovative practice.

Schools where students have been successful in these areas are now needing to re-examine their curriculum creating conflict between compulsion and student choice and this restrictive academic offer has the potential to have a negative impact on student outcomes and learning.

It is unfortunate that applied learning, through vocational and technical programmes, which offers work place and employability skills, is devalued by the Ebacc as are subjects which lead to successful further study and employment. The reaction will be to displace these subjects in order to deliver the English Baccalaureate.

An unintended consequence of this measure will be to restrict the economic growth of this country by exacerbating the skills shortage at level 3 and 4, despite the excellent proposals from Professor Wolf.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

We recommend:

- (i) that data relating to Ebacc is not included until the 2014 league tables to allow successful completion of current learning programmes in Key Stage 4;
- (ii) that a consultation cycle is established with learners and professionals on the curriculum offer;
- (iii) that time is allowed for thoughtful and student centred redesign of curricula permitting flexibility and creativity and appropriate mechanisms which connect young people with employers;
- (iv) that local solutions to meet local economic profiles are explored; and
- (v) that there is recognition that to develop and implement Ebacc resources will be needed to:
 - ensure that all students learn enjoyably and successfully in key stages 3 and 4;
 - provide quality teaching;
 - organise the best possible in service CPD opportunities in planning and delivery; and
 - recruit or retrain teachers of these subjects.
- (vi) that consideration is given to the make-up of the baccalaureate; and
- (vii) that thought be given to developing a technical baccalaureate and Kent schools would wish to be involved in this development as a matter of priority.

22 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by The National Association of Language Advisers (Nala)

1. Nala welcomes the introduction of measures which will increase the number of pupils studying languages in Key Stage 4. The introduction of the E-Bac has already encouraged more schools to ensure that larger numbers of pupils are able to gain a GCSE and this trend seems set to continue.

2. Nevertheless, we are concerned that including in the measure only those who gain a grade C or above in GCSE or IGCSE does not give credit to those schools where all pupils are encouraged to study a language. Restricting the qualifications and grades which are available will not improve our standing in relation to other European countries where learning another language is seen as an important skill for all children.

3. We would like to see a wider range of qualifications, more suited to the full range of abilities and interests of our pupils, such as vocational courses. The current GCSE and IGCSE qualifications are not suited to all pupils and are not appreciated by many employers. A variety of qualifications would help address the current situation where 71% of employers say that they are not satisfied with school/college leavers's skills in foreign languages. (CBI/EDI Education and Skills Survey 2010 <http://www.cbi.org.uk/ndbs/content.nsf/802737AED3E3420580256706005390AE/C4393B860D00478E802576C6003B0679>)

4. We would also like to see a minimum number of hours of learning required for any qualification so that employers can be sure that the courses on offer meet their needs. England is currently joint bottom of a table of 39 countries in the developed world for the amount of time spent on languages by 12–14 year olds in schools. (OECD: education at a glance 2010 data).

5. We also feel that there should be some widening of choice in the subjects available for the E-Bac. We would support a compulsory language element but feel that the humanities option should include the wider, liberal arts subjects of RE, Music and Art all of which contribute to a rounded educational experience.

6. Our members are also concerned at the introduction of a retrospective measure which seems to have gained currency very quickly. Many pupils in the current Years 10 and 11 were not encouraged to take a language to GCSE and feel they may miss out on an important extra qualification which may be used to judge suitability for employment or future education. Conversely, our members have noted instances when pupils are being “force-fed” intensive courses (often over 12 weeks, with only three hours a week) which will not equip them to use the language for work, further education or pleasure.

22 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Mr P Travis, Headmaster, St Thomas More School

My submission is organised in four parts, as indicated below.

1. THE PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE E-BAC AND ITS VALUE AS A MEASURE OF PUPIL AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

1.1 I believe that there should be a single examination benchmark for pupils at GCSE. It is important for all pupils to study a set of core subjects to GCSE standard and for pupils to achieve in these subjects to the best of their abilities.

1.2 The current chief-measure of published examination-success, namely, “5 A*–C including English and maths”, perhaps needs to include science. However, to go beyond this as the E-Bac does is, in my view, of little positive value and if taken seriously may, I fear, be educationally counterproductive. I believe this for the reasons outlined in the remaining sections.

2. THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE E-BAC

2.1 Concerning the choice of subjects included in the E-Bac, I agree that English, maths and science should be included, but to include humanities and a foreign language is, I believe, a mistake.

2.2 Concerning humanities, I would submit that if “humanities” as a group of subjects is limited to the full GCSE subjects of history and geography, then it is inadequate and as a consequence of this inadequacy is unfair to those pupils who study the other humanities subjects.

2.3 A great deal might be said regarding the definition of the word, “humanities”; however I would suggest a definition along the lines of, “those subjects which lend themselves to the study of the human condition, ie what it is to be a human person and what it is to live in society”.

2.4 The subjects history and geography—providing geography is not too natural-science based—clearly “fit the bill”, but then there are many other GCSE subjects, which might also be considered:

- Business Studies;
- Citizenship;
- Classical Civilisation;
- Economics;
- English Literature;
- Psychology;
- Religious Studies;
- Sociology;
- and so on.

2.5 As a Catholic school, the Governing Body and leadership of this school are particularly concerned that religious studies is not properly recognised in the E-Bac. Religious studies as the study of mankind’s religious beliefs and practices surely is a humanities subject *par excellence*.

2.6 I wonder why other humanities subjects have not already been included in the E-Bac definition of humanities. I have heard it suggested that this is because they do not have the same breadth, depth and rigour as history and geography. Such an assertion would be contested and would need to be proven, but if for the sake of the argument this assertion were accepted, then the solution must be to ensure that all GCSEs of whatever type are fully equivalent; rather than pretending that certain subjects are not humanities, when they are.

2.7 Given a proper inclusion of the humanities subjects, I suspect that most pupils in most schools would study at least one humanities subject. If this were so, would it be necessary to single out humanities in the published examination-benchmark in the same way that English and maths are currently? I would suggest not for the reasons given in the third section of this paper.

2.8 Concerning the inclusion of a foreign language in the E-Bac, I have heard two arguments both of which, I believe, fail to justify its inclusion in any published examination-benchmark.

2.9 The first argument is that the study of a foreign language improves English grammar. It might do so, but this is hardly a compelling reason for its inclusion in a published examination-benchmark. If it is the case that the grammar of our pupils is generally inadequate, then should we not address this directly? Namely, should we not make the English language GCSE more rigorous in this respect?

2.10 The second argument I have heard for the inclusion of a foreign language in the E-Bac is that this will improve the international business potential of our work force. I believe that this argument is unconvincing for the following reasons:

- I. It is difficult to see how Latin or Classical Greek—currently members of the E-Bac—achieve this in any direct sense, splendid subjects though they might be.

- II. It seems that French is the natural choice of foreign language of most schools in England. This is a most excellent language, but I do not see that large numbers of pupils speaking French to GCSE level are going to help international trade to any significant degree. Most pupils who choose French because it is essential for the E-Bac rather than out of interest or enjoyment are unlikely, I believe, to take it beyond the GCSE.
- III. Would French be the right language to include, anyway? The growing economies are those of India, China and South America.
- IV. In India, China and South America I understand that their pupils seem genuinely keen to learn English. Perhaps this is because English is understood to be the international language of business and commerce.

2.11 In our school, whilst we strongly encourage our pupils to take a foreign language, we currently leave it as a matter of choice. I am not convinced that it should not remain so.

3. THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE E-BAC FOR PUPILS AND SCHOOLS

3.1 I believe that government published measures of GCSE success should keep to an absolute minimum the subjects they single out by name. My reason for saying this is that choice is important and therefore the more subjects that are named in the published examination measure the less choice there is. The importance of choice is shown in the following.

- I. Schools often have very different pupil-intakes. Schools often are in very different localities, socially and economically. Schools will differ in their ethos. It is important therefore to allow space for “local freedoms”.
- II. As Specialist Schools, schools have often worked within their communities to identify and promote the study of a “specialist subject”. In our particular case as a Mathematics and Computing Specialist College, our pupils at Key Stage 4 are all obliged to take ICT, in one form or another, to GCSE level.
- III. Pupils also need to have some element of choice in the subjects that they take. Pupils will have their own subject interests and enjoyments and their own career aspirations. These are important to all pupils. However, choice is critically important for those pupils for whom school is itself a challenge because of their potential disaffection or their tendency to believe that education is irrelevant for them. Pupil choice encourages engagement and a sense of relevance and importance.
- IV. To name subjects in the published examination-measure is to relegate those subjects not a “part of the club” to the category of ‘second-class subject’. This is, I believe, an inevitable consequence whether intended or not. Many of the non E-Bac subjects will suit the academic capabilities, interests and career aspirations of large numbers of pupils and yet have been downgraded. This runs the risk of increasing disaffection and a sense of irrelevance for those pupils who, for good reason, are studying them.

3.2 Around the core of a few essential subjects, let us continue to build equally respected “other GCSEs” and the vocational qualifications which have GCSE equivalence.

3.3 Specifically concerning vocational qualifications, if there is a suspicion that through lack of rigor, breadth or depth these do not truly have GCSE equivalence, then this would need to be tested and if confirmed addressed directly. Simply leaving them out of the E-Bac evades the issue.

4. INTERNATIONAL COMPARATORS AND THE E-BAC

4.1 This nation’s apparent slippage down the international league tables is a real concern that must be faced. If valid studies truly show a genuine slippage, then measures must be taken to strengthen the teaching and learning throughout our nation. This strengthening must start in the primary schools and work through to the secondary schools.

4.2 However well-intentioned, I believe that introducing the new measure—the E-Bac—is not going to address such a problem, not least for the reasons given above, but mostly because it does not in itself improve the rigor of the examinations or the scholarship needed to pass them and therefore it will not improve the teaching and learning in our schools.

Please note that my comments in the sections above refer specifically to the E-Bac as it currently exists and would not, of course, necessarily rule out suitable alternatives.

Once again, I thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the debate. You have our thoughts and our own hard work with you as we work to improve our education system.

Written evidence submitted by The Association for Language Learning

The Association for Language Learning (ALL) is the major subject association for teachers of languages and language professionals in the UK. Its patron is Professor David Crystal and it has some 5,000 individual, group and corporate members.

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The current proposal for the E-Bac should be retained, with a foreign language as one of the core subjects. We believe this will encourage more students to study languages at senior secondary levels in order to increase languages capability nationally.
- The proposal regarding the choice of languages to be included in the award should be retained, ie any language for which a GCSE examination exists, with the exception of GCSEs in Applied French and Applied Welsh 2nd Language.
- Steps should be taken to protect the position of successful and rigorous alternative awards such as the NVQ in languages.
- ALL, working with a range of partners, should be asked to put forward ideas for new GCSE criteria to provide a more intellectually stimulating syllabus and examination.
- The Government should consider the implications of the E-Bac with regard to the number of specialist language teachers in the workforce. There is already a shortage of specialist linguists in schools, and we know from preparations already being made in schools for the next academic year that there will be a significant increase in the amount of language teaching. If the E-Bac is introduced as proposed, it will need to be backed by strong policies on the recruitment of well qualified, well-trained teachers with the subject knowledge, teaching expertise and experience to carry it through to a high standard.
- Head teachers should be made aware of the need to strengthen subject-based CPD for languages staff, for example, by encouraging membership of their subject association and supporting participation in activities aimed at improving teachers' subject knowledge.
- Schools should be made to consider their responsibility in relation to provision for languages in the timetable (i.e. number of hours, regularity and continuity) to ensure excellent and sustained provision and high pupil achievement.

1. GENERAL

1.1 The Association for Language Learning (ALL) broadly approves of the introduction of the E-Bac, especially in its aim to encourage a balanced curriculum in secondary schools. We endorse the Government's concern for well founded educational values and ourselves wish to halt the drift away from what are sometimes seen as more academic and more "difficult" subjects. We welcome the encouragement to all children to achieve their full potential and believe that all children should have the opportunity to learn languages from an early age and that coherent, relevant and progressive programmes of language learning should be available throughout all phases of their education and training.

1.2 ALL is however concerned about some aspects of the implementation of the E-Bac.

1.3 Our submission focuses on only one aspect of the E-Bac inquiry, the inclusion of a language in the E-Bac. ALL believes that the Government has made the correct decision in making a language one of the five subjects to be included. This submission provides the rationale for our view.

2. THE PRESENT POSITION: A CHALLENGE

2.1 The last 10 years have seen a serious decline in the number of pupils learning languages at KS4. The decline has arisen in part from the decision of the previous government to make languages an optional subject at this Key Stage. Since the decision was implemented in September 2004, ALL has consistently voiced anxiety about the number of pupils, many of them high attainers, dropping languages at the end of KS3. Since 2003 an annual survey, *Language Trends* (http://www.cilt.org.uk/research_and_statistics.aspx), conducted by CILT, the National Centre for Languages in collaboration with ALL and the Independent Schools Modern Languages Association, has tracked a steady decrease in the number of pupils studying languages at KS4 and more recently—most strikingly in 2010—a worrying decline in pupil contact time in languages at KS3.

Participation in language learning has fallen for a number of reasons. These include:

- pupils restricted to choosing a very small number of options from a very wide range of subjects;
- the supposed difficulty of studying languages;
- pressure on curriculum time and inadequate time devoted to languages at KS3;
- severe grading at GCSE where it has been demonstrated that it is more difficult to achieve a high grade in languages than in many other subjects (http://www.all-london.org.uk/severe_grading.htm);

- intense pressure on schools to achieve five A*–C grades at GCSE, with pupils being directed towards “softer” subjects. This is often most obvious in schools in more challenging circumstances: participation in language learning by pupils in lower social groups and inner city areas is particularly low, as revealed in the *Language Trends* surveys.

2.2 This decline has been the subject of much policy discussion and numerous support strategies from government, national agencies and other organisations, including our own. There is much good and some outstanding practice in those schools that continue to offer languages. However, initiatives to improve provision and increase participation have on the whole been unsuccessful in the face of structures so heavily weighted against them. Language learning at KS3 and KS4 has become increasingly marginalised in schools and in some cases has been completely lost at KS4.

2.3 The major challenge now is to reverse the decline and encourage more young people to choose languages at KS4. An English Baccalaureate which includes a language will certainly provide the opportunity for a revival of language learning at KS4. It will also have a backwash effect on KS3 and could have an impact on numbers opting to continue to study languages at KS5.

3. LANGUAGE LEARNING AS PART OF A BROAD AND BALANCED CURRICULUM

3.1 ALL believes in a broad and balanced general education for all.

3.2 In the last few years, despite substantial investment in education and well intentioned initiatives to improve achievement, there has been a tendency for schools to lose sight of general educational aspirations in the drive to achieve targets and manage performance.

3.3 In a fragile yet increasingly interconnected and independent world, we believe that there is a powerful case for learning languages. Language learning should arguably form a part of compulsory education at every stage, and its inclusion in the secondary curriculum is of paramount importance. It may be difficult to predict the future language requirements that learners may need in their personal and professional lives but language learning in school should equip learners with fluency in at least one major language other than English and provide the necessary language learning skills and knowledge about language to enable them to learn other languages as required.

3.4 The current loss of capability in languages is likely to have a major impact on the UK economy and on our role in international affairs. The inclusion of a language in the E-Bac, as well as having intrinsic value, will have a number of positive effects, strengthening languages at KS3 and encouraging primary schools which have made a start on language learning to continue. The sustainability of primary languages is especially prescient as many primary schools, having introduced primary languages first as an entitlement and then in the expectation that primary languages would become compulsory from 2011, are now unsure of their future status in the curriculum review. Language learning for the E-Bac should build on the solid foundation that primary languages can provide.

3.5 We have noted with concern that language skills are becoming increasingly the preserve of the middle classes. Almost all pupils in independent schools study languages up to GCSE, they account for around 30% of A level entries (although only some 7% of the entire A level cohort are in independent schools), and take nearly 50% of the top A level grades. At university level Modern Languages has a higher level of students from independent schools than any other discipline. If the E-Bac becomes the award of choice for most state schools, this trend should be reversed.

4. WHY ALL PUPILS SHOULD LEARN LANGUAGES

4.1 Language is a uniquely human attribute which identifies us as individuals, as communities, and as nations. All human beings are capable of learning other languages. The ability to express ourselves clearly and creatively in our own language, or in the language of schooling, is fundamental to successful education. The more we understand about language—our own and those of others—the more we are able to reflect on our own culture.

4.2 Language learning has significant educational benefits:

- developing communication skills;
- promoting literacy, both in English and in the language of study;
- strengthening understanding and knowledge of the nature of language and communication;
- strengthening intellectual and analytical capabilities (eg engaging with different ways of making meaning);
- strengthening cognitive and general learning capabilities, such as creative and critical thinking;
- strengthening the knowledge and understanding of concepts across the curriculum;
- enriching understanding of other subjects (eg studying resources in other languages); and
- empathy with, and understanding of other ways of living and thinking.

4.3 Language learning also brings valuable personal benefits:

- the ability to communicate with speakers of other languages;
- increased self-confidence;
- broader horizons;
- enhanced career prospects; and
- increased opportunities for employment and travel.

4.4 The Australian school curriculum is also currently under review and the draft proposals emerging from the Australian review include the following statement which serves to sum up our own viewpoint:

Language [learning] affords an important opportunity to... work productively towards strengthening this country's role and relationships globally... Just as importantly...language [learning] contributes to the general education of all students. It operates from the fundamental principle that for all students, learning to communicate in two or more languages is a rich, challenging experience of engaging with the linguistic and cultural diversity of our interconnected world.

(Draft Shape of the Australian Curriculum: Languages, ACARA, January 2011)

5. WHY WE NEED MORE YOUNG PEOPLE WITH LANGUAGE SKILLS

5.1 There are powerful arguments for developing the language skills of the next generation. In an increasingly interconnected and interdependent world a good national capability in languages will serve the interests of the economy, of international relations, of trade, of cultural exchange and of national security.

5.2 We lose out as a trading nation due to our poor language skills; fewer and fewer young people are learning German, for example, yet it is the language of one of our major trading partners. In international affairs we often rely on the English language skills of others rather than being able to communicate directly and more effectively ourselves.

5.3 In the global economy our young people compete for work with their peers from across the world, many of whom speak English and often one or more other major languages. Our monolingual school and university leavers do not find themselves on a level playing field. Education should ensure that students who leave our schools are equipped to do well in the modern world, which must include the basics of foreign language education skills. As stated previously, no-one can predict which language or languages an individual may need to speak in the future, but a solid foundation in any language can help in the acquisition of another.

5.4 Language learning has a part to play in community coherence: a better understanding of "otherness" and of different communities within our own society. It leads to an appreciation of cultural diversity and thus to more tolerance.

5.5 Far from being a monolingual nation, England is strikingly plurilingual. Hundreds of languages are spoken in England, with London alone having over 300 in everyday use. Yet this rich heritage of many of our young citizens goes largely untapped and is not developed to its full potential. Schools in many cities enter considerable numbers of pupils for GCSE and other examinations in heritage languages but the formal teaching of these languages is still unusual, despite research evidence that both the general educational development and progress in English improves when children are taught their heritage or first language in school.

6. THE E-BAC: AN OPPORTUNITY

6.1 The E-Bac should provide the opportunity for a revival of language learning at KS4.

6.2 It will only do so, however, if the right conditions exist. Our experience as subject specialists tells us successful languages education can only occur if:

- the value of languages is recognised by schools and by society more generally;
- well qualified and experienced language teachers are available, supported by access to good professional development;
- adequate time is set aside: language learning requires regularity and continuity over a significant period if it is to be successful; and
- there is guidance and support on the curriculum and assessment.

6.3 If more pupils from all backgrounds and across ability ranges are to be engaged by languages and to do well in them, GCSE languages examinations will need to be reviewed to ensure that there is appropriate and stimulating content. There is a real opportunity now to innovate, to raise expectations, and to fire the imagination of teenagers within the framework of the GCSE examination. This may fall outside of the direct remit of the curriculum review but will be a pre-requisite to the successful implementation of the E-Bac.

6.4 A growing number of schools have introduced elements of content and language integrated learning (often known as CLIL) into their teaching. This has proved very successful, placing language acquisition into the real contexts of a range of subject teaching. For example, content from history, geography or science is taught through the medium of the foreign language. Impressive results have been noted in many of the schools

using this approach, pupils' development in the languages has accelerated with no negative impact in pupil achievement in the content subject studied. Opportunities to continue with such approaches and support to develop them further could contribute to raising achievement in GCSE languages. There may also be a clear role for CLIL in the development of appropriately rigorous vocational qualifications.

6.5 In response to the decline in participation, many schools and many teachers of languages have successfully introduced alternative qualifications for languages in recent years. They are popular with pupils and teachers alike because they are perceived to be relevant and worthwhile. One examination in particular, the NVQ in business languages, stands out in this respect. Unlike some other NVQs, this examination has significant academic content and is a challenging course which equips students with many useful skills. Teachers using it feel strongly about its value, and it is estimated that around 20% of state schools currently offer the NVQ in languages. There is a danger that the introduction of the E-Bac will endanger these successful alternative qualifications.

7. LANGUAGES IN THE E-BAC

7.1 We believe that there is a strong case for the inclusion of languages in the E-Bac. It would:

- encourage a greater number of young people to study a language GCSE level and thus to complete the “compulsory years” of schooling with a broadly based education;
- complement the other subjects in the suggested range and contribute to a balanced and outward-looking curriculum;
- help students access higher education—some universities (eg University College London) are already asking for a GCSE or equivalent in a language, or commitment to starting a language course, as an entry requirement; some high achieving state schools are also adopting a similar approach for entry to their sixth forms; and
- help strengthen the position of languages in primary schools and at KS3.

23 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by the Liberal Democrat Parliamentary Policy Committee for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport

1. INTRODUCTION

The Committee applauds the aims of the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) in seeking to encourage pupils to achieve a broad and rounded education. However, we are concerned at the lack of a creative element to the EBacc—in particular, the lack of provision for art, music or drama. We value the arts. We believe they are valuable academic subjects in their own right; that they can significantly improve performance in literacy, numeracy and foreign languages; and that they are vital to the future of our creative industries. We fear that the EBacc, as currently envisaged, will have a negative impact on the schools arts provision. The arts should take their place alongside the core subjects within the EBacc.

2. THE IMPACT OF THE EBACC ON THE PROVISION OF ARTS EDUCATION

In a written answer on 4 March, Schools Minister, Nick Gibb, said that the number of EBacc subjects had been kept “small enough to allow wider study”. However, as *The Guardian* reported on 7 February, some schools have already cut back on their arts provision in response to the EBacc, thus restricting opportunities for wider study. Some schools have devoted more teaching time to EBacc subjects, while others have stopped offering art and design at GCSE altogether. A survey conducted by The National Association of Music Educators also found that 57 out of 95 schools are planning to restrict opportunities to study GCSE music from next year.

With schools fighting to maintain their positions in the league tables, the decline of arts subjects is only likely to continue. The subjects within the EBacc are extremely valuable, of course, but the prominence placed on them by ministers means that the arts will fall by the wayside. The arts should be on an equal footing with the EBacc subjects. While the EBacc aims to ensure that pupils are offered a broad and rounded education, it will in many cases do the opposite.

3. THE VALUE OF THE ARTS TO OTHER FIELDS OF LEARNING

We believe that creative subjects, such as art, music and drama, are not only rigorous academic subjects but are valuable in their own right. But more than that, studies have repeatedly shown that study of the arts can lead to significantly improved performance in other areas. As the Government said in response to the Henley review into music education, “[r]esearch evidence shows that a quality music education can improve self-confidence, behaviour and social skills, as well as improve academic attainment in areas such as numeracy, literacy and language.”

Thus, the study of the subjects already covered by the EBacc could be significantly enhanced by the study of an arts subject.

4. THE NEED FOR A CREATIVE WORKFORCE

Education should, at least in part, be linked to future employment. The UK's creative industries currently make up around 6.2% of GVA and account for 7.8% of employment. Between 1997 and 2008, the sector grew faster than any other and is still growing at a steady pace. The UK's creative industries are well-placed to help the drive to economic recovery.

To meet the demands of a growing and fast changing industry, we will need to maintain a creative skills base. The National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts (NESTA) published a review in February 2011 of the skills needed for the games and visual effects industries, concluding that art, as well as maths and science, were indispensable.

Failure to maintain our creative skills base will severely hamper the growth of the creative sector.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

We believe that the arts should have an equal standing with the subjects within the EBacc. We therefore recommend that the humanities category of the EBacc should be expanded into a broader "Arts and Humanities" category, providing the opportunity to study, art, music and drama, as well as history and geography. This has the additional benefit that pupils will not have to choose more than five subjects to make up the EBacc, thus allowing more time for the study of other subjects.

If the art, music and drama are not to be recognised under the EBacc, they should, at the very least, remain an entitlement at Key Stage 4, following the review of the National Curriculum.

23 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by the Diploma Development Partnership for the Creative and Media Diploma by Skillset¹⁴⁴ and Creative and Cultural Skills

BACKGROUND

1. Through the Diploma Development Partnership for the 14 to 19 year olds Diploma in Creative and Media,¹⁴⁵ there has been a wide consultation with employers, practitioners and higher education on the skills and knowledge young people should be developing at this age and at this level. This resulted in valuable evidence that directly informed the development of the Diploma (and, specifically, the Principal Learning Qualification in Creative and Media).

2. Aspects of this evidence are important in relation to the Education Committee's inquiry into the English Baccalaureate; specifically, in terms of the implications of the E-Baccalaureate for pupils and employers.

3. Employers in the Creative Industries have had a voice in informing qualifications for this age group, both through the development of the Diploma in Creative and Media and the Vocational Qualification Reform Programme.

4. First we would like to note that employers were not asked about the need and content for an English Baccalaureate, so it is quite important that the Education Committee has chosen to include the employers' view/implication in their line of questioning.

5. Employers should continue to have a voice in informing relevant education and training, so that young people develop the skills and knowledge that are useful in the future world of work.

IMPLICATIONS FOR CREATIVE INDUSTRIES EMPLOYERS

6. Employers in the Creative Industries value a broad education that avoids specialisation too early and supports progression through the development of broad, transferable skills. This includes learning in a range of contexts, including those that support creativity and creative practice.

7. The qualifications that count towards the current E-Bac provide limited scope for the development of creative skills.

8. To develop the skills needed, across all sectors in the Creative Industries, there needs to be fusion of skills and subjects such as computer science, art & design alongside the traditional subjects of mathematics, science, English, humanities and a foreign language.

9. The skills required for the 21st century are technical, creative and visual literacy. Employers in Creative Industries want an education system that leads to good standards of English and Maths and can build on them.

10. For example, the recent Livingstone/Hope report Next Gen [for source document, see NESTA website]¹⁴⁶ on the Video Games and Visual Effects industries (which are recognised by Government as important growth

¹⁴⁴ Skillset was the convening Sector Skills Council for the Creative and Media Diploma Development.

¹⁴⁵ <http://www.skillset.org/qualifications/diploma/developments/>

¹⁴⁶ http://www.nesta.org.uk/home/1/assets/features/next_gen

potential industries for the UK) asks to bring Computer Science into the National Curriculum as an essential discipline. Another recommendation from this report also asks to include art and computer science in the E-Bac and encourage art-tech crossover and work-based learning through school clubs.

11. Moreover, creative practise can strengthen and facilitate core subjects. UK Music's report *Liberating Creativity*¹⁴⁷ notes that "encouragement needs to be given to educators to draw upon the power of music to engage young people in learning in core skills such as literacy, numeracy, IT, enterprise and "soft" employability skills (such as the ability to work in a team)."

GENERAL ISSUES

12. Employers welcome access to a "properly rounded education"—which goes wider than the subjects in scope of the E-Bac, although the language used in relation to the Government's ambition for the E-Bac implies that the content of the E-Bac alone provides this "properly rounded education".

13. Other types of qualification, including vocationally related qualifications, the Diploma in Creative and Media and applied general qualifications, encourage applied and experiential learning. This can enhance young peoples' soft skills, such as interpersonal skills, team working, problem solving and negotiation skills. These are central to employability skills—skills, attitudes and aptitudes that should be developed and nurtured at this stage, supporting personal development and growth, which in turn supports progression and personal achievement.

14. Whilst it is noted that such qualifications could be taken along side the E-Bac, there could be very little curriculum time for vocational options depending on which E-Bac-recognised GCSEs are selected by pupils or offered by a school.

15. For example, depending on which GCSE specifications are offered or chosen, a pupil may have to do both English Language and English Literature for one to count towards the E-Bac. Similarly, depending on which Maths specification is offered, a pupil may have to do both the Methods in Mathematics and Applications of Mathematics Linked GCSEs to meet the maths requirement. Finally, depending on which Science specification is offered, a pupil may end up doing two or three separate GCSEs in order to meet the requirement. Combined, this means that a pupil could be required to take up to nine GCSEs in order to meet the E-Bac requirements. Even if this scenario is rare, most would have to take six GCSEs (two sciences). This leaves limited curriculum time for qualifications outside of the E-Bac list. This not only limits choice of vocational subjects, but also general study in wider curriculum areas, such as music and art.

16. Employability skills may be developed in wider curricular activities and, to some degree, within the learning acquired through the E-Bac; however, these skills will not be developed by direct consequence of the E-Bac. Young people may achieve the E-Bac, but still not have the full range of transferable skills that employers value. The implication for employers is that young people may not have the opportunity to develop the broader skill set and learning experience that support progression into future employment.

17. Moreover, the emphasis on the traditional academic subjects and their direct link to schools' performance tables could re-establish the false divide between academic and vocational education. This would be at odds with what employers want. For example, Creative Media employers are engaging with Higher Education to enhance the vocational elements in undergraduate and post-graduate programmes of study. The blending of the vocational and the academic is important to them as it is reflective of the hybrid skill mix required in the workforce. A false emphasis on purely academic study as a rounded and robust education, with an incentive arrangement for schools that could marginalise other qualification options, could have a negative impact for employers.

18. Whilst a system for ranking schools may help with consumer choice, the use of the E-Bac to contribute so significantly to this could also limit consumer choice (learners and their parents or guardians) because so much learning of value (music, the arts, applied learning and vocationally-related learning) falls outside of this new "gold standard".

19. Finally, it is interesting to note the differences with the Welsh Baccalaureate¹⁴⁸ where the Diploma Development Partnerships (which include employers) were invited to feed in. It resulted to the Welsh Baccalaureate incorporating the Diplomas' Principal Learning component (Creative and Media example),¹⁴⁹ recognising it as one that compliments and enhances the Baccalaureate offer.

¹⁴⁷ <http://www.ukmusic.org/policy/liberating-creativity>

¹⁴⁸ <http://www.wbq.org.uk/home>

¹⁴⁹ http://www.skillset.org/qualifications/diploma/learners/article_7372_1.asp

Written evidence submitted by Association of Teachers and Lecturers

ATL, THE EDUCATION UNION

1. ATL, the education union, is an independent, registered trade union and professional association, representing approximately 160,000 teachers, head teachers, lecturers and support staff in maintained and independent nurseries, schools, sixth form, tertiary and further education colleges in the United Kingdom. AMiE is the leadership section of ATL representing leaders and managers in schools and colleges. We recognise the link between education policy and members' conditions of service.

2. ATL exists to help members, as their careers develop, through first rate research, advice, information and legal advice. Our evidence-based policy making enables us to campaign and negotiate locally and nationally.

3. ATL is affiliated to the Trades Union Congress (TUC), Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU), European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE) and Education International (EI). ATL is not affiliated to any political party and seeks to work constructively with all the main political parties.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

4. ATL believes that state education must be recognised as a public good, with an integrated and flexible education offer for all 14–19 year olds.

5. The E-Bac will only serve to recognise and distinguish the achievements of the most able and advantaged pupils. It encourages schools to compete with each other in league tables and by seeking to attract the “best” pupils.

6. Educational breadth is not achieved by schools competing on the same criteria and having very similar approaches to teaching and learning in order to ensure good GCSE passes in a select choice of subjects. A broad and balanced education provides a range of skills, knowledge, subject choices and pathways which are suitable to the needs and interests of all pupils.

7. ATL does not agree with the Government that the E-Bac will prevent disadvantaged pupils being unfairly pushed by schools towards less academic or “difficult” routes. This shows a lack of understanding of vocational education and is a gross simplification of the challenges around breaking the link between poverty and low educational attainment. The E-Bac is an example of a context-blind policy which fails to take into account that education takes place in communities which are shaped by complex webs of historical, social, economic, political and geographical factors, many of which create or compound inequality.

8. The choice of subjects included in the E-Bac prejudice the outcomes of the Government's curriculum review and preclude the latter from being an independent re-evaluation.

9. The introduction of the E-Bac means that schools will adapt their curriculum to meet the new requirements and to improve their scores in league tables. The E-Bac will inevitably lead to a narrowing of the curricular offer, and efforts are likely to be concentrated on the most able and advantaged pupils who are likely to do well in E-Bac subjects. Disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEN will be the biggest losers, particularly with funding cuts to central support services and support staff in schools.

10. Consultation with the education profession prior to the introduction of any new performance measure would have ensured a more accurate understanding of the existing educational offer, including in relation to raising standards and educational attainment, as well as the impact of education cuts on the provision of a broad and balanced education for all children irrespective of their backgrounds.

ATL RESPONSE

The Purpose and benefits of the E-Bac and its value as a measure of pupil and school performance

11. ATL welcomes the Government's intention, as stated in the School's White Paper 2010, to “encourage and facilitate a more rounded educational experience for all students”. We have long argued against a narrow and overly-prescriptive National Curriculum, which together with an entrenched academic/vocational divide, a high-stakes testing and accountability regime and a proliferation of educational providers, has reinforced divisions and inequality within our education system.

12. We are extremely concerned that without fundamental changes to our education system, including a reassertion of state education as a public good and the promotion of an integrated and flexible educational offer for all 14–19 year-olds, the E-Bac will only serve to recognise and distinguish the achievements of the most able and advantaged pupils. It will also reinforce divisions amongst groups of pupils by encouraging schools to compete with each other in league tables and by seeking to attract the “best” pupils.

13. At present, disadvantaged pupils are disproportionately leaving school early and with little or no qualifications. Official GCSE figures published in January 2008 have shown that pupils from a wealthy background performed better at all stages than those who are eligible for free school meals, and a study by the

Sutton Trust found that bright children from disadvantaged backgrounds are outperformed by their less able peers from wealthier backgrounds by the age of seven.¹⁵⁰

14. Research shows a clear correlation between socio-economic disadvantage and low educational attainment even after controlling for measures of family background, such as parental education, and a child's ability.¹⁵¹ Due to the pervasive influence of structural obstacles on disadvantaged pupils' life chances, including the "poverty premium" and stigmatisation based on the assumption that poverty is the result of an individual's "failings", the quality of a school effectively only accounts for approximately 14% variation in pupils' performance.¹⁵² When seeking to raise achievement, therefore, including in those subjects promoted by the E-Bac which, according to the Secretary of State for Education, "stretch the mind and prepare [young people] for a more competitive world", it is necessary to look at the full range of disadvantaged children's experiences, both inside and outside of education.¹⁵³

15. ATL agrees that there is an urgent need for educational reform in order to ensure that disadvantaged pupils feel more confident about their educational experience and more involved in their own futures.¹⁵⁴ We disagree very strongly however that the E-Bac, with its emphasis on a narrow range of traditional academic subjects, is an appropriate means to re-engage disadvantaged pupils who already feel a lack of control over their own learning and may lack the confidence in their ability to succeed within the existing system. Many are indeed the reluctant recipients of a taught curriculum with externally monitored attainment rates as a way of measuring a school's effectiveness and, in practice, creating educational "winners" and "losers".¹⁵⁵

16. A 2006 ATL membership survey has found that less than 4% of teachers believe that the national curriculum meets the needs of all their pupils.¹⁵⁶ We have argued that there is a need for a major overhaul of the curriculum and are pleased that the Government is now conducting such a review. ATL believes that a revised National Curriculum should consider the needs of the whole person as a physical, moral, social and intellectual being without assuming that any academic pathways should have a higher status than vocational ones.¹⁵⁷

17. ATL continues to be deeply concerned, however, that specialist schools such as university technical colleges (UTCs), which will offer programmes with a distinctive vocational element, will have their own performance indicators alongside the E-Bac. We maintain that the "parity of esteem" for academic and vocational awards remains a pressing concern, which is indeed illustrated by the Wolf Report's contention that vocational awards for 14–19 year olds could "figure among the *sub-set* [of qualifications] which enjoy high esteem".¹⁵⁸ We conclude from this that rather than providing an integrated educational offer with a range of fully flexible pathways, the Government intends to re-assert and deepen the academic/vocational divide, thus limiting not only the options of pupils pursuing vocational routes but also limiting the educational offer available to those who have chosen a more traditional academic route.

18. ATL does not agree that the E-Bac is about achieving "real breadth". As a retrospective performance measure, we note that only around 15% of pupils currently meet the requirements for the E-Bac and that less than a fifth of pupils in England's grammar schools qualified for the E-Bac on their GCSE 2010 results.¹⁵⁹ Similarly, in only three out of the 16 Academies praised by the Government "for driving up standards" more than 6% of their pupils qualified for the E-Bac.¹⁶⁰ Using the Government's own arguments, this seems to indicate a near absence of any breadth within the present educational offer, including by a diversity of providers some of whom are regarded as beacons of excellence. ATL believes that in fact it shows that the E-Bac is not a suitable measure of pupil and school performance.

19. Educational breadth, in our view, is not achieved by schools competing on the same criteria and having very similar approaches to teaching and learning in order to ensure good GCSE passes in a select choice of subjects.¹⁶¹ A broad and balanced education provides a range of skills, knowledge, subject choices and pathways which are suitable to the needs and interests of all pupils.

20. A broad and balanced education also necessitates a genuine recognition of the professionalism of the education workforce. By this we mean greater autonomy, adequate resources and safeguarded terms and conditions for education professionals and less external, data-driven monitoring, prescription and standardisation of practice, which shows a lack of trust in the workforce.¹⁶² Performance measures such as the

¹⁵⁰ Sutton Trust, *Recent Changes in Intergenerational Mobility in the UK*, (2007).

¹⁵¹ DCSF, *Deprivation and Education—The Evidence on Pupils in England*, March 2009, p.6.

¹⁵² D Hirsch, *Experiences of Poverty and Disadvantage*, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, (2007).

¹⁵³ Mail Online, *Call me Sir! Former troops to be recruited as teachers in a crackdown on trendy schooling*, 24 November 2010.

¹⁵⁴ ATL, *Sustainable Education: Review, Rethink, Reform*, position statement, (2009).

¹⁵⁵ Cf. D Hirsch, *Experiences of Poverty and Disadvantage*, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2007 and Centre for Equity in Education: *New Directions*, University of Manchester, January 2007.

¹⁵⁶ ATL 2006 membership survey quoted in ATL, *Subject to Change: New Thinking on the Curriculum*, 2007, p.13.

¹⁵⁷ ATL, *Subject to Change: New Thinking on the Curriculum*, 2007, p.71.

¹⁵⁸ A Wolf, *Review of Vocational Education: The Wolf Report*, March 2011, p.111.

¹⁵⁹ Department for Education, *The Importance of Teaching*, November 2010, p.44 and TES, "EBac measure left grammars wanting", 4 March 2011.

¹⁶⁰ TES, "Gove's favoured academies are failing to meet his own standards", 25 February 2011.

¹⁶¹ Centre for Equity in Education: *New Directions*, University of Manchester, January 2007, p.9.

¹⁶² ATL, *New Professionalism*, position statement, (2005).

E-Bac are a covert means of standardising practice and restricting the profession through a high-stakes testing and accountability regime.

21. ATL agrees with the Institute for Public Policy Research that the introduction of the E-Bac into the existing accountability framework for schools will work against the pupil premium and divert attention away from the most disadvantaged pupils.¹⁶³ Where the pupil premium is envisaged to provide an incentive for schools to admit and support disadvantaged pupils, the prestige that can be gained by the E-Bac, within the context of parental “choice”, would effectively far outweigh any gains on behalf of disadvantaged and vulnerable pupil groups.

22. It is well-known that league tables have crucially informed parental choice-making, especially of aspirant parents, leading to increased segregation in terms of social class.¹⁶⁴ Schools which find themselves at the bottom of local league tables often struggle to attract sufficient pupil numbers and achieve a balanced intake.¹⁶⁵ With a disproportionate concentration of pupils with a range of very specific needs, these schools will find it much harder to support their pupils into pathways that are deemed to offer greater educational breadth and enjoy a higher esteem.

23. ATL deplores the Government’s rhetoric that the E-Bac is an important means to prevent disadvantaged pupils being unfairly pushed by schools towards less academic or “difficult” routes. This shows a lack of understanding of vocational education and is a gross simplification of the challenges around breaking the link between poverty and low educational attainment, which are multi-dimensional and require wider social changes. In our view, the E-Bac is an example of a de-contextualised policy which fails to take into account that education takes place in communities which are shaped by complex webs of historical, social, economic, political and geographical factors, many of which create or compound inequality.¹⁶⁶

The choice of subjects included in the E-Bac

24. ATL opposes the introduction and rationale of the E-Bac for the above reasons. We have already argued that most of our educational values, institutions and practices are based on an unsustainable model of education which does not meet the needs of all our pupils and thus fails to provide a broad and balanced educational offer.¹⁶⁷ In our view, we need a renewed debate about the aims and values of education and of how these correspond with the promotion of children’s well-being and life chances, and a society characterised by greater fairness, equality and social justice. It is not clear how the E-Bac will contribute to this.

25. ATL notes that the Government is currently consulting on a revised National Curriculum. We believe that any considerations of the choice of subjects included in the E-Bac in fact prejudices the outcomes of the curriculum review and precludes the latter from being an independent and open-minded re-evaluation. We are very disappointed with what is either a deliberate obfuscation or a lack of co-ordination within the Department for Education. With this in mind, we will just offer some cursory reflections on the existing choice of subjects.

26. We believe that the Government employs a very narrow albeit not altogether consistent concept of ‘humanities’. More commonly, “humanities” is understood to include the branches of knowledge concerned with human thought and culture. ATL believes that Religious Education/Religious Studies, together with art and design, drama, music and sociology, all of which are taught as GCSE subjects, should also be considered as part of humanities. It further appears that the OCR has developed a GCSE Humanities and Edexcel a GCSE in Citizenship Studies which were both to start in 2009 but are not recognised subjects for the purposes of the E-Bac.

27. At present, only history, ancient history and geography count towards the E-Bac as humanities subjects. The Headmasters’ and Headmistresses’ Conference noted that no exam on ancient history was available in 2010 and that a GCSE in classical civilisation, which provided an “almost exact” match to ancient history and was sat by thousands of pupils in the same year was not included in the E-Bac.¹⁶⁸

28. The Edexcel maths IGCSE module, which is taught in many independent schools is also not included among the qualifying subjects, thus contradicting Government rhetoric of giving schools greater autonomy in deciding what is being taught to pupils.¹⁶⁹ Paradoxically, the non-recognition of both the Edexcel maths IGCSE and the GCSE in classical civilisation somewhat suggests the curtailing even of the freedom of independent schools, often regarded as beacons of excellence and achievement, to decide their own curriculum.

29. ATL welcomes the recognition of foreign languages, including community languages, in the E-Bac which should go some way towards reversing the dramatic drop in language teaching and learning in state-maintained secondary education. This has been accelerated by the narrow choice of subjects for school accountability purposes, the decline of the pool of specialist language teachers and the chronic under-resourcing of language

¹⁶³ IPPR, *Room for Improvement*, December 2010.

¹⁶⁴ S Ball, *The Education Debate*, (Bristol: Policy Press, 2008), p.133.

¹⁶⁵ Centre for Equity in Education: *New Directions*, University of Manchester, January 2007, p.9.

¹⁶⁶ Centre for Equity in Education: *New Directions*, University of Manchester, January 2007, p.3.

¹⁶⁷ ATL, *Sustainable Education: Review, rethink, reform*, position statement, (2009).

¹⁶⁸ TES, *Gove pledge: bring GCSE strugglers up to scratch*, 14 January 2011.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

provision in the state-maintained sector. In regards to E-Bac requirements, however, it is not only counter-intuitive but also extremely concerning that ring-fenced funding for specialist language colleges as well as funding for KS2 languages appears to be coming to an end.¹⁷⁰

30. We believe that consultation with the education profession prior to the introduction of any new performance measure such as the E-Bac would have ensured a more nuanced and accurate view of the existing educational offer, including in relation to raising standards and educational attainment, as well as of the impact of education cuts.

The implications of the E-Bac for pupils, schools and employers

31. ATL believes that the introduction of the E-Bac invariably means that schools will adapt their curriculum to meet the new requirements and to improve their scores in league tables. As a new “gold standard”, the E-Bac will inevitably lead to a narrowing of the curricular offer, and efforts are likely to be concentrated on the most able and advantaged pupils who are likely to do well in E-Bac subjects. Disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEN will be the biggest losers, particularly with funding cuts to central support services and support staff in schools.

32. ATL members have testified to the tremendous difference made by support staff to the educational achievement of pupils with a range of specific needs. Some pupils have improved by more than 6 levels due to the specialist support they have received. Government pronouncements on the E-Bac, as far as we are aware, have never included any acknowledgement or recognition of the vital role of support services and support staff in schools.

33. ATL is extremely concerned that this Government’s attempts to set itself apart from its predecessor, and indeed the Every Child Matters agenda, will be paid for by even more limited life chances of the most vulnerable pupil groups. We do not believe that a strong emphasis on traditional academic subjects is equivalent to creating an inclusive educational ethos.

34. We are also concerned that the emphasis on the E-Bac will signal a return to whole-class teaching and a limited range of pedagogical techniques, which will act as a further internal means of pupil selection in addition to schools’ external competition for the “right” pupils. Without any equivalent initiatives within the same school which recognise excellence and achievement, for example, of gifted and talented pupils in a range of subjects which are currently not accepted for E-Bac purposes, ATL believes that the E-Bac will spell the end to comprehensive education.

35. With its disproportionate emphasis on pure subject knowledge, the E-Bac is likely to redirect employers’ engagement towards those schools with an explicit vocational offer. ATL doubts whether a tiered education system can ultimately produce school leavers who bring a range of transferable skills and can work across a variety of industries. We are not convinced that the E-Bac will contribute to increasing Britain’s economic competitiveness. Instead, we suspect that the E-Bac will create educational “winners” and “losers”, with the latter being increasingly alienated from the labour market.

INTERNATIONAL COMPARATORS FOR THE E-BAC

36. References to international comparisons of the E-Bac promote an already growing concern amongst young people and their families with the “exchange-value” of their qualifications.¹⁷¹ ATL believes that we need to begin to value education as a good in itself with important benefits for a fair and cohesive society, including equal access to and participation in the labour market. The E-Bac does not contribute to this.

37. Existing international qualifications such as the Cambridge or Edexcel IGCSE offer a choice of over 70 and 35 subjects respectively. Similarly, the International Baccalaureate offers eight subject groups plus a personal project. The E-Bac does not offer anything close to this breadth. There appears to be no basis for the retrospective introduction of the E-Bac other than as a measure that will allow the Government to produce data in 2011–12 showing an increase in E-Bac performance, or educational attainment, due to schools’ compliance with the new requirements in view of local league table positions. Political profit, however, fails children and it also fails education.

23 March 2011

¹⁷⁰ ATL membership survey, “Talking Point: Foreign languages in primary education”, (2010).

¹⁷¹ T Wrigley, *Another school is possible*, (Stoke-on-Trent: Trentham Books, 2006), p.19.

Written evidence submitted by Engage

1. THE PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE E-BAC AND ITS VALUE AS A MEASURE OF PUPIL AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

It is commendable to encourage young people to aspire to achieve good qualifications at 16 in a broad range of subjects; however arts subjects are excluded from the E-Bac. This demotes the status of the arts in formal education—the implication is that the arts are not of academic value. The E-Bac therefore disadvantages students who excel at the arts. If the arts were to be included in the E-Bac the breadth and scope of the knowledge and transferable skills that students would gain would be greatly increased.

2. THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE E-BAC

The new E-Bac does not include any arts subjects (including Art and Design). While students can choose to study other subjects alongside this qualification, the omission of Art and Design from the E-Bac will discourage students from studying the subject and make schools far less likely to prioritise Art and Design teaching. There is a real danger that Art and Design teaching in schools will be weakened, that young people who have talent as artists and designers will not be given support and that they will not go on to develop their skills, potentially weakening the cultural industries. The impact of this could be felt most strongly by children and young people who are introduced to Art and Design through school or at home. These children and young people may miss out entirely on the opportunity to engage with artists and the arts.

Art and design has been a popular choice at GCSE for young people regardless of their social background. There is strong evidence that engagement with the arts, including Art and Design, increases a range of social and personal skills, and can lead to deeper engagement with learning across the curriculum (see www.enquire.org and <http://www.creativitycultureeducation.org/> for further information and evidence).

3. THE IMPLICATION OF THE E-BAC FOR PUPILS, SCHOOLS AND EMPLOYERS

The cultural industries are vital to the UK economy. Children and young people currently have the opportunity to study Art and Design as part of the National Curriculum. Many young people choose to continue their education and training in the arts and gain employment in the cultural sector. If schools are discouraged from prioritising the teaching of Art and Design there is a strong possibility that less children and young people will recognise their potential and pursue a creative career path. There is a threat that the next generation of artists and designers will not be supported and encouraged, and that the cultural industries of the UK will subsequently suffer.

4. INTERNATIONAL COMPARATORS FOR THE E-BAC

The International Baccalaureate allows students to study a broad range of subjects including the arts and actively encourages creativity, action and services. This emphasis on the arts, on creativity and on civic engagement could provide an excellent model for the English Baccalaureate.

23 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Group for Education in Museums

1. The Group for Education in Museums (GEM—www.gem.org.uk) is a charitable trust which promotes learning through our cultural heritage, with 750 UK and international members representing museums and galleries, country houses, heritage sites, urban and countryside interpretative centres, science centres, archives, schools and universities.

THE PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE E-BAC AND ITS VALUE AS A MEASURE OF PUPIL AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

2. We recognise that the main purpose of the E-Bac is to raise England's academic standards by making schools follow more academic subjects, and we accept that this is a valid aim.

3. However, it's worrying that this is a top down scheme which seems more to be a stick for schools than a carrot for students.

4. More able students will already achieve the requirements for an E-Bac, so presumably the intention is to raise aspirations and opportunities for poorer and less able students so that the nation's academic standards go up. However we remain doubtful whether the move away from learner-centred decisions will achieve this aim—indeed it may result in even more disaffected low-ability students.

5. We feel that making it a retrospective award is a missed opportunity. The integration of study from 14–19 offers goals and vocational skills for less academic students. By restricting the range of subjects at Level 1 vocational students will start later on their studies and may become less motivated to continue learning.

THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE E-BAC

6. The five subjects represent a broad range along the lines of the former “School Leaving Certificate”.
7. However we strongly oppose the omission of creative subjects from the list.
8. If creative arts subjects are omitted from the E-Bac, we would recommend that the core five GCSE courses are revised to include creative skills drawn from arts subjects, in the way that IT skills have become more embedded across the curriculum.
9. The broader range of subjects will open up cross-curricular benefits for students, but only if there is coordination between the subjects.
10. The inclusion of a humanities subject offers a challenge for teachers to make this area of study more exciting and relevant for less academic students and our members would strongly support initiatives to help teachers to enhance their teaching through the use of museums, the historic environment and original historical evidence.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE E-BAC FOR PUPILS, SCHOOLS AND EMPLOYERS

11. The focus on a more restricted group of subjects will disadvantage less academic pupils who are currently catered for by taking more vocational options, as demonstrated by the fact that currently only 4% of pupils on free school meals take this range of subjects.
12. We recognise that one of the central objectives of the E-Bac is to make a more level playing field and to halt the abuse of league table data, for instance by guiding less academic students towards “easier” exams or adopting “double award” courses.
13. However there is a possibility that this initiative could entrench the “league table culture” which puts organisational ahead of personal development, with school policy ever more likely to be driven by the need to achieve results.
14. We recognise that the E-Bac (or a similar award) is a useful tag for employers.

INTERNATIONAL COMPARATORS FOR THE E-BAC

15. A major objection to this initiative is the use of the term “Baccalaureate”. A common perception—based on International and Welsh Baccalaureate qualifications, for instance—is that a ‘Bacc’ is a coordinated post-16 scheme. The retrospective award for an existing group of subjects is so different to the other schemes that we regard this as a bad case of “stealing someone’s clothes”. Indeed it is a shameful devaluation of the term. We suggest it is called the School Certificate.
16. The E-Bac does not align with the iGCSE and IB which are increasing in popularity. This issue should be addressed so that a two-tier system is avoided.
17. If the E-Bac was to be a genuine post-16 course, we would recommend the Welsh Bacc as an excellent model because it provides the breadth of study alongside vocational and academic options. The opportunities for cultural heritage organisations to contribute to the broader range of study, both on academic and vocational levels, has been proven, with students being able to relate their options to the wider context of Welsh history, heritage and identity.

23 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Crafts Council

BACKGROUND

1. The Crafts Council is England’s national development agency for contemporary craft. It aims to build a strong economy and infrastructure for contemporary craft, to increase and diversify the audience for contemporary craft and to champion high quality contemporary craft practice nationally and internationally.
2. The Crafts Council works to promote participation and learning, developing opportunities for interaction and informal engagement with craft. It supports craft makers’ professional development and builds the market for contemporary craft by running fairs and promoting export. It holds a significant collection of contemporary craft, which it makes available through touring exhibitions and loans. It also works to raise the profile of contemporary craft through critical debate and by building an evidence base that demonstrates the nature and value of craft.
3. The contemporary craft sector is part of a vibrant cultural and creative sector in the UK, which contributed 6.2% of the UK’s GVA in 2007 (source: DCMS).

INTRODUCTION

4. The Crafts Council welcomes the opportunity to contribute evidence to the Commons Select Education Committee Inquiry into the E-Bacc. Our response addresses three points of the review:

- the purpose and benefits of the E-Bacc and its value as a measure of pupil and school performance;
- the choice of subjects included in the E-Bacc; and
- the implications of the E-Bacc for pupils, schools and employers.

5. Our view is that:

- The focus in the E-Bacc on “a core of selected academic subjects” inherently sends a message to pupils, parents, schools and employers about the relative value of these subjects, and may encourage only a partial valuation of the achievements of pupils and schools.
- The focus on a limited number of academic subjects in the E-Bacc may threaten the provision of other subjects in secondary schools, including art and design and design and technology under which craft skills fall, and the important benefits they bring.

THE PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE E-BACC AND ITS VALUE AS A MEASURE OF PUPIL AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

6. The Crafts Council believes that as part of a balanced education, pupils should have access to rigorous teaching in a broad range of subjects to age 16, and that a variety of skills, including craft skills, should be recognised and valued in the schools system.

7. The E-Bacc focuses on accrediting achievements in “a core of selected academic subjects”—English, mathematics, sciences, a language and a humanities subject—in which pupils gain good passes in GCSEs or iGCSEs. This distinguishes a limited number of academic subjects from other subjects, including art and design and design and technology, available at Key Stage 4.

8. The bias towards a limited number of academic subjects in the E-Bacc implies that the performance of pupils and schools should be accredited according to narrow academic parameters, and does not promote balanced education in which a range of subjects and skills are valued equally. By only accrediting a limited number of academic subjects the E-Bacc may present a partial valuation of the achievements of both pupils and schools.

THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE E-BACC

9. Whilst the Crafts Council strongly agrees that pupils should achieve “good passes” in “rigorous” GCSEs or iGCSEs, the current definition of ‘rigorous’ subjects is not sufficiently broad and fails to acknowledge important educational benefits derived from other subjects such as art and design and design and technology. Research shows that craft skills in particular, can play a vital role in education—extending far beyond the most obvious benefits (see end note).

10. Practical learning, specifically craft education, needs to be properly recognised and valued in our secondary schools. By excluding practical learning from the E-Bacc we take a retrogressive step in terms of facilitating access to its important benefits and promoting balanced education in schools.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE E-BACC FOR PUPILS, SCHOOLS AND EMPLOYERS

11. The E-Bacc encourages pupils, schools and employers to focus on and value a limited number of academic subjects; transmitting a message about the relative importance of core academic subjects in relation to subjects which have been excluded. This fails to promote a balanced education system in which a range of subjects and skills are valued equally—suggesting that to excel in excluded subjects, such as art and design and design and technology, is not to excel in education more broadly.

12. Craft teaching throughout the education system plays an important role in developing a pipeline to the sector and ultimately to unlocking its economic and social potential. The craft sector is an important economic driver and has significant social impacts. It produces a turnover in excess of £3 billion each year and is part of a vibrant cultural and creative sector in the UK, which contributed 6.2% of the UK’s GVA in 2007 (source: DCMS). Largely made up of self-employed makers and owners of SMEs, the sector employs nearly 35,000 people and in 2009/10 was growing more rapidly by employment than any other creative sector.

13. The Crafts Council welcomes the new Government’s position on practical learning and the repeated recognition from skills and education ministers of the vital social and economic contribution of practical skills, including craft. The Government has a vital role to play in translating dialogue into policy by addressing hierarchical distinctions between academic and practical learning and restoring the opportunity for skills and practical learning to the curriculum, encouraging the development of craft knowledge in young people and the recognition that craft is a viable, entrepreneurial career.

14. The narrowing of focus at Key Stage 4, represented by the E-Bacc, poses a significant threat to the teaching of craft skills and the benefits they bring. By only emphasising the importance of academic subjects the E-Bacc fails to reflect the different strengths of pupils and to meet the diverse needs of employers and the economy.

15. We hope that a broader range of subjects will be represented in the Performance Tables for 2011 as important elements of the curriculum. There for their own sake and on their own merit—all offering something different but equally valid to our young people.

END NOTE ON CRAFT EDUCATION

16. Craft teaching fosters creative thinking and innovative learning, and research shows that developing haptic skills aids cognitive development. Craft skills also provide children with a firmer grasp of the 3-D world, allowing young people to experience how the world works in practice, to gain an understanding of materials and processes and to make informed judgments about abstract concepts. This in turn develops problem-solving skills which feed into all manner of professions including engineering, medicine and software design.

17. Craft, and other forms of cultural learning, can help to create links between school, home and work and between generations and communities. Pupils who learn specific craft skills, become more aware of the origination and characteristics of materials and develop more general, transferable skills such as coping with problems and finding that “things don’t always go right”, but that they can learn from this. This increases pupils’ sense of autonomy and control, which can have positive impacts on their personal and broader academic development.

18. Underlining the importance of craft in schools and the reintroduction of craft to the curriculum are major strands of Crafts Council activity. We have a number of initiatives that help teachers to teach craft confidently to pupils, all supported by the Craft Action Network (CAN), which provides a forum and resources for educators. Initiatives include Craft Club which utilises the skills of the local community through the WI to teach young people yarn skills; and Firing Up which has been made possible with private funding from the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation and Paul Hamlyn Foundation. Firing Up aims to reintroduce working with clay and get school kilns re-fired across the country working with Higher Education Institutes, their technicians, tutors and pupils.

23 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by The Association of School and College Leaders, The Curriculum Foundation and Whole Education

1. The Association of School and College Leaders has over 15,000 members and speaks exclusively for secondary school and college leaders, in both the maintained and independent sectors. ASCL members receive legal cover and support, access to advice through a telephone hotline, guidance and resource materials, and updates on the latest education news via the website. ASCL is frequently consulted by the Government and its agencies. It contributes constructively to the national policy debate on education and is a major provider of training courses and consultancy for schools.

2. The Curriculum Foundation’s starting point is the conviction that there is a universal core at the heart of every successful curriculum: a core that is common to nurseries, schools and colleges; common to all communities and all nations. This universal core excites young people’s imaginations, extends their horizons and equips them with the confidence, ability and desire to improve the world. The Curriculum Foundation works with schools, colleges and key stakeholders to build an understanding of the curriculum’s potential, through: running conferences, courses and workshops; supporting curriculum projects; sponsoring research; working directly with schools; producing materials and reports; and seeking to influence public policy at local, national and global levels. The Curriculum Foundation is a not-for-profit organisation. All money raised through fees for membership and conferences is used to further its aim of creating a better world by funding and supporting curriculum development projects in the UK and overseas.

3. Whole Education is an independent not-for-profit organisation that brings together leading education organisations that demonstrate a commitment to a more rounded education for young people. These organisations, or ‘partners’, each run innovative and successful programmes of activity for young people. Whole Education’s current partners include: ASDAN, Building Learning Power, Creativity Culture and Education, Channel 4, Coach in a Box, The Co-operative College, Discovering Language, Flow Organisation, Food for Life Partnership, HTI, Human Scale Education, Iris Connect, Incerts, Innovation Unit, Learning to Lead, Learning Outside the Classroom, Open Futures, Paul Hamlyn Foundation, Personal Development Point, RSA Opening Minds, School-Home Support, Sixth Form Colleges Forum, Skill Force, Speakers Trust, Sports Leaders UK, Studio Schools, UK Youth, University of the First Age, ViTaL Partnerships Ltd, World Challenge, WWF and The Young Foundation.

INTRODUCTION

4. These three organisations have come together to build a better baccalaureate.

5. We are concerned that the E-Bac has been introduced into the English education system, not as a well-designed programme of learning but as a new measure of school accountability. Education policy is beset with changes often made with the best of intentions, but without piloting or proper consultation. This creates perverse incentives that can prove counter-productive.

6. Evidence is emerging that the introduction of the E-Bac is already having a negative effect on the provision of education for some young people:

In a survey by the National Association of Music Teachers, 60% of respondents said their departments had already been adversely affected by the E-Bac. Music teachers in 57 out of 95 schools said their schools plan to reduce opportunities to study music from this September.

The National Association of Teachers of Religious Education polled almost 800 schools and found that nearly one in three secondary schools are planning to cut time spent teaching RE as a result of the E-Bac.

The National Society for Education in Art and Design (NSEAD) polled over 100 teachers. Over 60% of art teachers told NSEAD they thought fewer pupils would start art GCSE courses this autumn because of the introduction of the E-Bac.

7. We believe that, if there is to be an E-Bac, it should compare favourably with the best on offer elsewhere. Our evidence indicates that the current E-Bac fails to compare well with the International Baccalaureate or with the curriculum in high performing jurisdictions such as Finland and Singapore.

8. Young people in England deserve the best learning and assessment system that it is possible to design, drawing on both international evidence and the traditions of education in England. Consequently, we are developing a set of principles that we believe should inform the design of a new and better baccalaureate that would promote a more rounded education for young people and thus better serve the interests of all learners, our society and the economy. We believe that such a baccalaureate—unlike the E-Bac—should be the result of widespread consultation and discussion.

THE PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE E-BAC

9. The secretary of state has described the E-Bac as a certificate for students with a specific set of examination grades and as a school performance measure.

10. There appears to have been no prior discussion with employers or higher education about the value that they would place on an E-Bac as a qualification. Subsequently it appears that they will place little value on the E-Bac.

11. In judging the benefits of the E-Bac at this early stage, one needs to look at its effect on different groups of young people:

- (a) Students seeking high GCSE grades will not be motivated by a threshold measure that recognises only whether grades are C or above. Nonetheless, the subject choices of these students are being affected by the fear that selective universities may, in several years' time, use the E-Bac as an entry qualification.
- (b) Students likely to achieve middle GCSE grades are already motivated to achieve five grades above C, so the E-Bac will create no additional motivation, although it will restrict their subject choice and therefore have a demotivating effect.
- (c) Students unlikely to achieve many high grade GCSEs may well have their choice of course restricted and so will be less well motivated to learn.

12. The conclusion to be drawn from this is that there appear to be no benefits for students of any ability, unless one takes the view that there is something to be gained by constraining their subject choice at age 14. For some, particularly those students on other learning pathways, the E-Bac will be a demotivating factor.

13. As a performance measure, the E-Bac provides retrospective information about student choice of subjects, but does not indicate which schools are more successful in maximising the achievement of their students, nor does it take any account of prior attainment. It potentially creates a league table of schools according to the extent of the traditional nature of their curriculum.

14. It is surprising that the E-Bac has been introduced in advance of the recommendations from the reviews of vocational qualifications and of the school curriculum.

CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE E-BAC

15. The range of subjects in the E-Bac reflects a past in which students were channelled into a restricted choice of specific GCSE subjects. In our view, this is not a true baccalaureate in the sense that we understand it.

16. With the E-Bac there is a considerable risk of unspecified subjects being put at risk, especially in Key Stage 4.

17. A baccalaureate should cover a broad range of learning areas, within each of which there would be considerable choice. Only English and mathematics might be specified narrowly. A baccalaureate would include both knowledge and skills, demonstrated in a variety of learning contexts, both within and outside the school. This is exemplified by baccalaureates in other countries (see below).

18. The narrowness of assessment modes, which are confined to GCSE in the E-Bac, excludes the possibility that a young person's knowledge and skills could be appropriately accredited by other means, such as ASDAN certificates or by the ASSET language ladder.

19. A baccalaureate should include an opportunity for independent learning, either a specific project or as a part of an existing subject, and must include an opportunity to develop an understanding of digital skills as well as skills relating to enterprise and employment, to help prepare young people for the working environment.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE E-BAC FOR PUPILS, SCHOOLS AND EMPLOYERS

20. There is evidence that some schools are changing their curriculum at Key Stage 4 in order to improve their E-Bac percentage and in order to ensure that their students are not disadvantaged in future years if universities decide to use the E-Bac as an entry qualification.

21. Student choice is liable to be restricted. This is certain to decrease motivation among students who have to take all the E-Bac subjects, but whose preference and career aims would point them in a different direction.

22. Surveys of employers consistently conclude that they seek in young people a range of work-related skills and attributes, such as communication skills, flexibility, creativity and ability to work in teams. With the E-Bac dictating the curriculum at Key Stage 4, it will be very much harder for schools to develop these skills in young people.

23. Higher education wants young people with good research skills, extended writing ability, an analytical brain and critical thinking. The E-Bac offers no encouragement to the development of these skills.

INTERNATIONAL COMPARATORS FOR THE E-BAC

24. The E-Bac gives priority to a specific range of GCSEs; it does not form a baccalaureate, which in other countries is a carefully planned over-arching qualification embracing knowledge and skills.

25. The International Baccalaureate, for example, "seeks to promote the whole person through an emphasis on intellectual, personal, emotional and social growth". The E-Bac comes nowhere near to doing this.

26. The Singapore curriculum aims to produce "a holistic education, focused on both academic and non-academic areas ... to develop the skills and values that they will need for life". The E-Bac is limited and narrow in comparison.

27. The Welsh Bac operates at three levels and has a strong core programme. Its website states that "it combines personal development skills with existing qualifications like A levels, NVQs and GCSEs to make one wider award that is valued by employers and universities."

CONCLUDING REMARKS

28. The 14–19 qualifications structures of the most educationally successful countries should be studied to examine what lessons might be learned from them and how these might be used beneficially in the English context.

29. Building a better baccalaureate needs to start from first principles—the knowledge and skills that we wish to develop in young people; the development of an exciting, engaging curriculum; the economic and social needs of the country; the views of employers and higher education; the right balance of choice and prescription; learning styles and assessment that are both fit for purpose and appropriate for the differing abilities and interests of young people.

Written evidence submitted by Mr Pigott

THE PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE E-BAC AND ITS VALUE AS A MEASURE OF PUPIL AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

At the core of just about everything that is being said at the moment when it comes to what areas are taught in schools are the areas that are covered in Design and Technology.

Design and Technology by its' very nature is an engaging and challenging part of the current pupil experience. It is closely linked to Science, Maths and Art. We take the theory of Science and Maths and challenge pupils to put it into practice. There are many higher order skills that give pupils the understanding to learn in a variety of ways; team-working, problem solving, independent enquiry, creativity and innovation, self-management are but a few. These are skills that industry and commerce cry out for.

A quote from Mr. Gove, "the pace of economic and technological change is accelerating and our children are being left behind." Not in Design and Technology. Please come to Silverdale school, Sheffield to find out for yourselves.

THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE E-BAC

Narrowing the curriculum is a backward step as the worlds of industry and commerce is so varied, so should the learning of pupils. How else can pupils be prepared? Yes there are the building blocks of sound/excellent understanding and knowledge of the main subject—Science, Maths & English, but pupils need to be able to do things with that understanding and knowledge.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE E-BAC FOR PUPILS, SCHOOLS AND EMPLOYERS

The pupils would lose the chance of being exposed to many different learning experiences if the D&T part of the curriculum was sidelined. Design and Technology is a vibrant and up to date part of the curriculum that pupils across all ability ranges and varying backgrounds benefit from.

From previous studies; pupil's rate D&T very highly as it is good at breaking down learning barriers and is very enjoyable. There are so many enrichment and industrial links that build from the subject. Computer aided Design and Manufacture, STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths)—cross curricular links. We have all the major industries in this country covered, textiles, food, electronics, engineering, graphic design.

INTERNATIONAL COMPARATORS FOR THE E-BAC

A curriculum that does not build on the successes of this subject is a missed opportunity. How can we hope to compete internationally if we don't have some sort of manufacturing/engineering base, having the young people with the skills and abilities to be the next James Dyson?

23 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Cardinal Wiseman Catholic Technology College, Birmingham

THE ENGLISH BACCALAUREATE (EBAC)

The Department for Education's White Paper, *The Importance of Teaching*, sets out a radical programme of reform for the school system. One of the changes sees the introduction of the English Baccalaureate (EBac). The DfE believes the EBac will enable schools to offer pupils a broad range of academic subjects to age 16. What is puzzling is that the DfE has recently launched a review of the secondary curriculum to be reported on in the autumn. Rather than wait for its recommendations, however, the DfE has pressed ahead without any consultation whatsoever in introducing the EBac.

THE EBAC AS A MEASURE OF PUPIL AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

The EBac is not a new qualification but merely a collection of five subjects: English, mathematics, science, a language and a humanities subject. There is a case to be made that the EBac offers pupils the opportunity to study an academic curriculum and so support the government's decision to identify a core entitlement across all schools. The proliferation of qualifications in recent years has inevitably led to some pupils dropping subjects at KS4 that in the longer term might have benefitted them. This is particularly true with modern languages in which the number of pupils studying such courses have significantly dropped. This is the case here at Cardinal Wiseman. A consequence, however, of such a hierarchical pecking order of subjects is that it minimises other subjects in particular the arts not to mention vocational courses, which as explained overleaf, despite proving highly successful are not included in the calculations for the EBac. In reality the EBac is a performance indicator. As such the 2010 results show that only one in six pupils "passed" the EBac ie gained a GCSE grade C or higher in English, mathematics, science, a foreign language and history or geography.

THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED WITHIN THE EBAC

Outrage was felt by the DfE's insistence that the EBac be reported in the 2010 School Performance Tables published in January for as such it was a retrospective measure of pupils for whom the EBac hadn't even been thought up when choosing their courses of study back in the spring of 2008!

What has caused even more controversy than the timing, however, has been the selection of subjects included within the EBac. The humanities comprise History and Geography but not Religious Studies (RS). RS is and always has been part of the core curriculum of Catholic schools. We believe that giving young people the opportunity as they become adults to reflect from a religious and ethical point of view on themselves and their own place in society helps develop understanding and harmony. Like other Catholic schools we are appalled that RS is not considered a humanities and strongly argue for its inclusion in the EBac.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE EBAC

Schools will need to be creative in planning their KS4 curriculum if they are not simply to reduce the options available to enable as many pupils as possible to access the EBac. This may mean reducing the degree to which some schools can personalise the curriculum to meet pupil need.

As a level 2 only qualification the EBac will mean some pupils denied access and thus risk becoming marginalised with the EBac regarded as the preferable pathway to employment and progression routes. This brings into question the future viability of the study of vocational course such as BTECs and somewhat contradicts the Government's professed interest in apprenticeships.

The current levels 1 and 2 BTEC courses offer pupils a good preparation for the later study of vocational courses being a mix of practical and theory within a defined context. Currently the results of level 2 BTEC courses count towards a pupil's Average Points Score (APS). The fear exists that BTECs will not feature in the published school league tables. As a school we have successfully established the credibility and currency of our BTEC courses. In our current Year 10, for example, two-thirds of the cohort follow a BTEC course. Withdrawal will hit us hard.

Some pupils will inevitably feel pressure to take a subject which they neither enjoy nor feel they can be successful at. There will be an onus on schools to ensure that modern languages and humanities are taught in exciting and interesting ways. Schools may have difficulty recruiting additional modern languages and humanities teachers. There will be an impact also on the staffing requirements of different subject specialisms as numbers taking each subject vary in response to the new qualification.

Employers may find school leavers have fewer technical and ICT skills than they would if schools reduce opportunities for pupils to follow courses other than the subjects included in the EBac.

THE INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE

The International Baccalaureate is not just a performance indicator but a recognised qualification comprising a much broader base.

23 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Rev Christopher Thomas

As a foundation governor of two Catholic schools and a keen observer of educational policy, I wish to urge Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Education to review the current policy on valid subjects for the E-Bac and include religious Education as a humanity subject.

The Becket School, Nottingham, where I am a governor is an outstanding Catholic School with excellent results at Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5. We hold double speciality status as a science college and a humanities college. For our application for humanities' status, we had RE as our core subject, which was accepted under the protocols for specialist status at the time.

Sine then, a change of government has seen the introduction of the E-Bac; we welcome this as a school but would like to see the inclusion of RE as an approved humanity. There seems to be significant inconsistency that one set of protocols allows for this whereas the proposal for E-Bac does not.

RE is not a "sink subject" without rigour or real content; in our school, all young people are required to study it but their assessment shows that the amount of time and effort for this subject is genuine in order to grasp key principles and the validated assessment shows parity with other more "academic" subjects. The teaching content from both AQA and Edexcel are challenging and the formal assessment rigorous.

The argument that we, as a catholic school, would be biased in some way because of our compulsory teaching of RE is not, in fact, genuine since English and Mathematics are compulsory requirements at Key Stage 4 and most schools would make a science subject that too.

I reiterate my point and urge Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Education to allow the inclusion of RE as a humanities subject for the E-Bac.

23 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers

SUMMARY

1. In this submission we urge the Committee to recommend:
 - (i) the inclusion of Religious Studies as a humanities subject in the English Baccalaureate; and
 - (ii) clarification of the rationale for the inclusion of the five subject areas in the English Baccalaureate and of the subjects and qualifications within each subject area.

ABOUT US

2. The National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers is the corporate body of school and Religious Education advisers canonically appointed and employed professionally by the 22 Catholic diocesan bishops of England and Wales. Advisers spend much of their time in schools working with and supporting headteachers, senior leaders and Religious Education curriculum leaders.

PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE ENGLISH BACCALAUREATE

3. The stated purpose is to “offer pupils a broad range of academic subjects to age 16”¹ so that they receive “a properly rounded academic achievement”² but no evidence or argument is advanced for the particular range of five subject areas that have been chosen. Without such a justification it is impossible to discuss and debate the inclusion and exclusion of subject areas and particular subjects from a common agreed starting point.

4. The previous administration stressed the importance of education providing young people with “skills”; the present administration stresses academic subjects. *The Importance of Teaching* made no reference to Religious Education, a statutory subject since 1944. The National Curriculum Review is only addressing subjects in the National Curriculum, established in 1988. A review of the purpose of education and the nature and purpose of education in school is essential in order to establish a coherent curriculum framework within which teachers in schools are able to exercise proper local autonomy. It is through such local autonomy that *PISA*³ has found standards are consistently improved.

5. It seems clear that the English Baccalaureate is intended to drive the school curriculum because it is to be the new school league table standard.⁴ It is an imprecise and crude means of driving sudden curriculum change with unintended and unexpected consequence: NATRE⁵ has evidence of pupils being switched between GCSE subjects midcourse so that they sit subjects included in the English Baccalaureate.

6. We cannot see the immediate benefit of the English Baccalaureate to individual young people. Indeed it may be to the detriment of those in schools who place the school league table ahead of the skills, interests and aspirations of their students when devising the school curriculum and organising teaching groups.

CHOICE OF SUBJECTS

7. No evidence or rationale is offered to support the decision to include five subject areas. It is not determined by the existing league table criteria of five GCSE subjects including English and Mathematics because the English Baccalaureate requires six GCSE subjects with science consisting of two GCSE grades A*–C.

8. No evidence or rationale is offered for the inclusion of particular GCSE specifications in each of the five subject areas. We do not challenge the inclusion of English, Mathematics or Science per se but with no rationale we are unable to comment upon the particular approved qualifications and specifications.

9. We appreciate the value of young people speaking a second language but are puzzled by the languages included. A rationale or justification would help explain if the motivation is to accredit the language skills of those young people for whom English is a second or co-equal language or to expand the language skills of native English speakers. For example, are Welsh, Gallic and five languages from South Asia intended to be promoted as the first foreign language acquired by English-speaking young people? If their inclusion is to accredit the language skills of young people whose first language is not English, it is not easy to see how this extends their core learning, unless the equivalence is that native English speakers gain accreditation in English.

10. The narrow restriction of humanities subjects, limiting them to only geography and history, is surprising and regrettable, given earlier comments by the Secretary of State that subjects as diverse as “history, geography, art (and) music”⁶ might be regarded as humanities. Religious Education is a long-established humanities subject that the Minister for Schools has said in various correspondence was explicitly excluded.

11. Religious Education is “the core subject in a Catholic school”⁷ because it addresses what it means to be human. Developing in a measured way throughout the young person's school career, Religious Education demands a wide range of knowledge and skills including language and textual criticism, history and geography,

science and anthropology, art and music, ethics, logical reasoning, philosophy and theology. These enable young people to come to their own understanding of themselves and make sense of the amazing, beautiful yet confusing world and global community that they inhabit. Through Religious Education they are able to engage with profound metaphysical questions concerning human existence and the nature of reality along with the most fundamental ethical dilemmas of today. This necessarily includes an understanding of major world religions and faiths other than Christianity, and Christian denominations as well as the Catholic Church. While its scope transcends the traditional criteria of humanity subjects, Religious Education has always been included within that grouping. Its exclusion from “humanities” in the English Baccalaureate seems curiously eccentric.

12. Religious Education is examined at GCSE as Religious Studies. It is well regarded by young people. It can contribute to building a more harmonious and integrated society. 80% of pupils who studied RS at GCSE level believe it can promote understanding between people with different religions and beliefs. More than 60% said that taking the subject had been a “positive influence” on them.⁸

13. GCSE Religious Studies outcomes are broadly similar with that of GCSE history and geography. The variations may be explained by the slightly higher number of girls sitting the subject and the policy of most schools with a religious character to enter large numbers of pupils for GCSE RS. There is no research concluding that GCSE Religious Studies is anything other than a rigorous subject at full course GCSE level.

14. We recognise a significant difference between full course and short course GCSE Religious Studies. The short-course requires much less curriculum time and usually indicates a much smaller curriculum presence, and hence subject knowledge, throughout the school. Short-course GCSE Religious Studies was criticised in the 2009 Ofsted three-year review of Religious Education.⁹ Only a few Catholic schools enter exceedingly small numbers of young people for the short course GCSE Religious Studies when individual circumstances indicate that this is in their best interest. We believe this is the best use of the short course

IMPLICATIONS

15. The fact that Religious Education is a statutory subject has been stated by the Minister of Schools in correspondence as a reason to exclude it from the English Baccalaureate on the grounds that its position in the curriculum is completely secure. This argument is false.

16. It is a statutory subject in Years 12–13 and an integral element of the curriculum of Catholic schools and sixth form colleges, but the 2009 Ofsted review found that schools inspected rarely met the statutory requirements with respect to Religious Education.¹⁰

We believe this pattern will become increasingly pronounced in Key Stage 4 following the introduction of the English Baccalaureate and the forthcoming re-focusing of Ofsted inspection on outcomes rather than provision.

17. Religious Education will be marginalised because the English Baccalaureate will occupy about two-thirds of curriculum time at Key Stage 4. In the remaining time, schools will seek to accommodate optional examination courses along with statutory requirements including Physical Education and Religious Education. In order to meet the aspirations of their pupils who, until December 2010, expected a wider range of options than will now be available, there is bound to be pressure on curriculum time leading to innovative curriculum models. NATRE has evidence of the diminishment and marginalisation of Religious Education in order to retain a range of option choices in addition to the English Baccalaureate subjects.

18. Catholic schools constitute about 10% of all maintained secondary schools in England. They face a particular problem in accommodating the English Baccalaureate because they are committed to devoting 10% of curriculum time to Religious Education in line with their trust deeds and requirements of the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales.¹¹ This requirement was introduced to ensure sufficient time for this key subject as a result of the introduction of the national curriculum. If Religious Education is not included within the English Baccalaureate, Catholic schools will commit about 75% of their curriculum time to the English Baccalaureate and Religious Education, leaving around 25% of curriculum time to option subjects and other statutory requirements such as Physical Education. This will result in fewer option subject opportunities in Catholic schools. In Ofsted inspections, Catholic schools are rated consistently better than average on all criteria.¹² In terms of overall effectiveness, Ofsted judged 73% of Catholic secondary schools to be outstanding or good, compared to 60% of schools nationally. The centrality of Religious Education is a key element in this success. It should be recognised and included within the English Baccalaureate.

19. The success of Religious Education in Catholic schools at GCSE has led to a continuing growth of student numbers at Advanced Level. Not only are students achieving notable success at this level but many are going on to pursue theology and allied subjects at university. It is from this cohort that we are developing professional religious educators who will in turn staff our schools and colleges.

INTERNATIONAL COMPARATORS

20. We are struck by the wide variety of Baccalaureate subject combinations, and age ranges, in nearby countries including Wales, Scotland and France, as well as the International Baccalaureate. We conclude that each country or organisation has developed its own structure to meet its specific requirements and that a clear rationale is required for our English Baccalaureate.

21. The rationale may acknowledge the value of recognising achievement in subjects not presently included in the English Baccalaureate. The Minister for Schools allowed for this when he said on 12 January 2011 “I am open to arguments about how we can further improve every measure in the performance tables—including the English Baccalaureate.”¹³ One method would be to promote “EBacc Plus” which would recognise achievement in a nominated subject in addition to those included in the English Baccalaureate, thereby energising and enlivening an otherwise restrictive curriculum.

CONCLUSION:

Extract from Archbishop Vincent Nichols, Westminster Cathedral 3 March 2011

22. “Religious education, too, is a crucial part of this pathway. A religiously illiterate people will find many obstacles on their pathway towards peace. The risk of Religious Education and Religious Studies being neglected in schools in this country if they are excluded from the core subjects of the proposed new Baccalaureate is one that must be carefully weighed. To fail to do so is to weaken the cause of peace at a crucial moment.”¹⁴

REFERENCES

- ¹ Statement of Intent 2010—Addendum (The English Baccalaureate) 2010 para 1
<http://www.education.gov.uk/performance/tables/Statement-of-Intent-2010-Addendum.pdf>
- ² The Importance of Teaching para 4.22
- ³ OECD (2010) *PISA 2009 at a Glance*, OECD Publishing,
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264095298-en>, p86f
- ⁴ Statement of Intent 2010—Addendum (The English Baccalaureate) 2010 para 6
<http://www.education.gov.uk/performance/tables/Statement-of-Intent-2010-Addendum.pdf>
- ⁵ National Association of Teachers of Religious Education
- ⁶ The Andrew Marr Show, BBC1, 5 September 2010
- ⁷ Statement on Religious Education, Catholic Bishops’ Council of England and Wales 2000 para 4
- ⁸ Dubit survey of 1000 16–24 year olds, 2010
- ⁹ *Transforming Religious Education: Religious Education in schools 2006–2009*, Ofsted 2010 paras 66–85
- ¹⁰ Statement on Religious Education, Catholic Bishops’ Council of England and Wales 2000 para 10
- ¹¹ Value Added: the Distinctive Contribution of Catholic Schools and Colleges in England, CESEW, 2010
- ¹² <http://www.education.gov.uk/inthenews/inthenews/a0072298/gcse-and-a-level-performance-tables-and-school-spend-data-published>
- ¹³ <http://www.education.gov.uk/inthenews/inthenews/a0072298/gcse-and-a-level-performance-tables-and-school-spend-data-published>
- ¹⁴ http://www.rcdow.org.uk/archbishop/default.asp?library_ref=35&content_ref=3268
23 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by The British Psychological Society

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Psychology is one of the fastest growing science subjects attracting many people to science who may not have otherwise studied a scientific discipline.
- Psychology attracts a large proportion of women to science.
- Entries for psychology GCSE have increased by almost 60% in the last five years.
- The classification for psychology is split between A Level (science classification) and GCSE level (social science classification). Despite this, the inclusion of psychology at GCSE level can augment scientific literacy more generally, beyond the discipline of psychology.
- Psychology, under the current classification, would not be included in the E-Bac.
- Reclassification of psychology at GCSE level to science and permitting the inclusion of psychology as a science in the league tables would allow the subject to be included in the E-Bac and facilitate greater integration between GCSE and A Level.

1. The British Psychological Society welcomes the opportunity to provide evidence to the House of Lords Science and Technology Select Committee. This response has been prepared by the Society’s Psychology Education Board and the Standing Committee on Pre-Tertiary Education. The Board comprises representatives from a wide variety of backgrounds of psychological education, including academics, A Level examination boards and representatives from the Further Education Sector, as well as a cross section of representation from other areas of our Society.

2. Psychology is one of the fastest growing science subjects. It not only has a very strong scientific basis in the biological and computational sciences, but shares many similarities with other long established quantitative social sciences. Its diversity is one of its core strengths and as such it has much to contribute to the future development and strengthening of the UK research and science base. According to figures released by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ), over 54,000 students sat the Psychology A level in 2010, significantly more than in Physics (30,976), Chemistry (44,051) and rivalling Biology (57,854). Psychology also attracts a significant number of women to science, as demonstrated by the same figures from the JCQ which show that 40,138 women sat the Psychology A Level in 2010, with the numbers for Physics (6,668), Chemistry (21,057) and Biology (32,635) being in some cases significantly proportionally lower.

3. The Qualification Curriculum Authority (QCA) and the JCQ have classified psychology as a science at A Level, although not at GCSE and GCSE psychology cannot currently be counted as a science in the league table returns. Despite this, information from the JCQ has shown that GCSE entries for Psychology in England, Wales and Northern Ireland have increased by nearly 60% in the last five years as more centres introduce the subject at GCSE level, particularly since the changes to the curriculum introduced in 2009, which has brought the qualification much more up to date. The scientific basis of the subject criteria is extremely encouraging in relation to the teaching of this subject at pre-tertiary level,

THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE E-BAC

4. The current classification of psychology in the social science suite for GCSE and science suite for A Level is unhelpful, particularly as psychology is taught as a science at both levels and an understanding of scientific method is vital for students to succeed in both qualifications. Anecdotally, schools introducing the psychology GCSE have found that students are able to transfer skills developed in psychology GCSE to their other science subjects. The inclusion of psychology at this level can augment scientific literacy more generally, beyond the discipline of psychology.

5. The current classification of psychology will present schools that have successfully introduced psychology GCSE with difficulties when introducing the E-Bac. As it stands, psychology would not be included in the E-Bac. The Society would urge OFQUAL to reclassify psychology as a science at GCSE and allow schools to include this qualification in their league table returns. This would allow schools that have successfully introduced the GCSE to their qualification suite to include psychology in the E-Bac and would also allow for greater integration between GCSE and A Level, which can only be of benefit to the students and to enhance the scientific literacy of our cohort.

23 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by University of Cambridge School Classics Project

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 Latin teaching in UK schools, which has seen significant growth over the last decade, will enter another period of decline if the WJEC Level 2 Certificates in Latin are not rapidly included in the Language component of the E-Bac. These are demanding qualifications which surpass the linguistic requirements of a Latin GCSE and are encouraging more students, particularly in the state sector, to study Latin to a higher level.

1.2 Research conducted by the University of Cambridge indicates that the failure to count GCSE Classical Civilisation for the Humanities component of the E-Bac will lead to a 32% drop in the number of students studying Classical Civilisation by 2014.

1.3 The negative impact on Classical subjects of the E-Bac in its current form will be felt in both the state and independent sectors, but more severely in the state sector.

1.4 The failure to include the Level 2 Certificates in Latin and GCSE Classical Civilisation appears not to be based on careful analysis of examination syllabuses and subject criteria. There is inconsistency in the Department's current approach which appears to be based on the title, rather than the content, of the specification.

1.5 The rapid introduction of the E-Bac and the lack of a clear revision timetable for its revision have created a period of considerable uncertainty in secondary education. Such uncertainty is a strong incentive for charitable and commercial organisations to pause investment in Classical subjects in UK schools just at the moment when budgetary cuts are making Classics departments particularly vulnerable.

2. LATIN IN UK SCHOOLS

Growth in Latin at KS3

2.1 It may surprise members of the Committee to learn that Latin in UK secondary schools has enjoyed significant growth over the last decade. In 2000 there were approximately 600 secondary schools offering Latin. Today there are 1,091. This 82% growth has occurred almost entirely in the state sector and has been due to a number of factors:

- 2.1.1 Between 2000 and 2005, the then DfEE invested £5 million in an initiative to develop digital teaching and learning materials for Latin at KS3. The initiative achieved two important results:
- 2.1.1.1 it created significantly more interest and engagement in Latin in schools which already offered the subject at KS3. Many schools reported an increase both in the number of students wishing to study the subject and in the attainment levels of their students.
 - 2.1.1.2 it enabled teachers who had studied Latin themselves but had not followed a teacher training course in Classics to introduce Latin into their schools successfully.
- 2.1.2 The introduction of the Gifted and Talented initiative created both the requirement and the funding for schools to stretch their more able students. Hundreds of schools introduced Latin as one of the ways to meet the demands of this initiative and thousands of students across the country gave up their free time before, during and after school to study Latin.
- 2.1.3 From 2000 to 2005, the Cambridge School Classics Project (CSCP) worked with the DfEE on the development of the KS3 digital resources. Since 2005 CSCP has been using its own funds to promote the initiative in schools, offering free school visits and teacher training in addition to regularly advertising the initiative to Headteachers and Gifted and Talented Co-ordinators.
- 2.1.4 The decline in Latin teaching in schools in the late 80s and early 90s was due to the introduction of the National Curriculum under the 1988 Education Reform Act. Schools dropped Latin due to a lack of space in the timetable, not due to a lack of desire to offer the subject. Many schools had long wanted to reintroduce Latin and once materials and support were made available to them they jumped at the chance to do so.

Decline in Latin at KS4

2.2 Despite the fact that the number of schools offering Latin at KS3 almost doubled between 2000 and 2010, in the same period the number of students studying the subject at KS4 continued to fall. Schools with existing Latin departments were seeing a drop-out rate of 76% from KS3 to KS4 and few of those schools which had recently introduced Latin at KS3 were showing signs of continuing to KS4. In 2007 CSCP's research into the decline in Latin at KS4 found:

- 2.2.1 The decline was of similar proportions in both the independent and state sectors: it was not just a state-school problem.
- 2.2.2 The withdrawal of AQA from examining Latin GCSE in 2006 had been problematic, particularly for state schools and for schools in the north of England, which had been its main users.
- 2.2.3 The only remaining Latin GCSE was offered by OCR and was perceived by many schools, particularly state schools, to be a significant barrier to continuation from KS3 to KS4. Two key problems with the OCR qualification were identified:
 - 2.2.3.1 **Severe grading:** independent research by the Curriculum, Education and Management Centre in Durham found that Latin was much more severely graded than any other GCSE. For example, it was harder for a student to gain a grade "E" in Latin than a grade "C" in the next most difficult subject. Students in schools noticed this differential in grading and made their option choices at KS4 accordingly.
 - 2.2.3.2 **Volume:** despite the fact that the regulations for Latin GCSE require the content be sufficient for 120–140 hours teaching, schools were, on average, requiring 272 teaching hours to cover the content of the OCR Latin GCSE (fewer than 7% managed it in under 140 hours). Teachers and students were therefore being required to study twice as much content as was required for other GCSEs. This disparity with other subject areas was placing a significant downward pressure on student take-up of Latin at KS4.
- 2.2.4 Both these issues appeared to be driven by a self-perpetuating situation. Although the majority of schools offering Latin were non-selective schools, the majority of candidates for the OCR GCSE were the most able students in selective schools with generous teaching time. As a result, the level of difficulty of the examination was pitched far beyond that required by the Latin GCSE subject criteria. That, in turn, made it very difficult for non-selective schools with less teaching time and lower concentrations of highly able students to generate class sizes sufficiently large to enable the subject to run successfully at KS4. And that, in turn, provided little incentive to OCR to alter the level of demand of its examination: the majority of its existing customers who were able to access the qualification were content.

2.3 The high drop-out rate from KS3 to KS4 also meant that significant numbers of students (approximately 30,000 per annum) were ending two-three years of studying Latin without any nationally accredited qualification.

Impact on A level

2.4. Further, the severe grading and volume of the OCR GCSE were having a negative impact on take-up of Latin at A level. Based on their experience of Latin at KS4, students were calculating that KS5 Latin would be much more difficult than is in fact the case. One might argue that the OCR GCSE is pitched too closely to

the AS, requiring too much ground to be covered at KS4, but then presenting few new linguistic developments between GCSE and AS.

Repairing Latin at KS4

2.5 In 2008, in response to these issues, CSCP approached a number of awarding bodies to offer subject specialist support should they wish to introduce a Latin GCSE as an alternative to OCR, replacing that withdrawn by AQA. It is to the great credit of the WJEC examination board that it offered to do so: WJEC could have had little hope of making money from the qualification.

2.6 As the submission window for Latin GCSEs had recently closed, CSCP met the then Schools Minister, Jim Knight, to request that the submission window be reopened in order that WJEC might submit a new qualification as a GCSE. The Schools Minister, understandably, considered it imprudent for a politician to interfere with regulatory process. It is important to note, however, that WJEC wanted to develop its qualifications as GCSEs, not least because to do otherwise would clearly make it harder to market them to schools.

2.7 Unable to develop the qualifications as GCSEs, WJEC was advised by the regulator to develop the qualifications as Level 1/2 Certificates via the “Other General Qualifications” route. This is exactly the route by which Cambridge International Examination’s (CIE) so-called “IGCSEs” have been accredited. It is unclear, therefore, why qualifications accredited to exactly the same standard by exactly the same process are not treated by the Department in exactly the same way. Why are, for example, CIE’s Certificates in French and in Greek permitted for the E-Bac and not WJEC’s Certificates in Latin? Of the CIE Certificates included in the E-Bac, six had fewer than 500 UK entries in 2010. The CIE Certificate in French received in the region of 10 UK entries in summer 2010 and the Certificate in Hindi fewer still. It can hardly be claimed that these qualifications have proved themselves in the UK education system. Whether they have proved themselves internationally is unknown: CIE will not release data on international entry figures.

2.8 Further, in discussions with the regulator it was agreed that when the submission window for Latin GCSEs next reopened (then expected to be 2013), the qualifications would, if possible, be submitted as GCSEs and the subject criteria for Latin GCSE revised in the light of lessons learnt from the success or otherwise of the WJEC Certificates in Latin.

Maintaining rigour at KS4

2.9 The regulations (subject criteria) for Latin GCSE state that specifications and assessment should comprise 45–55% language and 45–55% civilisation and/or literature. Further, the volume of content required should require approximately 120–140 teaching hours, with no subject specific prior learning.

2.10 The Certificates in Latin were developed with the aim of keeping the standard expected of students as high as possible within the 120–140 hours available for a GCSE. Clearly it would not be possible both to keep the same high standards in language and literature and adhere to the regulations on teaching time as that would allow only 60–70 hours for each of language and literature. The solution to the problem was to uncouple, as in English GCSE, language assessment from literature assessment. Standards in each area could then be maintained by devoting 120–140 teaching hours to each of language and literature. Thus the Certificates in Latin Language/Latin Language & Roman Civilisation and Certificates in Latin Literature were born. Schools with 120–140 teaching hours available could now enter students for a GCSE level qualification in Latin and focus entirely on Latin Language (with an option to study some civilisation). Schools with an additional 120–140 teaching hours available could continue their tuition by also entering students for the Certificate in Latin Literature.

2.11 The Level 2 Certificate in Latin Language and Roman Civilisation has a higher language content (67%) than that required for a Latin GCSE (max. 55%). Further, although on paper it is classed as 120–140 hours, in practice most schools would spend three years (about 180 hours) covering the material. It therefore exceeds the requirements of a Latin GCSE by some distance.

2.12 The Level 2 Certificate in Latin Language is entirely comprised of language study. Again classed as 120–140 hours, in practice we would expect schools to spend three to four years (about 180–240 hours) covering the material. It therefore exceeds the requirements of a Latin GCSE by a great distance.

2.13 The Level 2 Certificate in Latin Literature contains eight pages of original Latin Literature (Virgil, Tacitus, Ovid, Catullus, etc.) for in depth study. This is a highly demanding qualification, requiring a detailed understanding of Latin language and literature techniques. A student would need about three years of Latin studies to be able to successfully engage with the specification.

2.14 The Council of University Classical Departments has said “The Council of University Classical Departments supports the development of Level 2 Certificates in Latin alternative to the current Latin GCSE. It expects that university Classical departments will treat those who have obtained A, B and C grades in Latin Language in these Level 2 certificates as they would treat those who have obtained the same grades in Latin GCSE.”

2.15 The University of Cambridge Admissions Office has said “We can confirm that the A or A* grades in Latin Language and Latin Literature at Level 2 will be viewed in the same way as the same grades in two GCSEs.”

Demand for the WJEC qualifications

2.16 In September 2008, CSCP wrote to all Latin departments in England and Wales, and to Headteachers in those schools, to assess interest in Level 2 qualifications as an alternative to the new Latin GCSE. The response was as follows:

- 2.16.1 79% of Headteachers (73% in independent schools, 89% in state schools) said they would either allow or encourage their Head of Latin to enter their students for the Level 2 examinations;
- 2.16.2 74% of Heads of Latin (64% in independent schools, 84% in state schools) said they would be likely to enter students for at least one of the exams.

2.17 The demand for the Certificates in Latin has been clearly shown by the relatively high levels of candidate entries in this the first year when they are fully available. Over 5,600 unit entries from approximately 3,000 candidates have been received.

2.18 The Level 2 Certificates in Latin have found favour across the state and independent sectors, with the balance of entering Centres broadly reflecting the balance of schools offering Latin:

- 2.18.1 30% of entering Centres are in the independent sector (41% of all schools offering Latin are in this sector);
- 2.18.2 12% of entering Centres are in the state selective sector (10% of all schools offering Latin are in this sector); and
- 2.18.3 58% of entering Centres are in the state non-selective sector (49% of all schools offering Latin are in this sector).

2.19 Teachers have said:

- 2.19.1 “WJEC seems to have scored a big hit in our school and more pupils are expressing interest in Latin now than ever before.”
- 2.19.2 “We now have 18 students where two years ago we had four.”
- 2.19.3 “The excellent results gained in the Level 1 language unit encouraged them so much that an unprecedented number of girls opted for Latin in Year 10.”
- 2.19.4 “Interest in the subject has increased between two and threefold.”
- 2.19.5 “Thanks so much for devising this new exam—it’s so eminently suitable to the way that I teach Latin at my school.”
- 2.19.6 “Just wanted to say it is lovely teaching for the new WJEC Certificates. I’d be tearing my hair out now if it wasn’t for the new Certificates!”
- 2.19.7 “All going well and have a lot of classes now, plus a new AS Classics group and Latin groups for the Certificates too, so am hoping the new exam will bring in a new generation of students.”
- 2.19.8 “It will make a difference that will really change lives—not least, mine!”
- 2.19.9 “We are going with WJEC for both Year 9 and Year 11 and parents are delighted.”

3. CLASSICAL CIVILISATION IN UK SCHOOLS

3.1 In 2010, only 4,500 candidates entered Classical Civilisation GCSE. Approximately 2,000 of these were from state selective or non-selective schools.

3.2 In February 2011 CSCP contacted over 100 state schools which offer Classical Civilisation. Feedback from these schools suggests that Classical Civilisation GCSE numbers will drop by 32% by 2014.

3.3 The number of students who took Classical Civilisation in 2010 is tiny when compared with the 198,000 who took History. Is it sensible to inflict such significant damage on Classical Civilisation for such a small increase in History numbers?

3.4 Some schools have already axed, or are planning to axe, their Classical Civilisation courses. The following comments are all from teachers:

- 3.4.1 “We will be dropping the subject as its exclusion will mean we need to focus on History GCSE.”
- 3.4.2 “If the head decides to opt in to the Ebacc, then Classical Civ will disappear as a GCSE option.”
- 3.4.3 “GCSE Classical Civilisation has been dropped from our KS4 options due to the White Paper.”
- 3.4.4 “The impact of Ebacc is likely to be considerable and we think it unlikely that it will remain viable next year to offer CC. This is ... a retrograde step in trying to broaden the curriculum in state schools.”

3.5 The argument that the study of Classical Civilisation is not the study of history does not stand up to close scrutiny. None of the content for study in either the OCR or the AQA Classical Civilisation GCSE specification is less than 1,800 years old.

3.6 The Department has put forward no definition of what it considers “history” to be. In a context devoid of metrics, it is difficult to understand why, for example, the study of the history of architecture in a qualification with the title “Classical Civilisation” is rated less historical than the study of the history of medicine in a qualification with the title “History”.

3.7 How can we understand the “history” of ancient civilisations if not through the study of their literature and material culture?

3.8 In its current form, the E-Bac will significantly reduce the number of students in the UK who have read the Iliad, studied Greek tragedy and investigated Athenian democracy. Is this a positive step?

4. CHARITABLE SUPPORT FOR CLASSICS IN SCHOOLS

4.1. CSCP spends £100,000s each year supporting the teaching and learning of Latin and Classical Civilisation in UK schools. In a few months the E-Bac has set CSCP’s work back many years and created a situation where CSCP and other charitable organisations have seen significant investment wasted.

4.2. Further, the lack of a revision timetable for the E-Bac makes it impossible for CSCP and others to plan further investment and support: there is currently no knowing which qualifications may be added to the E-Bac list, nor when.

23 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Mrs K Packham, Curriculum Leader for Religious Education, St Thomas More Catholic School, Crewe

I am writing with reference to the second paragraph: the choice of subjects included in the E-Bacc, to make the point that it is vital that Religious Studies GCSE be included in the EBacc list of humanities subjects.

We are a Catholic school in Crewe where all our pupils study GCSE Religious Studies and our exam results in the subject are excellent with 82% of our pupils achieving A*–C in Religious Studies. 38% of pupils were A* and A grades. To disclude Religious Studies from the EBacc of humanities, will completely undermine and devalue all the hard work we do and devalue the excellent achievements of our young people. It is an academically rigorous subject and deserves its place in the rigour of the EBacc.

Religious Studies is also an important subject in our faith based school. It is key in supporting our school community in its faith development and community ethos, driven by the Gospel values of Jesus. We have a part to play in supporting other faith based schools in its development of the Religious Studies curriculum. It is valued by parents and by our pupils. If you do not include Religious Studies, you will take away our status as an academically driven subject and a tool in developing our pupils’ spiritual, moral and cultural understanding.

We need to develop social cohesion in our country and through Religious Studies, we can help to show understanding of all religious and ethnic groups and take away the fear and ignorance, replacing it with trust and knowledge. In our diverse societies, Religious Studies plays a major part and our GCSE modules include Community Cohesion which helps to breed tolerance and embrace humankind.

The number of students taking GCSE RS over the last 15 years has increased from 113 000 to about 460 000. This reflects the success of subject teaching, and is a key contribution to the development of good subject learning. In RE, pupils learn to respect themselves and understand their own identity and to respect others as well. The multi disciplinary nature of the subject, involving textual study, philosophical thinking, ethics, social understanding and the skills of analysis and reasoning make it a valued qualification.

I have had responses as to why RE is not chosen as an EBacc subject, in that the government will continue that RE has to be studied anyway. But what price can be put on the value of a subject if it is included in the important EBacc? Please consider this vital subject in your view of academic rigour for our young people.

23 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Leeds SACRE

I am writing with regard to your decision to omit Religious Education from the English Baccalaureate. It is the view of SACRE, Education Leeds, that this decision will seriously hinder the development of young people, and further jeopardize the government's Prevent policy in relation to social cohesion.

Reviewing comments made by RE Teachers in Leeds Schools, the following points have been made:

- Omitting RE from E-Bac, “devalues the subject greatly not only in the eyes of the students, but also in the eyes of fellow teachers and parents.”
- “Students in my school are very disappointed that it is not currently included in the E-Bac. It is a topic they have addressed, and they know that RE is the only subject that allows them to think about the meaning and purpose of life, crucial for personal, moral and spiritual development. It develops values and attitudes of respect and tolerance.”
- “RE encourages students to look at how they, as individuals, can make a positive contribution to society, by challenging prejudice and discrimination, promoting community cohesion and reflecting on the importance of faith.”
- “RE helps provide honest and hard working employees for employers carrying moral value. It provides great opportunities to work for a peaceful, harmonious and tolerant multi-ethnic society.”
- “RE is assessed against stringent academic standards both at GCSE and GCSE levels.”
- “The multi-disciplinary nature of the subject, involving textual study, philosophical thinking, ethical reasoning and social understanding, enable students to develop important skills of analysis and evaluation.”
- “RE has always been classed as a traditional humanity alongside History and Geography and it deserves a place alongside these two subjects; it provides a rigorous study of culture, ethics and philosophy and plays an integral role in promoting the key concepts of the citizenship curriculum.”
- “RE heavily supports history at GCSE with topics such as Crime and Punishment, Prejudice and Discrimination and War and Peace on the AQA syllabus.”
- “A full GCSE is delivered to all our KS4 students, with 90% A*-C last year, both students and parents view it as a meaningful, academic subject. Seventy one students are taking it for A level in September 2011.”
- “At present all KS4 students study GCSE RS with 70% achieving A*-C. The uptake at AS and A2 is increasing on a yearly basis.”
- “The E-Bac will narrow the curriculum, limit student choices and direct learning away from other important subjects that enable young people to play a valuable and productive role in all branches of society.”
- “The introduction of the E-Bac in its current state, will be divisive and result in returning to a two tier education system in which individuals will be labelled, either by themselves or society, as failures.”
- “If RE is not part of the E-Bac, this could affect how the subject is seen in the future, for both students, parents and Universities.....Currently it is viewed very highly as a degree and A Level.....will universities continue to see it in this light?”

It is evident from a selection of quotations listed here, taken from individual teacher responses, that RE teachers, students and parents in Leeds schools, including Academies, are very disappointed with the exclusion of RE from the English Baccalaureate. Each quotation makes a reasoned argument based on experience and fact for the inclusion of RE. The commitment of RE teachers and students can be seen in the results for 2010.

- RE GCSE Full Course 2010. 2,429 candidates. 66.8% A*-C. 98.4% A*-G.
- RE GCSE Short Course 2010. 2,985 candidates. 48.5% A*-C. 95.2 A*-G.
- RE GCE AS level 2010. 47 candidates. 29.8% A-B. 89.4% A-E.
- RE GCE A Level 2010 145 candidates. 28.3% A*-A. 53.8% A*-B. 100% A*-E.

SACRE/Education Leeds welcomes the fact that there is a short enquiry into the English Baccalaureate. Given the terms of reference for SACRE's we have confined ourselves to the impact of the Secretary of State's decision to exclude Religious Education from the E-Bac. Views expressed through quotations focus on the four points that written submissions are asked to address.

Written evidence submitted by Sheffield Learning for Life Partnership

1. This submission is made by Sheffield's Learning for Life (LfL) Executive Group. LfL brings together those major stakeholders in the city that have a role to play in the organisation and delivery of learning to 14–19 year olds, including, the local authority, secondary and special schools, the FE college, the sixth form college, the two universities, work-based learning representatives, the local Connexions Service and the local Education Business Partnership.

2. The LfL approach is predicated upon the establishment of strong links between 14–19 education providers and key economic growth sectors within local industry and commerce with the objective of encouraging students to develop additional key skill capability in those areas that local employers are seeking in their future workforce.

3. LfL welcomes the opportunity to submit a response to the Department of Education's proposals to establish an English Baccalaureate addressing the following points:

THE PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE E-BAC AND ITS VALUE AS A MEASURE OF PUPIL AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

5. We recognise that the purpose of the E-Bac is to provide a strong core of education provision to all 14+ students rooted in the traditional GCSE examination measure of student performance. We acknowledge the benefits that can be derived from such an approach in terms of an accurate value added measure tied to a common core for all students but have concerns of a model that measures student attainment specifically via GCSE performance.

6. However, we would respectfully highlight that in his speech to the Edge Foundation announcing the review by Professor Wolf, the Secretary of State said:

“it's crucial to note that securing this core base of knowledge would not preclude the study of technical or vocational subjects as some have suggested. It's not either/or but both/and. I'm absolutely clear that every child should have the option of beginning study for a craft or trade from the age of 14 but that this should be complemented by a base of core academic knowledge.”

7. Sheffield has a robust 14–19 Vocational Skills Programme (VSP) that provides opportunities for more than 2,200 14–16 year old students per year to undertake accredited off-site provision following qualifications that carry high levels of credibility with local employers and FE providers. We do not believe that only GCSEs represents a valid measure of value added progress and do not believe that the best interests of Sheffield students would be served by such an approach. Furthermore, the recently announced findings of the Wolf Review support our assertion that vocational qualifications with appropriate academic rigour of approach to assessment and moderation processes and clear progression routes should be a valid and valued part of the KS4 curriculum.

8. Furthermore, the E-Bac plays down the fact that these qualifications are delivered in industry standard facilities by trainers or lecturers with recent industry standard experience. Moreover, these qualifications are located in sectors such as advanced engineering & manufacturing and digital & new media that are fundamental to the city's economic growth and rebalancing.

9. We are further concerned that the current success of our VSP model in terms of the encouragement of many students to seek apprenticeship routes of progression would be threatened by an approach that appears to marginalise the vocational routes that underpin apprenticeship pathways. This puts at risk the career prospects of young people for whom an academic progression route does not offer the most productive pathway to their preferred vocation. These students do benefit from the development of alternative skills that secure an appropriate level of learner employability skills which attract a high level of endorsement from our employer partners in business and commerce.

10. The importance of the issue of progression cannot be overstated. Currently, in Sheffield, 4,500 students pursue A levels mainly in schools with sixth forms or at the local FE or sixth form college, 4,150 pursue applied learning at levels 2 and 3 mainly at the city's FE and sixth form colleges and the academies, 2,000 pursue apprenticeships with work based learning providers or our Fe college Sheffield College and 1,800 pursue Foundation Learning at Special Schools, the Sheffield College or five other providers. The E-Bac proposals could easily therefore devalue the progression of the majority of Sheffield post-16 learners.

11. If the EBac is exclusively tied to GCSE achievement we feel that the real value of many schools will be hidden and that many schools which provide a valuable, rounded level of education will be perceived as low quality providers when the reverse is more often the case. We therefore urge the Department to reconsider the assessment approach to be applied within the English Baccalaureate and recommend the application of a broader range of assessment processes recognised and valued by progression destinations for Key Stage 4 students.

THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE E-BAC

12. We support the inclusion of English, mathematics and science in the core of the E-Bac.

13. We are concerned about the absence of Engineering and Technology from the proposed STEM components. We have a strong and vibrant engineering and manufacturing tradition in Sheffield and South Yorkshire. We are concerned that the E-Bac proposals will lead to a dilution of the Centre's product with a consequent reduction on recruitment at age 16 to this vital area of the local economy.

14. We are concerned that the exclusion of engineering and technological capability from the proposed qualification will lead to a marginalisation of these curriculum areas and popularity with students will be lost.

15. For the above reasons, we strongly recommend the urgent establishment of a Technical Baccalaureate to complement the English Baccalaureate for those students for whom a technological educational experience at KS4 would offer successful progression to productive careers in the future.

16. We note the inclusion of History and Geography in the proposed Humanities component of the qualification. Whilst supporting the incorporation of these subjects, we feel that this represents too narrow an offer in this area of the curriculum and recommend the addition of Religious Studies, Music and Economics to this component.

17. We note and support the inclusion of a languages component to the proposed qualification. However, we are concerned that the apparent conviction that measurement of attainment in Languages is only served by the GCSE assessment model and recommend that further consideration be given to curriculum approaches and associated assessment regimes that support an economic contribution from the languages sector. In Sheffield, we have developed a Business Languages qualification route (IBC = International Business Communications) that encourages students to develop their foreign language capability within local companies that have developed large export order books. All of these companies recognise the strength of this curriculum approach and believe that more, rather than less, support should be given to encouraging its incorporation into the mainstream offer. This innovative curriculum approach has now been successfully rolled out nationally with over 5,000 students currently enrolled on the programme.

18. We additionally note that the languages component of the E-Bac proposals is limited to European and dead languages. We are concerned about the decision to marginalise community languages from this package given the importance of this area of the curriculum in celebrating society's heterogeneity.

19. We are further concerned that the proposed subjects do not cover business and finance or opportunities for financial literacy and entrepreneurialism. In an area such as South Yorkshire which is heavily dependent on public sector employment, encouraging entrepreneurs and growth in the private sector is fundamental if a rebalancing of the economy is to be achieved.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE E-BAC FOR PUPILS, SCHOOLS AND EMPLOYERS

20. We respectfully point out that the current E-Bac proposals appear to be incompatible with the concept of University Technical Colleges also proposed by the Government. Previous mention within this submission has been made to our support for a Technical Baccalaureate and we highlight that the establishment of this would remove the apparent contradiction.

21. We are concerned that the proposed design for the E-Bac would occupy not less than 60% of the KS4 curriculum based on a traditional two year model, squeezing the time available for additional optional studies including Diplomas, which the Government appears to accept as a bone fide qualification route.

INTERNATIONAL COMPARATORS FOR THE E-BAC

22. We support the principle of establishing a qualification that compares favourably to the best equivalent processes at an international level.

23. We do not believe that this principle is best served by the iGCSE brand of qualifications. There is a very low exposure to iGCSEs and little enthusiasm for investment in the development of capability for this qualification. We believe that the iGCSE suffers from the same narrowness of approach and would welcome more innovative developments that have been highlighted at other points in this review.

24. We respectfully point out that many European countries, and particularly France and Germany, place an imperative on the development of a range of skills intrinsic to the workplace, many of which are developed from an early age. All of these economic partners appreciate and understand the need to offer a broad curriculum approach that places equal significance to the development of both academic and applied pathways.

Written evidence submitted by WJEC

WJEC is an Awarding Organisation that provides examinations throughout England and Wales. WJEC's qualifications include a range of traditional academic and work-related subjects at Entry Level, GCSE and AS/A Level, as well as Functional and Key/Essential Skills.

WJEC provides the Welsh Baccalaureate to schools in Wales at Foundation, Intermediate and Advanced levels. It offers an innovative programme of study incorporating working with employers, community activities, individual investigations and key skills, as well as students' GCSEs, GNVQs or A level studies.

1. THE PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE ENGLISH BACCALAUREATE AND ITS VALUE AS A MEASURE OF PUPIL AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

Our understanding is that the English Baccalaureate is mainly an indicator of performance across a particular group of subjects and will be reported in School Performance Tables. It is not a qualification in its own right or an aggregation of subjects to create a qualification as is the case with the Welsh Baccalaureate Diploma. We therefore question the value of the measure to the pupil.

2. THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE ENGLISH BACCALAUREATE

Good passes (A* to C) in “rigorous” GCSEs or IGCSEs in all of the following are required:

- English;
- Maths;
- the sciences—two good passes required;
- a modern or ancient foreign language; and
- humanities.

2.1 *Equivalents*

In our view, it is essential that each of the subject categories is clearly understood in terms of what equivalents are allowed, the fact that the Cambridge International qualifications (and their IGCSE legacy predecessors) are the only qualifications other than GCSEs currently to appear in the English Baccalaureate is of great concern. It is vital that IGCSE qualifications listed should not specify a particular Awarding Organisation's offering only, as is the case in the white paper. Indeed there is a general lack of clarity around the use of the term IGCSE, which is currently unregulated and undefined.

2.2 *Languages*

The question of equivalents is a prominent concern in relation to languages. Our understanding is that pupils need to secure a good pass in a modern or ancient foreign language in order to satisfy the languages requirement of the English Baccalaureate, and that this may be fulfilled through GCSEs or “accredited IGCSEs”, including community languages.

2.2.1 *Latin*

Taking Latin as an example, our understanding is that GCSE Latin is included, as are “accredited IGCSEs”, despite the fact that Ofqual has on a number of occasions stated that they do not recognise the existence of “accredited IGCSEs” and that such qualifications should be described as Level 1 and Level 2 Certificates.

In that context, we consider that WJEC's Level 2 Latin qualifications should be eligible as fulfilling the languages element of the English Baccalaureate. WJEC's certificates in Latin are accredited at Level 1 and Level 2 under exactly the process and standards Ofqual states it uses for “accrediting” so-called IGCSEs. In order to be consistent, therefore, our certificates in Latin at Level 2 should be recognised as having the same eligibility for inclusion as the CIE Level 2 Certificates that have already been included.

Comparability of demand with GCSE Latin at Grades A*–C, both in terms of language skills/content and the size of the qualification, was a key criterion at the time of accreditation of the Certificates. At the same time, unlike GCSE, the provision of a Level 1 “stepping stone” provides a means of encouraging progression to Level 2 (and GCSE Grade C+ equivalence).

Even in the short time of their availability those schools using the Certificates in Latin have reported a significant rise (a doubling or tripling) in the number of students studying Latin at KS4 and intending to study Latin at KS5. For the first full entry this summer there will be over 5,000 unit entries from over 150 centres. Inclusion of the Certificates in Latin would promote this growth, whereas exclusion will cause a reduction in the number of students studying Latin in England.

Experience of the CIE Languages IGCSEs is limited in the UK, with Greek only recently accredited and French only managing 10 entries last summer and Hindi not even that. The WJEC Certificates in Latin have a far greater number of entries and have proved themselves in the relevant market-place.

2.2.2 Applied Languages

The Addendum makes specific mention of excluding Applied Welsh Second Language and Applied French. WJEC would suggest that Applied language GCSEs should be included, on the grounds that they serve to make GCSEs in Modern Foreign Languages more attractive and relevant to young learners. The more options we can provide, the greater the motivation of students.

2.3 Humanities

WJEC is concerned at the effect of the decision of the Government to limit Humanities to just History and Geography and to exclude Religious Studies/RE from Humanities within the English Baccalaureate. We would argue that GCSE Religious Studies/RE and GCSE Humanities should be included in the choice of subjects within the English Baccalaureate as they are rigorous academic subjects which have strong parallels with the knowledge and skills that are developed through History, Ancient History and Geography. If they are not included, this is likely to have a major unintended consequence in terms of the balance of curriculum experiences available to young people in England.

2.3.1 Religious Studies

Since the 1990s the provision and quality in RE/RS has improved. Ofsted's report "Transforming RE" (Ofsted 2010) confirmed the pattern of good practice. RE/RS is one of the most important components of a broad and balanced curriculum. The status of the subject will be compromised if it is excluded from the definition of being a Humanities subject with equal parity of esteem with History and Geography. There is no evidence to suggest that GCSE RS is less demanding than GCSE History or Geography.

WJEC has always had a major interest in the development of a challenging RS curriculum for schools in England and Wales. The current WJEC GCSE RS courses encourage pupils to learn from different religions, beliefs, values and traditions, whilst exploring their own beliefs and questions of meaning. The courses challenge pupils to reflect on, consider, analyse, interpret and evaluate issues of truth, belief, faith and ethics and to communicate their responses. They encourage pupils to develop their sense of identity and belonging enabling them to flourish individually within their communities and as citizens in a diverse society and global community.

RS has an important role in preparing pupils for adult life, employment and lifelong learning. It enables pupils to develop respect for and sensitivity to others, in particular those whose faiths and beliefs are different from their own. It promotes discernment and enables pupils to combat prejudice.

In both curriculum and academic terms RS should be included in the Humanities section of the English Baccalaureate. If it is excluded it will be to the detriment of the pupils and to the subject which forms, and should continue to form, a major part of the curriculum in England.

It is not only the RS/RE professional community that has protested at the treatment of RS by the current government. There has been protest from head teachers, faith communities and indeed parents.

2.3.2 Humanities

WJEC maintains that there is a strong argument for including the GCSE Humanities qualification as part of the English Baccalaureate. This is not a course that covers integrated themes, as other awarding bodies offer, but one that gives the opportunity to select units from the subject areas of Geography, History, Religious Education and a Contemporary theme (such as rights and responsibilities and conflict and co-operation).

This course, which is rapidly gaining popularity in English schools, covers the identified Humanities areas of Geography and History (plus more) and inclusion of such a course would remove the need for schools to offer the limited and divisive choice of either Geography or History. It could even enhance the humanities choice in the same way that combined science enhances the choice of single sciences. The WJEC Humanities GCSE course captures the essence of individual subjects in a collective framework and is easily delivered by subject specialists, working on a carousel approach.

3. THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE E-BAC FOR PUPILS, SCHOOLS AND EMPLOYERS

The measure is intended to make it easier to identify "those schools which succeed in giving their pupils a properly rounded academic education". We would argue that it will indeed have the reverse effect with a narrowing of the curriculum being offered by schools as they focus on the English Baccalaureate subjects.

Pupils will have limited scope to study additional subjects as they will be strongly encouraged to sit at least one GCSE in each of the five areas required for the English Baccalaureate, leaving them with the choice of only two or three additional GCSEs.

There is great educational and employability value in studying the Arts (eg Music, Art & Design), Technical subjects (eg ICT, Design and Technology) and Social Sciences (eg Business Studies, Sociology, Media studies). WJEC has already been contacted by a number of schools in England who are worried that some subjects will be discontinued within these valuable curriculum areas.

There is huge concern in the capability of schools to deliver the language element of the English Baccalaureate due to the recent declining trends in pupil take up of language subjects. The inclusion of a language option, whilst welcomed by WJEC, will inevitably cause undue strain on schools in the short term.

4. INTERNATIONAL COMPARATORS FOR THE ENGLISH BACCALAUREATE

The use of the term “Baccalaureate” as a measure of school performance at the age of 16 is not necessarily appropriate, as it is a term generally used and recognised internationally as a pre-University type of qualification. WJEC therefore suggests that a more appropriate descriptor is required for the kind of aggregation of subjects suggested under the English Baccalaureate, recognising that it is not in itself a qualification, nor is it taken at the pre-University stage.

In addition, all the other Baccalaureates aim to give the students a rounded education by including skills development and encouraging less specialism, whereas the English Baccalaureate is promoting the study of a much narrower range of academic subjects. The use of the term English Baccalaureate therefore risks creating a misleading impression of similarity with the currently established Baccalaureate qualifications and hence creating confusion.

Examples of the use of the term:

4.1 *French Baccalauréat*

France’s national secondary-school diploma is an academic qualification which French and international students take at the end of secondary education and is the main diploma required to pursue university studies. It confirms a rounded secondary education, gives access to a wide range of University education. It cannot be compared with our A-Levels as it cannot, like A-Levels, be obtained in single subjects. The method of assessment is primarily via examinations at the end in essay form with the addition of problem sets in maths and science and orals and translations in languages.

4.2 *International Baccalaureate*

A group of three internationally recognised educational programmes for students aged 3 to 19. The International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme is the most well known and is the senior of the three International Baccalaureate programmes for students aged 16–19, it is a 2 year programme that provides an internationally accepted qualification for entry into higher education, and is recognised by universities worldwide. Subjects are assessed using both internal and external assessments, and courses finish with an externally assessed series of examinations, usually consisting of two or three timed written examinations. Internal assessment varies by subject (there may be oral presentations, practical work, or written works) and in most cases is initially graded by the classroom teacher, whose grades are then verified or modified, as necessary, by an appointed, external moderator.

4.3 *Welsh Baccalaureate*

A qualification introduced in Wales in 2003, where students take traditional qualifications, such as GCSEs, AS and A-Levels but are also assessed on a wider core curriculum. The qualification is offered at three levels—Advanced, Intermediate and Foundation. To fulfil the requirements of the qualification, students must complete a Core Programme of personal development studies along with their Options, which are the subjects they choose from academic or vocational qualifications. As such, the Welsh Baccalaureate adds to the value of established qualifications, but does not replace them.

The components of the Core Programme are:

- Wales, Europe and the World—a chance to learn more about Wales and its relationship with Europe and the World. A language module at a level suitable for the student is included in this.
- Personal and Social Education—helps the student explore issues in the modern world: family, health, relationships, citizenship and sustainable development. It includes an activity in the local community.
- Work-Related Education—includes working with an employer and taking part in a team enterprise activity to help the student understand how businesses work.
- Individual Investigation—the opportunity to carry out an individual research project into an area of interest.
- Essential Skills Wales/Key Skills—the opportunity to develop all six transferable skills, and the requirement to achieve all six for Advanced level and four for Intermediate and Foundation levels.

The value of the Welsh Baccalaureate Diploma “Core” is best measured in terms of the capabilities and experiences it provides. Students become more confident and self-reliant because they take part in practical activities. With the Welsh Baccalaureate Core the emphasis is on learning by doing. The Welsh Baccalaureate better prepares students for work or university. It helps them develop their Key Skills and gives them a range of positive experiences in the community and with employers. The Welsh Baccalaureate Core within the

Advanced Diploma attracts 120 UCAS points. This is in addition to UCAS points earned through the Options qualifications and is included in University offers.

4.4 Sixth Form Baccalaureate

Being piloted in 11 centres in England with an aim to define and endorse the philosophy of an all-round education on the basis of subjects, skills, values, and breadth and to recognise the diversity of student learning programmes to ensure that their educational experience is not just about taking exams. Other aims include helping to prepare students for continuing education, life, work and citizenship and to add value to students' applications for further and higher education by recognising the full range of courses, activities and experiences which a sixth form college curriculum offers.

	<i>Qualification</i>	<i>Upper age</i>	<i>Core subjects</i>	<i>Options/Additional content</i>
French Bac	Yes—diploma	19	1. French 2. History 3. Geography 4. A foreign language 5. Philosophy 6. Maths 7. Science	Three options/specialisms: 1. Literature biased 2. Economic and social sciences bias 3. Science focused version
International Bac	Yes—diploma	19	1. Theory of knowledge 2. Creativity, action and service 3. Extended essay	Six separate subjects—one from each of: 1. First language 2. Second language 3. Experimental sciences 4. Maths and Computer science 5. The arts 6. Individuals and society
Welsh Bac	Yes—Foundation, Intermediate and Advanced Diploma	19	1. Wales, Europe and the World including a foreign language 2. Personal and Social Education including Community Participation 3. Work Related Education 4. Individual Investigation 5. ESW/Key skills	Advanced Maximum of three level 3 qualifications: 2 A levels 720 GLH 108 credits Intermediate Maximum of four level 2 qualifications 4 GCSEs A*-C 480 GLH 60 credits Foundation Level 1 qualifications which total 4 GCSEs D-G 480 GLH 60 credits
Sixth Form Bac	A national award/testimonial certificate	19	4 key elements: 1. Subjects 2. Skills 3. Values 4. Breadth	
English Bac	No	16	GCSE A*-C in five core subjects: 1. Maths 2. English 3. Science—two qualifications 4. Foreign language 5. History or Geography	None

Written evidence submitted by William Musk

1. THE PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE E-BAC

1.1 Once it has become established as a worthwhile target for young people, parents, schools and employers, the E-Bac can exercise a beneficial influence by ensuring that all Year 11 pupils follow a valued core of subjects, the essential foundations for broader studies at Key Stage 4 and Sixth Form..

1.2 I am 65. My parents' generation used to speak fondly of School Certificate and Matriculation which were their gold standard passports to careers and in some cases higher education. I can see the E-Bac in a few years time, when it has been properly explained to the public, having a similar status as a target for today's young people, even if some of them will not welcome the element of guided compulsion behind these changes. It has the potential to become a useful measure of pupil and school performance.

1.3 I deplore the way in which it was used by the Government as an evaluation measure of last summer's GCSE results. The young people who made their subject choices in the academic year 2007–08 for their Key Stage 4 courses had no notion whatsoever that this would be used in the autumn of 2010 as an evaluation measure of their performance and that of their schools. This retrospective judgement seems basically unjust.

2. THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS IN THE E-BAC

2.1 I think that the right core has been chosen. My only modification would be to allow religious education to be set alongside history and geography as the humanities subject.

2.2 A Language in the E-Bac.

I welcome this greatly. It should be a key skill in the spectrum of qualifications of all young people with aspirations. It matches their contemporaries in other countries such as Germany and China. Without one language at GCSE level, our young people put themselves unwittingly at a disadvantage in the ever competitive global jobs market. Hopefully the language learning skills and methodologies acquired in this way can be applied to another language, if a future post or responsibility requires learning a second or even third language for specific purposes.

3. IMPLICATIONS OF THE E-BAC

For pupils it will offer a recognized criterion of solid achievement for future courses and careers. For parents it gives a very clear indication of the crucial core subjects which they should insist should be available as a Key Stage 4 combination of subjects in their child's secondary school. It is a valuable guide for parents who may lack confidence and even assertiveness in the face of senior school management. Employers can expect their potential young employees such as apprentices in the future to have this basic core as their foundation for further development and training.

4. INTERNATIONAL COMPARATORS

My impression is that most comparable countries to the UK such as France and Germany expect their 16 year olds to have followed a broad and balanced course, in which the Government lays down what are the expected core subjects for all pupils. This change by the Government is a welcome step towards matching their systems in both aspiration and delivery.

5. OVERALL

A broad welcome, particularly the encouragement of language learning at Key Stage 4.

23 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Arts Council England

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 Arts Council England is the lead body charged with developing the arts in England. Our mission is Great art for everyone. We work to get great art to everyone by championing, developing and investing in artistic experiences that enrich people's lives.

1.2 The Arts Council is committed to ensuring that children and young people have the opportunity to experience the richness of the arts, in and outside of school.

1.3 The arts support the underpinning of core knowledge and concepts, both as subjects in their own rights and across core subjects. The recently published Henley Review of Music Education recommends music be included within the English baccalaureate. Arts Council England agrees with this and further endorses the inclusion of all arts subjects in the proposed baccalaureate programme.

1.4 If young people are unable to access the arts and culture in schools it will have a disproportionately negative effect on those from disadvantaged backgrounds who rely on their formal education to provide them with that access.

1.5 The progression routes in the arts through schools to further and higher education and conservatoires are key to the success of the creative economy, and the economic growth of this country.

1.6 Both the International and European Union Baccalaureates cover a broad range of subjects and include the arts as options.

1.7 We urge the Education Select Committee to include arts subjects within the English Baccalaureate.

2. ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND

2.1 Arts Council England is the lead body charged with developing the arts in England. Our mission is Great art for everyone. We work to get great art to everyone by championing, developing and investing in artistic experiences that enrich people's lives.

2.2 Our aim in championing is to embed the arts in public life through advocacy and by brokering partnerships. In developing, we commission projects or programmes to address particular challenges or seize new opportunities. In investing, we aim to make informed decisions about how best to allocate public money to ensure that the arts thrive. We fund a national portfolio of organisations who delivered almost 16,000 school performances and over 335,000 learning sessions in 2010.

2.3 The Arts Council is committed to ensuring children and young people have opportunities to experience the richness of the arts, in and outside of school. Through our strategic framework, Achieving Great Art for Everyone, we are using our dual role as a development agency and funder to raise the standards of work made by, for and with children and young people and to address issues of supply and demand, ensuring as many young people as possible have access to great art experiences, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

2.4 Arts Council England encourages and supports schools to develop their arts provision through its flagship school scheme, Artsmark. Artsmark acts as a benchmark for arts and cultural activity across the curriculum and from September 2011 will also measure the impact and quality of arts provision, linked to the Ofsted framework. Currently 20% of all schools hold the award and we aspire for every school to be an arts and culture "Artsmark" school.

2.5 Arts Council partner with Trinity Guildhall to deliver the Arts Award, a national qualification which supports young people to develop as artists and arts leaders. We are proud of the award's appeal to young people and professionals alike, and its growth in both education and cultural settings since launch in 2005. To date over 30 000 young people have achieved an Arts Award.

3. ENGLISH BACCALAUREATE

3.1 The Schools White Paper encourages schools to offer a broad set of academic subjects to age 16 and propose that introducing the English Baccalaureate will enable this. The White Paper also states that children should expect to be given a rich menu of cultural experiences. We therefore feel that to achieve the broad education that Government desires, the choice of subjects proposed for the Baccalaureate must be extended to include the arts.

3.2 There is highly robust evidence from the DCMS led Culture and Sport Evidence programme (CASE) that arts participation contributes to learning outcomes for children and young people. The arts support the underpinning of core knowledge and concepts, both as subjects in their own rights and across core subjects. The impact of experiencing and engaging with high quality performances or outstanding national acquisitions can bring a subject to life. These experiences not only enhance motivation and attainment but lead to a life long engagement with the arts.

3.3 Our research from Artsmark schools indicates that 78% schools believe that increased access to the arts has helped to improve overall attainment results for their pupils. Furthermore, 94% of Artsmark schools feel that access to and increased opportunities to work with professional artists has had a positive impact on students and their learning, reinforcing our view that arts rich education opportunities are a positive way for children and young people to gain a broad, well-rounded education.

3.4 In his recent review of music education, Darren Henley recognises "the positive effect that music, both as an academic subject, taught in the classroom, and as a participative activity, in and out of the classroom, can have on young people's lives". He directly recommends the inclusion of Music as an academic subject in the English Baccalaureate. The Government responded to Darren Henley's review by agreeing that Music, in itself, is an "enriching and valuable subject" and "can improve a number of social skills and improve academic attainment in other areas such as literacy and numeracy". Arts Council England endorses these findings and see relevance beyond music and into all arts subjects.

3.5 At the request of the Government, Darren Henley will be conducting a further review on other aspects of cultural education including dance, drama and the visual arts. We would welcome direct links in the findings of National Curriculum review and English Baccalaureate consultation.

3.6 If the arts are not included in the English Baccalaureate, we believe there is a threat that some schools will reduce their arts and cultural offer and there is a risk that some children would have less opportunity to experience high quality arts opportunities. A recent poll by the National Society for Education in Art and Design found that 60% of teachers thought that fewer pupils would start an arts GCSE next academic year as a result of the proposed English Baccalaureate. We are also mindful of the dramatic downturn in young people opting for languages when it was “dropped” from compulsory teaching in 2004.

3.7 If young people are unable to access the arts and culture in schools it will have a disproportionately negative effect on those from disadvantaged backgrounds who rely on their formal education to provide them with that access. Schools can help narrow the gap and address inequalities by offering arts and cultural education. This will help young people develop their cultural capital, and therefore increase social mobility.

3.8 We know that early engagement with the arts leads to sustained, life long interest and can improve well being. Schools can provide the setting to identify and support talent development and help progression to conservatoires and careers within the wider arts and creative industries. Studying the arts also provides young people with the skills required to pursue careers within the creative industries which the Prime Minister recently recognised as an important growth area in rebalancing the UK economy.

3.9 Both the International and European Union Baccalaureates cover a broad range of subjects and include the arts as options. The English Baccalaureate should also include the arts subjects to ensure continuity and progression opportunities for young people into higher level qualifications and higher education.

4. RECOMMENDATION

4.1 We urge the Education Select Committee to include the arts subjects in the English Baccalaureate.

23 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Fr Timothy M Gardner OP, on behalf of The Catholic Education Service for England and Wales

SUMMARY

In this submission, whilst affirming the importance of a broad curriculum, we express some serious misgivings regarding the likely unintended consequences of the E-Bac:

- (i) that Religious Education has a strong claim to be *the* humanity, *par excellence* as it demands knowledge and skills in history, textual criticism, anthropology, ethics, philosophy and theology. Thus its omission from any measure which seeks to ensure that pupils receive a genuinely broad education is indefensible and therefore strongly urge that Religious Studies be included within the list of humanities for the purposes of the E-Bac;
- (ii) that the E-Bac will lead to a reduction in the number of students studying Religious Studies to GCSE in community schools;
- (iii) that it unfairly disadvantages schools with a religious character where Religious Studies tends to be of excellent quality and results are high; and
- (iv) that it will distort the distribution of resources because success/failure in it depends on a minority of students (the C/D boundary).

SUBMITTER

1. The submitter is the Catholic Education Service for England and Wales, is an agency of the Catholic Bishops Conference of England and Wales. CESEW negotiates, on behalf of all Catholic bishops, on legal, administrative, and religious education matters in order to safeguard and promote Catholic interests in education and contribute to the common good of civil society.

2. CESEW represents the interests of some 2197 schools in England, educating over 750,000 pupils.

THE PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE E-BAC AND ITS VALUE AS A MEASURE OF PUPIL AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

3. CESEW shares the concern of the Secretary of State over recent reductions in the number of children studying science and languages to GCSE and regard these subjects as part of a broad curriculum. It is vital that academic subjects remain an entitlement for all pupils, not only those regarded as high-achieving.

4. We give a cautious welcome to the principle of the E-Bac insofar as we are sympathetic to its broad aims. However the very problem which the E-Bac seeks to address (children being steered towards “soft” subjects in order to most easily achieve the current gold standard of 5 A*-C including English and Maths) is itself a product of a league table culture in education.

5. We are not convinced that the E-Bac is simply “a measure” and not a prescription of curriculum. League tables are a blunt instrument in curriculum planning and militate against precisely the sort of local determination that *PISA* has consistently found drives up standards.¹

6. We were appalled by the decision to publish E-Bac league tables immediately and retrospectively. This will of course allow the Government to show significant “improvement” in future years, but is otherwise arbitrary, alarmist and unjust.

7. The E-Bac is a simplistic threshold measure likely to mean that schools will devote more resources to borderline C grade students in order to achieve the highest percentage score in league tables. This policy will unfairly disadvantage both G&T and SEN children. Moreover, an E-Bac “pass” will not tell anyone (including parents) whether a particular grade represents success or failure for a given student. For example, a school with a high percentage of pupils achieving the E-Bac (say, at grade B) might actually be seriously underperforming if a significant proportion of those pupils might have been expected to achieve an A or A*.

THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE E-BAC

8. *English and Mathematics*

English and Mathematics are absolutely essential for all students and GCSE is the best measure, though with the caveat that (as in any subject) a C grade does not tell us whether it represents real achievement for a given pupil.

9. *Science*

Two science qualifications is a laudable goal for all students. However the decision not to include Applied GCSEs or BTEC risks demotivating some students who can and do have access to a career or higher education in applied science, caring or nursing courses.

10. *Foreign Languages*

The importance given to foreign languages is to be broadly welcomed. But as with science there is a real risk that SEN students in particular will be simply left behind to flounder in an academic GCSE track rather than being allowed to make real progress in, for example, an entry level certificate.

11. *History and Geography*

We are pleased to note that the E-Bac will encourage uptake in History and Geography, although we have already seen the E-Bac measure having the opposite effect in schools where all students currently sit short-course GCSEs in History and Geography. It therefore seems likely that the E-Bac will limit, rather than liberate, student choice of academic subjects.

12. Whether accurately or not, Geography is perceived to be a more accessible GCSE than History (thanks to its practical and fieldwork aspects). We fear that History at GCSE may prove to be an unintended (and paradoxical) casualty of the E-Bac.

13. *Humanities*

Given the Secretary of State has in the past indicated that subjects as diverse as “history, geography, art (and) music”² might be regarded as humanities, it is surprising and regrettable that a well-established humanities subject like Religious Studies has not been included in the E-Bac (indeed in various correspondence from the Minister for Schools it has been explicitly excluded), nor does there seem any potential for music or art to be accorded any recognition.

14. *Religious Studies (reverse order?)*

Religious Studies is regarded as the “heart of the curriculum” in Catholic schools precisely because we consider that it has a claim to be *the* humanity, *par excellence*. In an increasingly confusing world, Religious Studies pupils have the opportunity to engage not only with the most profound metaphysical questions concerning human existence and the nature of reality, but also with the most fundamental ethical dilemmas of our day. Religious Studies demands knowledge and skills in history, textual criticism, anthropology, ethics, philosophy and theology. Thus its omission from any measure which seeks to ensure that pupils receive a genuinely broad education is indefensible.

15. Religious Studies is popular with pupils. It can contribute to building a more harmonious and integrated society. 80% pupils who studied RS at GCSE level believe it can promote understanding between people with different religions and beliefs. More than 60% said that taking the subject had been a “positive influence” on them.³

16. It seems that Religious Studies has become a victim of its own success. A*–C pass rates at GCSE are slightly higher for RS (72.7%) than for history (70%) and geography (69.4%). However, 4% more girls take RS than take history or geography and as their pass rate over all subjects is 7% higher than that for boys, one

would expect the overall pass rate for RE to be slightly higher. Furthermore, most pupils in schools with a designated religious character are entered for the full course examination, well resourced and taught by specialist teachers. This is naturally reflected in higher exam results.

17. It is important to distinguish between Religious Studies when taken as a full GCSE (for example in a Catholic School) and Religious Studies as it is taught in some community schools. The latter is sometimes such a pale imitation of the former that it barely deserves the name.⁴ In many community schools Religious Education, despite being a statutory subject in the primary curriculum, is taught in tutor time or combined with citizenship or PSHE, falling well below the time allocation recommended in the *Dearing Report*. Analogously, a daily act of collective worship is a statutory requirement in English schools and yet 80% of schools are reckoned to fail in their duty to provide.

18. No government minister has disputed that Religious Studies, when studied to GCSE, is a humanity. The official position seems to be that as Religious Education is already a statutory subject, the E-Bac will increase the number of pupils studying History and/or Geography. There seems to be some confusion, then, about what the E-Bac actually is, or is not intended to be. Either the E-Bac is simply a “wrapper” for certain GCSEs deemed to represent a minimal, broad range of academic subjects, or it is an instrument intended to influence curriculum. If it is the former then there is no good reason not to include Religious Studies as a humanity, and if it is the latter, then it inexorably follows that Religious Studies will lose out if it is not included, regardless of its status as a statutory subject.

19. *Fairness and Faith Schools*

All Catholic schools, in accordance with the policy of the Bishops of England and Wales, are required to spend 10% of curriculum time on Religious Studies. It is hardly surprising that results should be good. However, it seems to many of our headteachers and teachers that achievement in Religious Studies is at best being ignored in the E-Bac, and at worst being actively penalised. In Ofsted inspections, Catholic schools are rated consistently better than average on all criteria.⁵ In terms of overall effectiveness, Ofsted judged 73% of Catholic secondary schools to be outstanding or good, compared to 60% of schools nationally. In all of these schools Religious Studies is an important exam subject: surely an argument for promoting Religious Studies more widely.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

20. We strongly urge that Religious Studies be given its rightful place alongside History and Geography as a rigorous academic humanities subject at GCSE.

21. We urge the Government to consider ways in which the E-Bac measure might be modified so that schools which are rightly regarded as specialist schools or centres of excellence in particular subjects or subject areas (eg art, music, sport, technology etc.) will receive appropriate credit for their excellence. This might be achieved by adopting an “E-Bac+one” measure where the sixth subject would be determined by the school. This model, especially if linked to funding, could be a more useful and imaginative means of driving up standards in particular subject areas than either the E-Bac alone or the recent “specialist schools” model.

22. We urge the Government to seize this opportunity to develop a more meaningful and useful measure of school performance, one which is not simply a threshold target but rather a more nuanced progression measure and which would therefore enjoy the confidence of teachers, parents and pupils. Putting pupils at the heart of learning is, we believe, the intention of the Secretary of State. We fear that the E-Bac as it is currently conceived will not achieve this.

23 March 2011

REFERENCES

OECD (2010), PISA 2009 at a Glance, OECD Publishing, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264095298-en>, p. 86f

The Andrew Marr Show, BBC1, 5 September 2010

Dubit survey of 1,000 16–24 year olds, 2010

Transforming Religious Education: Religious Education in schools 2006–2009, Ofsted, 2010, *passim*

Value Added: the Distinctive Contribution of Catholic Schools and Colleges in England, CESEW, 2010

Written evidence submitted by Mr J Partridge, Curriculum Team Leader for ICT, The Minster School, Southwell

1. My background is as the head of ICT at a voluntary aided East Midlands comprehensive secondary school of around 1,600 students.

2. The particular point of those set out in your inquiry which I would like to contribute to is the implications of the E-Bac for pupils, schools and employers. We have seen an immediate impact in our school of the E-Bac on vocational subjects in terms of option numbers and dialogue from students. The announcement for the E-Bac came just before our school options evening for year 9 students going in to GCSE. The school chose to explain the principal of the E-Bac to parents, but not to restrict and manage student choices in any way. Students have available to them option choices on top of the core subjects of English, Maths, Science, Languages and Wider Learning. We have seen a significant decrease (over 45%—from 105 to 65) in students selecting ICT as one of those choices, with a significant rise in those taking History and Geography.

3. Through publishing the E-Bac statistics the message given to students and parents is that the subjects included are more important than others available to them in school. I personally find it concerning that academic subjects appear to be put above skills based courses. Placing the humanities subjects within the E-Bac means that parents see them as “better”, and so appear to have advised their son/daughter to take these as their option choices at our school. It may well be correct that students aspiring to university and other academic pathways should carefully consider their choices in this way, and ensure they take subjects with a suitable level of academic content. There remains, though, a wide range of students who should look to a balanced range of options or an entirely more vocationally weighted curriculum path. By judging schools against the E-Bac an impression has been created that students should take those subjects, which has led to a significant shift towards them. Without adequate time to adapt our curriculum around this it will lead to a year group with a much smaller range of practical skills in subject areas that may be useful to them—technologies and ICT.

4. I strongly believe that there must be a range of pathways available to students, and that they should be seen as having equal merit. If particular pathways are seen as being better than the others, then the risk is that the correct choice for the individual is not made. Students and parents will choose the pathway which is held in the highest general esteem, and not the one that is the correct choice for them. This has been evidenced previously in the problems faced by NVQ's when first launched, when the pathway was considered to be a “dropout” route for poor students, despite the merits of several of the qualifications. As a teacher little is more frustrating than a student who chooses the wrong subjects for reasons such as this, and so struggles to fit into a group. I presently see a number of students each year who take A-levels when they would be much better served by college courses or an apprenticeship. Advising these students and their parents often makes little difference as they see A-levels as having greater worth and prestige. This often means these students struggle through a year of sixth form education performing badly and losing self-esteem before doing badly in their AS exams and leaving. Whilst I entirely agree that we should all aspire to give our young people the best education possible, it is important to recognise that may mean different paths for each individual. From what we have seen so far in our school the E-Bac risks setting one particular path above others, therefore condemning other routes to underuse and even to ridicule.

5. The lack of skills based qualifications in the E-Bac does not recognise the benefit of a rounded education or the realities of the modern employment market. ICT skills particularly are an area in which developed nations should be looking to lead in. When taught well ICT is an enabling subject which improves the capacity of students and provides them with the tools required to function in a digital age. The announcement of the E-Bac has directly led to a reduction of almost half in the number of students opting to study ICT, which will have a knock on effect in future years on the number of A-level and then Degree entrants.

6. The implications, I believe, for employers is that the E-Bac risks pushing students away from skills based qualifications—as they will be seen as inferior. Meaning a skills deficit is likely to continue to grow at a time when a range of skills and abilities appears to be of great importance.

23 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by the Design and Technology Association

1. The Design and Technology (D&T) Association (www.data.org.uk) is an educational charity and a company limited by guarantee. It is the recognised professional association representing all those involved in design and technology education. The Design and Technology Association was established in 1989 with support from the Smallpeice Trust. It is governed by a Council of Management, which is elected by the members at the Annual General Meeting. It is financed through membership fees, support from charitable foundations, industrial sponsorship and income generated through project management, publications, courses, conferences and consultancy. For its members the Association provides access to a network of like-minded professionals helping to share and develop ideas about the subject, teaching, learning and professional development. Membership of the Design and Technology Association is currently over 6,000.

THE PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE E-BAC AND ITS VALUE AS A MEASURE OF PUPIL AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

2. The Design and Technology Association does not believe that the E-Bac will give schools the “freedom and incentive to provide a rigorous and broad academic education.” Early evidence received from members indicates that the reverse is in fact true. Examples of early negative impact include schools where:

- (a) GCSE option choices are being restricted with Y9 pupils being told, incorrectly, that they can no longer select a technical subject if they want to go to university;
- (b) Y7 pupils are being withdrawn from 25% of their D&T lessons to undertake additional Spanish lessons; and
- (c) two years ago 14% of Y9 opted to study D&T: Electronic Products, whereas this year that has reduced to 4%—with the likely impact that the course will not run because of insufficient numbers.

3. Decisions such as those described above are not being made because they are in the interests of the individual pupils concerned, but because the schools want to ensure their position in the E-Bac league tables is safeguarded. Even before the E-Bac passes into law schools have started to prioritise E-Bac subjects above others. This cannot be in the interests of the individual pupils or the country as a whole.

4. The examples above also indicate that, in addition to distorting Key Stage 4/GCSE option choices, the E-Bac will also result in a curriculum narrowing “backwash” into preceding key stages.

5. The D&T Association is concerned that the prioritisation of a limited range of “academic” subjects, and the consequent and unavoidable lower status accorded to other subjects, will result in a narrower curriculum which will fail to provide pupils with experience and opportunities in technical and creative subjects. We believe these subjects are essential for all pupils growing up, living and working in an advanced technological society, but also for stimulating the interest in those pupils who will go on to work in the creative and/or STEM-related industries.

6. The E-Bac is not a recognised qualification but rather another performance measure for ranking and comparing schools. Its introduction, retrospectively and without consultation, ahead of the review of the National Curriculum and the publication of the Wolf report into vocational education was pre-emptive. It has started to shape the curriculum in both KS3 and KS4 based on a spurious notion of what represents an effective combination of 16+ qualifications.

7. No rationale has been provided for the inclusion or exclusion of subjects other than their arbitrary definition as “academic”. The D&T Association supports the view of Sir James Dyson in his 2010 report produced for the Conservative Party, *Ingenious Britain*, where he discusses the importance of creating young “polymaths”—“hands and brain” people. Both attributes are equally important. He says, “Hands, in that they can solve problems, have no fear of failure, and follow their theories through into practice by actually making things. Brains, in that our best engineers and scientists, have the theoretical and scientific foundations to inform their work. And the intelligence and creativity to follow a logical course of development.” The development of polymaths will not occur with a curriculum based solely on academic subjects.

8. Already the validity of the E-Bac as an effective measure and comparator of pupil and school performance is being called into question by the development of a “Technical Baccalaureate” for use in University Technical Colleges. Will the Tech-Bac be regarded as rigorous as the E-Bac and, if there is one alternative Bac why not others—a Creative Bac or an Arts Bac, for example?

9. Instead of implementing one or more “wrapper” qualifications the Design and Technology Association believes that schools should be encouraged to offer, and pupils to select, combinations of courses that reflect their skills and interests and which prepare them effectively for further study and/or employment.

THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE E-BAC

10. If the E-Bac is implemented in its current form the number of pupils studying the limited range of E-Bac subjects will increase. For the majority of pupils this will be an inappropriate combination of qualifications. We would not dispute the inclusion of English, mathematics and science but believe that beyond this core a 21st century curriculum has to include creative and technical subjects if it is to fully prepare pupils for life and work in, “an advanced technological society” (Education for a technologically advanced nation—design and technology in schools 2004–07; Ofsted 2008).

11. The UK is the 7th largest manufacturing nation in the world ((ERA Foundation, 2010)—accounting for 12% of GDP. In addition, the creative industries account for a further 6% of GDP (DCMS website).

12. At the same time as the DfE are advocating the return to a traditional academic curriculum, BIS and DCMS are highlighting the importance of developing the skills needed to fill the shortages in key industries for the UK economy. There appears to be a worrying disconnect between these Government departments as to what is needed to address the future skill shortages in the UK.

13. We would argue, apart from being an essential part of education for all in the 21st century, D&T helps introduce and inspire children to the industries which account for nearly 20% of our gross domestic product and the sectors of industry which will get us out of our current economic situation. George Osborne stated in

a speech to the Conservative Spring Conference on 5th March 2011, “However important financial services may be, we can’t place all our bets as Labour did on the City of London. We need other parts of Britain, and other sectors of our economy, to grow and succeed. Wouldn’t it be good if Britain made things again? We want to see a manufacturing revival.”

14. If pupils are to consider careers in these productive sectors, and particularly in STEM technician careers where the major shortages exist, they need to have the opportunity to experience and develop knowledge and skills which will enable them to make informed decisions at 14+ about appropriate career paths. D&T provides pupils with these essential experiences. However, the E-Bac does not then provide pupils with the opportunity to progress and continue these career paths.

15. Design and Technology is currently statutory for all pupils in Key Stages 1–3. At KS4 it remains the most popular GCSE (JCQ, 2010, www.jcq.org.uk/national_results/news_releases/2010/) after the compulsory, core subjects. It is studied by nearly 50% of the cohort and is the subject which provides opportunities for pupils to be innovative and to design and make creative responses to design and engineering problems.

16. As Sir James Dyson states in *Ingenious Britain*: “Used as a tool to make products a reality, design links engineering to business. At school level, Design and Technology should receive the same priority status as Science and Maths.”

17. Brian Lightman, general secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL) and speaking on behalf of the CBI and the Education and Employers Taskforce, in an article in *The Times* (7 March 2011) warned that the prioritisation of traditional academic subjects risked depriving pupils of the skills that universities and employers wanted most: “These included research, independence, technology, communications, leadership, team work and problem solving.” These are all skills that D&T teaches.

18. Timetable time for subjects outside the E-Bac at KS4 will be limited. The lack of room for additional options could severely limit chances of progression towards some careers, for example engineering, if D&T or Computing/ICT A levels have not been studied at Key Stage 4 and earlier. Both of these A levels are listed as required or preferred entry to engineering and technology-related degrees in most universities, including those in the Russell Group. Similarly, lack of the study of art and design, D&T and/or ICT at Key Stage 4 could severely limit the numbers progressing to product/industrial design and media technology courses.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE E-BAC FOR PUPILS, SCHOOLS AND EMPLOYERS

19. For pupils there is considerable danger of the E-Bac becoming a divisive main measure of educational success. For those pupils who fail it their qualifications are likely to be regarded as “second rate”. There is also a related danger that any alternative Bacs, such as the Tech-Bac, would be regarded as inferior to the original, academic E-Bac.

20. For employers the E-Bac will not provide what they require. For example, manufacturing industry is enjoying growth. The PMI and CBI are all expecting this growth to continue and it is proving to be the backbone of the UK recovery. This growth will require a high level of skills in all areas of a manufacturing and engineering, including craft and technician skills requiring work with hand and brain. The E-Bac will create a diversion away from this learning in schools, thus creating serious damage to the future growth and development of UK manufacturing.

SUMMARY

21. Richard Kimbell and David Perry wrote, “In the UK we originated the concept of design and technology and we were the first nation to establish it as an entitlement for all children from 5–16. In doing so, we have provided a model that much of the world has followed.” (Design and Technology in a Knowledge Economy; Engineering Council; 2001). The E-Bac could undo all the work that has taken place to establish D&T education in the UK as something that the rest of the world looks to for inspiration and leadership. It is a subject that the UK needs its young people to study more than ever at this time.

23 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Trinity College London

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 Trinity College London is an awarding body offering qualifications in the arts and English language in the UK and internationally. Within our portfolio we offer graded examinations in music and drama and qualifications for teachers of music, drama and dance. Through our collaboration with Arts Council England we also offer the Arts Award which is growing fast in English secondary schools.

1.2 Whilst we welcome many of the proposals in the White Paper, “The Importance of Teaching”, including the E-Bac, we are concerned that the narrow focus of this new award will not ensure that pupils receive the fully rounded education that the white paper aims to support.

1.3 We consider that the list of subjects contributing to the E.Bac should include Arts subjects. We base our argument on three key positions:

1. That engagement with the arts is a key component of a broad and rounded education.
2. That engagement with the arts prepares young people for the world of work in the 21st century.
3. That the exclusion of the arts from the E-Bac will cause schools to reduce their provision of arts subjects resulting in a more impoverished and narrow education for young people.

2. THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE ARTS TO A BROAD AND ROUNDED EDUCATION

2.1 The Prime Minister introduced the Government's white paper, "The Importance of Teaching" by saying: "In the most recent OECD PISA survey in 2006 we fell from 4th in the world in the 2000 survey to 14th in science, 7th to 17th in literacy, and 8th to 24th in mathematics. The only way we can catch up, and have the world-class schools our children deserve, is by learning the lessons of other countries' success".ⁱ

2.2 The white paper itself then went on to make the commitment to "Introduce the English Baccalaureate to encourage schools to offer a broad set of academic subjects to age 16, whether or not students then go down an academic or vocational route".ⁱⁱ

2.3 The arts have long been considered to be part of a rounded education and this is no less the case today. In the OECD survey mentioned by the Prime Minister the top three countries are listed as Finland, South Korea and Canada. It is worth noting the position of the arts in the education systems of these three countries.

2.4 In Finland the arts is given special emphasis within the Basic Curriculum throughout the period of compulsory schooling, and local authorities providing basic education in the arts receive statutory government funding to support this.ⁱⁱⁱ

2.5 In South Korea the Seventh National Curriculum, introduced in 2000, includes music and fine arts as compulsory subjects with stated minimum instructional hours through until Grade 9 (Age 14–15).^{iv}

2.6 In Canada the curriculum is set at state level, but to take one example the Ontario curriculum document for Grades 11 and 12 (up to age 18) states that:

"Experiences in the arts ... play a valuable role in the education of all students"

And further that study in the arts:

"... prepare(s) students for a wide range of challenging careers, not only for careers in the arts"^v

2.7 The evidence from countries with the most successful education systems would therefore support the view that the arts should be central to a broad and rounded education, not peripheral to it.

3. PREPARING FOR THE WORLD OF WORK

3.1 The white paper makes frequent reference to the needs of employers, but in today's world of work employers do not just need young people with basic literacy and numeracy, they constantly call for improved skills in creativity, communication, collaboration, imagination and leadership. It is these skills that will give UK companies the edge in the global marketplace.

3.2 In his *Five Minds for the Future*, Howard Gardner writes:

"In our global, wired society, creativity is sought after, cultivated, praised. Corporate visionary John Seely Brown has quipped that, in the world of tomorrow, people will say, "I create; therefore I am".^{vi}

3.3 Given the fundamental relationship of creativity to the arts we would argue that the lack of arts representation in the E-Bac will lead to a reduction in the skills and attributes of the emerging workforce of the future, and a resulting lack of competitiveness in UK companies in the global marketplace.

4. THE PRESSURE ON SCHOOLS TO REDUCE THEIR PROVISION FOR THE ARTS

4.1 The continued existence of school league tables, and the inclusion of the E-Bac within these, will create a pressure on head teachers to change the emphasis within the school curriculum in favour of E-Bac subjects. Although visionary heads will resist this pressure, there will be many who, mindful of their schools position in the tables, will see the opportunity to improve this by a tight focus on E-Bac subjects.

4.2 This will be especially the case in poor performing schools which, arguably, are just the ones that need a broad curriculum, the provision of which is a highly effective way of encouraging those young people that education finds it hard to reach.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 In summary, then, we would urge the Select Committee to reconsider the subject areas covered by the E-Bac and to ensure that the arts are represented. This is, in our view, a crucial factor in ensuring that the English education system measures up to the world's best.

REFERENCES

- ⁱ “The Importance of Teaching” White Paper—November 2010.
- ⁱⁱ “The Importance of Teaching” White Paper—November 2010.
- ⁱⁱⁱ www.oph.fi/english/education/basic_education_in_the_arts (accessed on 4/3/11).
- ^{iv} www.inca.org.uk/1397.html#5.3.2 (accessed on 4/3/11).
- ^v www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/secondary/arts1112curr.pdf (accessed on 4/3/11).
- ^{vi} Gardner, H 2006 “*Five Minds for the Future*” Boston: Harvard Business School Publishing.
- 23 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Naomi Hart

1. As a recently appointed Head of Art I would like to voice my concerns about the impact that the proposed English Baccalaureate will have on the teaching of my subject and on the provision of a broad and balanced range of learning opportunities for young people.

2. It is my understanding that despite insisting that the introduction of the baccalaureate should not deny students the opportunity to engage in a full and diverse range of subjects, the Government is failing to recognize a number of crucial points. Schools today operate within a culture that is increasingly target-driven in terms of exam results, with the notion of “value” within education explicitly linked to student attainment as measured in results. Schools are under enormous pressure to ensure their value as institutions are reflected positively in league tables, and a vast amount of resources are directed towards developing strategies that will directly add to this “value” in each GCSE cohort. This places pressure on teachers and students and in my opinion directs the focus away from ensuring that each individual student is supported in reaching their individual potential. Instead, schools become focused on an often ruthless targeting of specific students that are identified as negatively impacting upon the school’s “value added” in core subjects, often at the direct detriment of other subjects which may have a more significant value in terms of that child’s own talents, abilities or need to experience a positive and engaging learning experience.

3. It is my concern that the introduction of the English Baccalaureate, by attributing an increased value to certain subjects, will inevitably undermine the value of others. It is inevitable that schools will react to the increased value of certain subjects with an increased level of support for these subjects at the direct detriment of others. If schools are to be judged and their effectiveness assessed by the results gained in a specific set of subjects they will have to respond in order to protect the perceived effectiveness of the school as identified within league tables. I suspect that in many schools this will equate to a significant reduction in department budgets for subjects such as Art, Music and Technology (arguably, the very subjects wherein the budget is spent almost entirely on consumable materials and resources used directly by the students, the absence of which will result in practical, creative activities grinding to a halt), a reduction of time allocated towards these subjects and a reduction in opportunities for students to opt for these subjects.

4. There may also be a less visible response within schools where those more able students will be directed towards the academic subjects, in order to ensure a strong cohort of students achieving the baccalaureate and this will mean that other subjects could become the place where non-academic students are directed, which is damaging to the subject. There is already evidence of this activity within many schools, and it is something I am very concerned about encouraging or perpetuating further.

5. It is all very well to say that the Government would “encourage” schools to continue providing a broad and balanced curriculum, but in an educational culture where schools and teachers are constantly put under the microscope and assessed using somewhat limited summative strategies that simply use results as an indicator of the quality of a child’s learning experience. I feel that this places a naive and dangerous emphasis on schools leadership teams’ ability to put the principle of ensuring that every child receives the best education above the needs of the school to ensure its perceived effectiveness and therefore its viability as a business. This is an unfair expectation, and I feel that the government should be supporting schools in making decisions that put the needs of the students at the very centre of what we do as educationalists by legislating in a fair and informed way.

23 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Nigel Ranson, Our Lady's Catholic High School

Please accept the following:

1. To judge whether having an aggregate qualification called the E-Bac is a good idea one first needs to establish what one is trying to achieve. With this in place the success of the move can then be judged. It would appear that the reason for implementing the E-Bac is that it highlights pupils who have taken a more academically demanding rather than vocationally demanding set of subjects.

2. If this is the case then it can only succeed in its aim if the set of subjects judged as suitably academic, rather than vocational, is correct. Consensus will never be possible but I should like to propose the following subjects for inclusion within the E-Bac:

3. Religious Studies (every bit the equivalent to History in academic analysis).

4. Music (strongly analytical and mathematical in many ways).

5. Humanities (one can hardly have a section called "humanities" and not then allow the study of humanities).

6. GCSE IT (preparation for the outside, modern world requires considerable expertise in this area which did not exist when Mr Gove and I were at school).

7. GCSE Computing (strongly mathematical and analytical and suited only to top academic pupils).

8. None of the non-GCSE IT related courses should be considered for inclusion.

9. I agree fully with the requirement that only GCSE subjects should be included and accept that not all GCSE subjects are suitable.

10. Finally when considering the academic profile of a pupil I am confident that a child with nine pure GCSE subjects at A* grade but without the E-Bac collection present would be at a significant advantage when compared to a pupils with 9 pure GCSE subjects all at grade C but with the E-Bac range of subjects included.

Hence I suggest that there are grades of E-Bac to comprise PASS, HONOURS, DISTINCTION. This would allow a pupil with A* E-Bac subjects to be recognized ahead of a pupil with C grade E-Bac subjects.

11. The E-Bac only has lasting currency if it guarantees both the range of achievement and the quality of that achievement

23 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Don Henson, Heritage Alliance

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The Heritage Alliance welcomes the introduction of an English Baccalaureate in principle, but is concerned about the potential for demoting the status of vocational subjects.

2. The Baccalaureate must benefit all pupils not only university entrants.

3. A rounded education is more than just the academic core, and must enable pupils to make a range of choices at 16 by covering the whole potential range of learning at 14 to 16.

4. The Heritage Alliance supports the idea that history should be a compulsory subject at 14–16.

5. An example of the kind of qualification that must be included in the Baccalaureate is the GCSE History Pilot.

6. Heritage is a mainstay of the UK economy and needs future workers and volunteers to have an education relevant to its future maintenance and support. A good Baccalaureate could strengthen the educational base for the future economy by understanding the link between education and areas of work/activity such as heritage.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the government consider extending the Baccalaureate to cover a wide range of areas of learning at 14–16.

2. That history be made compulsory at 14–16.

3. That the GCSE History Pilot be made available to all schools.

4. That the Government examine the suitability of all 14 to 16 qualifications for inclusion in the Baccalaureate.

1. *Purpose and benefits*

1.1 The purpose of the Baccalaureate as stated in the Schools White Paper 2010 is to provide promote “a broad academic core at 16 and a rounded education”. A rounded education should involve more than a broad academic core. The purpose of the Baccalaureate should be to help pupils make the right choices for their future education and training at 16. For some this will be applying to university, but for others may be developing vocational experience and skills. The Baccalaureate must benefit all pupils, not only the minority who go to university.

2. *Choice of subjects*

2.1 A rounded education should include both an understanding of the world through sciences and humanities, and the ability to express oneself through arts and sports. A good Baccalaureate needs to cover all those areas of learning that provide such a rounded education. This could be accomplished by grouping of subject into broad areas that would cover the range of qualifications available at GCSE, covering not only English, maths, sciences and humanities but also arts and leisure.

2.2 We believe strongly that heritage has an important role to play in education as a learning resource. Heritage can support not only learning about the past in history, but also learning useful skills and knowledge of subjects such as engineering, art and design, craft skills, technology etc. The Baccalaureate should allow achievement in rigorous qualifications covering a range of subjects, not only the traditional school subjects. The Wolfe report into vocational qualifications needs to be considered as part of the thinking that goes into the Baccalaureate.

2.3 We would support calls for history to be a compulsory subject at 14 to 16, as the heritage of the past forms part of the physical fabric of everyday life in which pupils will be engage as adults. Without an understanding of history, they will be unable to value the heritage that contributes so much to the national and local economy, and in which they could find employment. The GCSE History Pilot is an exemplary qualification, combining academic rigour with vocational relevance of great benefit to heritage and to pupils.

3. *Implications*

3.1 If the Baccalaureate is not carefully thought through, there is the danger that non-Baccalaureate qualifications will be seen as second-rate. A two tier education system where some qualifications are privileged above others is not in pupils' best interests. On the other hand, a properly structured Baccalaureate could indeed provide for a rounded education and allow pupils to personalise their learning based on a solid academic core but with appropriate vocational learning to the same standard.

3.2 Heritage related tourism provides £20.6 billion towards the UK economy every year, supporting a total of 466,000 jobs. It relies on craft and other skills for its long term maintenance and conservation. These skills are often in short supply. A Baccalaureate that demotivated schools from offering a wide range of courses and directed pupils away from such courses would not be in the nation's best interest.

23 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Theatre for Young Audiences—UK Centre* of ASSITEJ, the International Association of Theatre for Children and Young People)

CHOICE OF SUBJECTS WITHIN THE E-BAC

SUMMARY OF KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

- (i) Whilst welcoming a broadening of the core subjects to “include a language and humanities”, we are concerned that humanities must include the arts.
- (ii) The choice of subjects within the E-Bac must be considered alongside the conclusions of the Music Education and Cultural Education reviews and the impact these reviews will have on the curriculum at all Key Stages.
- (iii) The value of theatre and drama teaching in schools has been overlooked in the last 20 years: the E-Bac presents a golden opportunity to ensure that it is properly embedded within the curriculum across all key stages.
- (iv) The teaching of drama and theatre should be reviewed particularly in teacher training to ensure adequate skill, rigour and ambition.
- (v) Withdrawal of funding for arts and humanities in Higher Education sends a negative signal. The arts and humanities are as crucial to our future prosperity and well-being as science and technology, and our children need to be encouraged to explore and enjoy the arts from an early age. The E-Bac presents such an opportunity—please do not waste it.

1. *A golden opportunity*: The introduction of the “English baccalaureate” indicates a welcome impetus by the Government to broaden the core curriculum subjects at GCSE from a narrow English/Maths/Science base. This review presents a major opportunity to rebalance the curriculum to a broader education where science,

humanities and arts subjects are at last given equal status and resources as key to children's development of the crucial skills and knowledge they need for "life in an interdependent global society and economy that offers unprecedented opportunities but also unprecedented uncertainties and risks" (Runnymede Trust Think Global briefing).

2. *Timing*: The choice of subject for the E-Bac is critical for all our futures and should not be rushed into. It should not be finalized until:

2.1 the Committee has considered the findings of the Henley reviews of Music Education and Cultural Education and made decisions on the changes to the curriculum that they will bring about: the E-Bac, and indeed primary curriculum that prepares the ground for KS3 and KS4, must be considered alongside those decisions, otherwise we run the risk of a piecemeal, free-for-all approach to state education where schools can leave out subjects that are not included in the E-Bac.

2.2 The Committee has consulted widely with headteachers, Higher Education, including teacher training providers, students and employers on the impact of the absence of other arts and humanities subjects.

3. *A clear rationale*: The stated rationale of the proposed E-Bac is to provide an education which gives "a rounded sense of how to understand this world in all its complexity and richness" and the inclusion of a language and a humanities subject is to be welcomed. However, humanities cover a broad spectrum and there is no educational or academic justification to narrowing the choice merely to History and Geography. Religious Studies, and Philosophy are equally "valid" as subjects which develop an understanding of human thought and history. Art, Music, Dance and Theatre, properly taught, develop technical knowledge and a wide range valuable skills in addition to demanding intellectual rigour. "Humanities" within the E-Bac must mean the broadest spectrum, and must include the arts. As the DCMS website affirms:

Research has shown involvement with the arts can increase the overall academic attainment of children.

4. *Where are Drama and theatre?* TYA are deeply concerned about the absence from the E-Bac of drama and theatre as both subjects and creative teaching methodologies. Over the last 20 years we have seen a depressing lack of a clear statutory steer to schools regarding drama and theatre: despite Ken Robinson's *All Our Futures* report of 1999, despite attempts by OFSTED to establish the Creative Curriculum, despite the establishment of Creative Partnerships in many (though fatally not all) schools in England—in spite of all these and other interventions, drama and theatre are still excluded from the national curriculum, and teacher training in drama techniques as one of the most effective teaching tools remains totally inadequate.

5. *An impoverished learning environment*: The absence of theatre and drama in schools risks engendering an atmosphere un conducive to real learning, enquiry and emotional engagement with the profound complexities of a rapidly changing world. The study and practice of theatre increases children's ability to engage at all levels with the curriculum, increasing motivation, curiosity, ability to express, communicate, understand and engage with others and share learning.

6. *Drama as a teaching methodology*: Drama teaching contains a means to learning, as well as being a powerful medium to enable children to achieve greater literacy. It carries powerful methodologies which are rooted in children's perspectives, their emotional intelligence and the negotiation of meaning. The E-Bac is a golden opportunity, long overdue, to reinstate drama teaching across the board as a key component of excellent teaching and learning, and bring it back into the core curriculum to provide all children the rounded education they urgently need.

7. *Theatre skills can increase employability*: Drama and theatre teach children the essential skills that employers are increasingly seeking: confidence, imagination, empathy, creativity and adaptability, the ability to express and examine ideas and put them into practice, social skills, good team working and problem-solving skills. These are skills that everyone will need in the changing and challenging workplace of the 21st century—whatever their academic ability.

8. *Impoverished expectations*: Excluding Theatre (and indeed Art and Music) from the E-Bac humanities list is likely to do immense damage to children's cultural rights, and will weaken the idea that culture, art and the creative arts have any legitimacy or place in their lives. This will have a negative impact on the arts and cultural sector long into the future, as we create future generations who are disconnected, deskilled and disenfranchised from cultural expression.

9. *Impact on the future cultural economy*: The decision to withdraw subsidy from arts and humanities courses in Higher Education further reinforces this dangerous trend to "invalidate" the study of these subjects that is implicit in the exclusion of theatre from the E-Bac: marked down as "unworthy" of government support, arts and humanities risk withering away in universities and vocational training courses, with drastic consequences for the future cultural economy. Culture contributes billions of pounds to the economy each year—it is an asset to be cherished and invested in through education. The E-Bac is a generational opportunity to embed culture and arts more deeply across the whole education system to ensure that the cultural economy has roots that will

help it to flourish. Disinvestment now in cultural education will create an impoverished, divisive and third class UK cultural scene in the future.

23 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Catharine Darnton

I am Headteacher of an average sized state secondary school. The school is highly achieving (2010—5+A*-C 86%, 5+A*-C (inc E, M) 66%, E-Bac 31%). We offer seven different curriculum pathways at Key Stage 4, including a wide range of qualifications, largely GCSEs but also vocational GCSEs, BTECs, Diplomas, DiDA, CoPE etc. We match the choice of pathway carefully to each student's needs and best interests.

PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE E-BAC AND ITS VALUE AS A MEASURE OF SCHOOL AND PUPIL PERFORMANCE

1. I believe that all students have a right to access a broad range of academic GCSEs as part of their school curriculum for Key Stage 4 (ages 14–16). In so far as the English Baccalaureate encompasses this principle, I am content to commit to offering the chance to achieve it to our young people.

2. I am concerned that the E-Bac was introduced retrospectively, measuring school and students' performance on an indicator that did not exist when the school planned its curriculum and students made their choices. If schools are to be able to plan to meet a new E-Bac indicator, a year's planning time is required before students make their option choices. Therefore the E-Bac (even if not changed further) should not be published as an indicator until August 2014. All that the introduction without notice does is to undermine student and parental confidence in the education system and to cause teachers to question the value given to their work.

3. The following is the national data on the E-Bac from recent years:

<i>AGG_LEV</i>	<i>Exam Year</i>	<i>No of Pupils</i>	<i>% E-Bacc Entered</i>	<i>% E-Bacc Attained</i>	<i>% Failure rate</i>
All Mainstream/Special Schools	2004	59,1301	39.75	17.88	21.87
All Mainstream/Special Schools	2005	58,8699	32.72	17.12	15.60
All Mainstream/Special Schools	2006	59,8911	27.45	15.74	11.71
All Mainstream/Special Schools	2007	60,1135	24.46	14.73	9.73
All Mainstream/Special Schools	2008	59,7390	21.92	14.27	7.65
All Mainstream/Special Schools	2009	57,7621	22.20	14.96	7.24
All Mainstream/Special Schools	2010	57,8133	21.74	15.02	6.72

This shows that the proportion of students attaining the E-Bac has varied relatively little over the past seven years. However over the same time the proportion of students studying for the E-Bac has approximately halved. This suggests that, even if schools change their curricula in line with the E-Bac, it is unlikely to increase the proportion of students achieving the qualification significantly.

The 20% of students who were studying for E-Bac qualifications in 2004, but failing to go on to achieve C+ passes, seem likely now to be following a more appropriate, engaging and motivating curriculum for them, which will hopefully keep them engaged in learning beyond the age of 16.

4. As a school, we are committed to developing learning and teaching and improving outcomes for all our young people. We believe that core to this is an appropriate curriculum—one which students can access and enables them to achieve, as well as one which raises their expectations of themselves and supports their progress to further and higher education. We are clear that a programme of academic GCSEs, which is appropriate for many of our young people, is not appropriate for all and that therefore any shift of the curriculum back to the solely academic would risk the gains in achievement and progress we have seen in recent years.

THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE E-BAC

5. We have specific concerns about the subjects included within the English Baccalaureate. In common with many, we believe that Religious Studies should be counted as Humanity. There are other anomalies; for example GCSE Additional (Applied) Science does not count as a second science GCSE. Similarly, GCSE Applied French does not count as a language GCSE. Indeed in order to improve uptake in languages some schools introduced vocational courses, such as NVQs and the ABC national award in practical languages for business and travel—none of these are recognised in the English Baccalaureate. Subjects such as Business Studies, PE, Music, Art and Drama are also at significant risk of being marginalised.

6. A further concern has begun to emerge as our Year 9 students choose their GCSE options for September 2011. Take up of the study of 'triple science' (the three separate sciences: Biology, Chemistry and Physics) has always been exceptionally strong, with almost 50% of the cohort choosing it. (All the remainder have to study Double Science.) However take up has dropped this year to only about 40% of the cohort. This may just be random variation but the E-Bac does not give an incentive to study triple science. Double Science is 'enough'. In addition to the common core which includes English and maths, our students have four option

choices. Two choices are taken up by a foreign language and history/geography. Doing triple science would use one further choice. It is easy to see how a student with a wide variety of interests, including the Arts and sport, might rather follow those with the remaining two choices rather than devote time to further study of science. I believe that students are much better prepared for the study of science at A level if they have studied triple science at GCSE. It would be a great pity if the E-Bac acted as a perverse incentive for students not to take triple science.

THE IMPLICATION OF THE E-BAC FOR SCHOOLS

7. Following the Comprehensive Spending Review, schools are facing both decreasing funding and funding uncertainty. The introduction of the E-Bac risks producing instability in students' option choices which may cause significant shifts in staffing need between subjects. This in turn may lead to greater redundancies, which of course incur significant cost to the school.

23 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Links into Languages North West

These are the concerns and questions raised during a series of meetings hosted by Links into Languages North West, at Greenbank School Sefton, and at the University of Manchester in February and March 2011. In total over 100 people attended these meetings: teachers of languages, history and geography, assistant and deputy heads, curriculum planners, school governors, SIPs and School Improvement officers, as well as representatives of awarding bodies, other universities and European educational organisations based in offices in the UK.

COMMENT 1

(a) *Purpose and benefits of the E-Bacc*

- It promotes and raises the profile of marginalized subjects (languages and humanities) to pupils and parents.
- It may potentially raise literacy levels and requirements.
- It broadens the range of subjects and skills on offer which could give pupils more choice.
- It allows for the potential for cross-curricular teaching.
- It raises equality between schools.
- It could increase the breadth of choice of languages on offer that has been removed and restricted in recent years. This is important as languages are an asset in a global market.
- It is a way to police the curriculum.
- It would force schools to concentrate less on maths.
- It could lead to a higher standard of academic achievement.
- There is doubt over its long-term validity.
- Clarification of the motivations behind its introduction would be helpful.
- It would open up “top university” places to all if used as an entry requirement.
- It pushes traditional and academic subjects.
- It stops a manipulation of league tables (with GCSE equivalents etc).
- It will benefit A&T pupils and push them further but could restrict curriculum choices for the less able.
- The purposes and benefits depend on whether schools will be measured on E-Bacc success and if it will be the sole means of measurement.
- It could have a potential impact on the economy.
- It has been cynically suggested that its purpose is to make uptake look good for the Government due to the retrospective publication of data.
- It summarizes the performance of a particular group of pupils in five subjects but not much else.
- It is not clear what the tangible benefits to pupils and schools would be if its purpose is to force pupils to study a broader and more academic curriculum.

(b) *Its value as a measure of pupil and school performance*

- If taught well it can give a broad academic pathway for interested pupils who enjoy and can achieve at these subjects.
- Achievement in it would mark an advantageous benchmark for the school.
- It would be a sign of a general level of academic ability.
- It would add impetus to the English/maths requirements.

- Schools should be offering a broad and balanced curriculum anyway so it will have limited value as a measure on its own.
- It is a biased and narrow measure of pupil and school performance.
- It is not clear how the achievements of pupils who do not do E-Bacc subjects should be measured. About two-thirds probably fall into this category. It could be demoralizing for them.
- It has value for schools but not for pupil performance.
- Its value is dependent on further and higher education procedures and whether it would be useful to employers.
- Schools with a less academic intake might struggle to succeed.
- It is possibly a more accurate and transparent measurement of achievement and therefore harder to manipulate.
- It does not recognise students with an aptitude for vocational subjects who are also very academic.
- The E-Bacc should not be restricted to being a qualification taken at 16 but extended to 18–19 to enable students to “catch up” where the school curriculum has let them down.
- Students pursuing the E-Bacc route will have the necessary skills to continue their academic education further.
- Qualifications should adapt to support the E-Bacc. For example, History GCSE does not currently have foundation and higher level and languages can be inaccessible.

COMMENT 2

The choice of subjects included in the E-Bacc

- There could be different E-Baccs with different weightings—eg linguistic, scientific, vocational, technical—with five subjects as a core, better reflecting the baccalaureate as it exists in other countries.
- There could be no motivation for UTCs to offer the E-Bacc unless more technical subjects were included.
- The subjects chosen do not necessarily address the needs of children in the 21st century. Subjects such as home management and ICT should be considered.
- The choice is too narrow. Subjects such as RE, art, DT, ICT, dance, music, philosophy should be considered.
- There was general bafflement regarding the lack of inclusion of RE as a humanity especially since there is not actually much difference between RE (26% of pupils doing full KS4) and history (32%) take-up. RE full-course is not necessarily a high take-up subject although more pupils do the short-course. RE helps to support community cohesion across religious divides.
- It seems a very simplistic approach to addressing profound issues related to subject uptake and perceptions.
- It will be problematic for dual linguists who will feel forced to choose a humanities subject over another MFL. It could even lead to schools narrowing the choice of languages offered.
- In some schools, less able pupils will not have access to the E-Bacc, which will affect their routes of progression.
- The choice of subjects could suggest that non E-Bacc subjects are not as valid.
- Other qualifications (eg NVQs) which count towards point scores in GCSEs should count for E-Bacc. The skill level of the majority of pupils still needs to be raised.
- It has been noted that there appears to be quite a personal choice to the selection of subjects, reflecting an attitude that assumes traditional, academic subjects are superior. This is not necessarily a sound baseline and could create an imbalance in the KS4 curriculum.
- The E-Bacc could be seen as an opportunity to slim down the compulsory curriculum and offer the E-Bacc and a broader range of other option subjects.
- The subjects chosen revisit the idea of entitlement: that every child should learn a language and a humanities subject.

COMMENT 3

Implications of the E-Bacc

For pupils:

- The pressure on pupils to choose subjects they do not really want to study and the creation of a two-tier system between those doing the E-Bacc and those not could cause behavioural and social problems.
- Pupils’ individual choices may be restricted by the E-Bacc.

- It would force pupils and even schools themselves down a GCSE only route.
- Not all pupils learn in the same way or have the same skill set or support from home. Their academic potential might not be best expressed by the E-Bacc.
- It is not clear what value the E-Bacc would have for pupils leaving school at sixteen or eighteen and going straight into employment.
- Good careers advice for pupils is crucial. This could be an opportunity to focus on skills needed for employment and review the provision of apprenticeships.
- The current lack of clarity regarding the E-Bacc will likely be confusing to pupils.
- There appears to be no alternative for pupils not acquiring the E-Bacc. A second level or tier should be introduced.

For schools:

- The E-Bacc could cause rivalry between schools.
- Subjects will compete against each other, creating divisions within schools.
- The E-Bacc has staffing implications. Schools are understaffed in some areas and overstaffed in others. Some subjects could be drained of resources as E-Bacc subjects get priority. It could mean getting non-specialist staff especially in history and geography.
- Funding and resources pushed into new initiatives e.g. diplomas would be wasted.
- More skilled languages and humanities teachers will be needed.
- Staffing, funding, timetabling would have to be overhauled. Similar initiatives to the ones given to maths and English would be needed for the other E-Bacc subjects.
- Small schools unable to staff or offer all the subjects would be at a disadvantage.
- Schools must interpret the E-Bacc for the needs of their pupils as it has the potential to go against the ECM agenda.
- Schools are being asked to make changes to their curriculum provision without being provided with the resources to facilitate this.
- Considering the focus of the E-Bacc, it would be useful to know what provision the Government intends to make for languages in primary schools so that the E-Bacc targets can be met later on.

For employers:

- The E-Bacc does not take into account that parity of opportunity is needed between academic and vocational subjects. Not everyone is designed for university. Workers are needed with vocational skills.
- Given that Connexions is disappearing, it is not clear how the possible significance of E-Bacc will be explained to employers who may be confused about what it stands for.
- Universities and employers should be consulted about the E-Bacc.
- It is not obvious what value the E-Bacc will have for employers.

COMMENT 4

International comparators for the E-Bacc

- The qualification needs renaming as it is neither strictly English nor a baccalaureate.
- Comparisons with systems in other countries are not valid. In all other countries the Bacc is sat at 18, has a much wider subject pool and is a university entry requirement.
- It is a greatly simplified version of what is found in other countries.
- E-Bacc is not culturally embedded in England as baccalaureates are in other countries.
- The German system values vocational courses equally whereas the E-Bacc is strictly academic.
- The E-Bacc does not really change anything already in existence. More dramatic changes should be made to a broad school certificate.
- In most European countries languages are already compulsory.
- Overseas Baccs have different pathways for different student preferences e.g. scientific or literary.
- The perception of a baccalaureate as an 18+ qualification internationally could make the E-Bacc be seen as a poor substitute.
- The E-Bacc has no natural equivalents in Europe, the USA, Australia, New Zealand or Canada etc. It is not a qualification, just a summary of qualifications and has not been authenticated.

Written evidence submitted by Mrs J Rowell

I would like to briefly outline my thoughts regarding the proposed E-Bac. I am a Head of Languages (seven years) of a large successful comprehensive school and language college in the North East.

I am delighted that languages will form an integral part of the E-Bac as this will help secure numbers of linguists in the future. I also feel that it will help to develop global citizens of the future and encourage parents to recognise the importance of language learning.

I am concerned however that there is not a level playing field amongst the core E-Bac subjects. Standards in Maths, English and Science have improved and more and more students have successfully gained GCSE qualification in these subjects. This however at times has been due to students re-sitting these exams several times and also due to extra curricular time given to such subjects. My concern is how this can continue with more core subjects.

I am also concerned about the impact E-Bac will have on students in terms of choices. Limiting humanities to History or Geography I believe is too restricting and is unfair especially to the most able students and those in Faith schools. Whilst there will be little choice for the most able students I am concerned at the provision for less able students. Where will this leave students who cannot achieve an E-Bac or Gold standard? How will this impact on their future opportunities?

Finally, I believe the current system of assessment through controlled assessment is placing too much pressure on our students and is turning them off learning and education. There needs to be reform of how we assess our students.

23 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Patricia M Slonecki, Head Teacher, St Catherine's Catholic School for Girls

1. I have already written to Mr Gove expressing my serious concerns about the E-Bac as a valid measure of pupil or school performance. In my view it is measuring only one person's perception of what an academic profile consists of and completely ignores the creative and technological abilities of individuals.

2. Has anyone asked employers about the skills and qualities they wish to secure in their future employees or do they want people who know lots of facts? As interesting and valid as these subjects are, they are limited in my view in their direct link to future employment opportunities. There is a limit to the number of academics we need.

3. My main worry concerns the fact that Mr Gove continues not to acknowledge and accept RE as a valid Humanity Subject. It is continually reiterated that RE is a compulsory subject anyway. It is not to GCSE level and as the Headteacher of a Catholic School *all* our students are required by the Diocese, quite rightly, to take RE at GCSE which they do successfully.

4. I have no problem about the MFL requirement but if we were to insist that our students do study History and/or Geography as well as the RE, then they would have no opportunity to develop and use their creative, technological or vocational skills.

5. In our curriculum model this year we have differentiated our offer to the students based upon their potential for success as indicated from prior attainment data. We have also completely informed Parents/Carers and Students about the E-Bac. Whilst making an MFL subject compulsory for some subjects we have left optional the Humanity as in our view, as already stated, they do the RE.

6. As a consequence of this model there has been a shift for History and Geography but not huge as these have always been popular and successful. We have also had to increase the number of groups in French and Spanish; this does have certain staffing issues but not insurmountable. The biggest worry is that we have now had to remove from the curriculum five subjects: GCSE Product Design, GCSE Graphic Products, GCSE Leisure and Tourism, BTEC Performing Arts and BTEC Dance.

7. I am sure you will be able to work out the reasons why to run groups in these subjects became unviable—this is the real evidence of the impact of the E-Bac. It will only lead to schools offering limited choices to their students which will lead inevitably to redundancies.

8. Having spent a number of years creating a curriculum offer that has proved very successful in meeting the needs of our students, I am now disappointed now the curriculum is looking fairly bland and uninspiring.

9. If the Minister would reconsider his opinion around the RE, then this would make a dramatic difference.

10. We are also a very culturally diverse school and many of our students are non native English speaking. For these students the E Bac is advantageous as they can take their native language as their MFL eg Polish, Russian and then have the full curriculum choices offer available to them. The E Bac actually disadvantages native English speaking students.

11. My last point is has anyone asked the students what motivates and inspires them? They want to do their best and achieve. The E-Bac will leave many feeling as though they are failures and it will not be their fault—if they had had the opportunity to choose other subjects, they may well have achieved at a higher level and be more switched onto learning.

23 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Matt Buxton

1. The proposed EBacc method of rewarding student achievement and the league tables reporting on school statistics surrounding it serve to undermine the aspirations of schools, students and parents across the country. It also appears as the antithesis of a number of government announcements regarding the concept of “choice” and the importance of “enterprise” as the way to grow out of recession.

2. As a history graduate and teacher (nine years in the profession at an inner-city academy), my early years have been spent watching the marginalisation of the subject under the previous government and I could, and have, dispense a considerable tome surrounding its’ importance as a subject in schools. However, I now have middle-leadership responsibilities and view things from a whole-school and personalised learning perspective these days.

3. As such, the proposed EBacc and the associated curriculum review fill me with a sense of foreboding for a number of reasons.

ACCOUNTABILITY

4. The basic premise is that, despite the official line that Headteachers will remain responsible for the curriculum their school offers, schools will in effect force students into particular subject choices at 14 in order to boost their league table performance. It is they who are accountable for their school’s performance to parents, governors and government. If schools are therefore labelled as “failing” to get a certain percentage of students to achieve an EBacc certificate, then the Headteacher will act, due largely to external pressure rather than out of any sense of what is right for the school and its’ students.

5. Many schools will face the prospect of its’ community forming detrimental opinions about it in view of any measure put in place which receives media attention. Governors are also likely to challenge Heads on poor EBacc performance.

6. This therefore represents an additional burden when key indicators of a school’s performance already exist in the shape of Ofsted inspection ratings and GCSE results including English and Maths. I understand also the claim that there have been no targets or “floor-levels” put in place, but wonder how long this will hold, especially towards the end of this parliament.

7. Is it the case that this measure has been retrospectively reported in league tables this year so that a rise can be evidenced next year, and the year after? If so it seems sensible to assume that the Government will not want to preside over a fall in EBacc results as a general election approaches, and so the temptation will be too great to resist sustaining the improvements by expecting certain levels of EBacc attainment.

8. Is it therefore morally justifiable to place Heads, teachers and students under a politically motivated pressure such as this?

“CHOICE”

9. The Government, both in opposition and since taking office May 2010, have made many pronouncements on the concept of “choice”. Two examples which immediately spring to mind are those of choice of hospital and treatment for patients, and parents having the choice of pre-school or nursery under the voucher system. The assertion being that those involved are best-placed to determine where and how individuals would like these services to be provided to them.

10. I therefore ask how this ideological preference for choice in some areas equates to the serious curtailing of it for youngsters at the age of 14?

11. Choice will become a rare commodity for students under the proposal as they find themselves forced into subjects at 14 which they don’t wish to be. This will have a profound effect upon engagement in the classroom, and therefore discipline as teachers struggle to work with increasing numbers of students who simply don’t want to be in that lesson. Without wishing to sound too much of a “doom-monger” of this, how will this help the recently re-iterated desire to drastically reduce the number of NEETs currently witnessed.

PERSONALISATION

12. Far from being a meaningless “buzz-word” which has entered into the educational vocabulary in recent years, this phrase concerns the key concept of ensuring that what is being learnt, and how it is being learnt, is appropriate to the learner. What is the point of forcing someone to study certain subjects when they may be

completely unrelated to the job or field to which they aspire? Geography may be completely relevant to someone whose dream is to become an architect, but wouldn't graphic design, art or photography then be more relevant to them than French? What about the student with a lifelong passion for music who wishes to pursue a career in that field?

13. Anyone with any involvement with Year 9 students at this time of year will tell that it's vital to get students onto the right courses for them; courses which will inspire, motivate and make best use of their interests and talents. Not courses which will propel a school up an artificial performance index.

THE SUBJECTS

14. Much has been written of the inclusion of subjects such as Ancient Greek and Biblical Hebrew and the exclusion of ICT, art, business studies and so on. I do not want to get into the bedevilling of some subjects over others which has been the way of much of the comment I have seen. There are some key points however which do need to be made.

15. I understand why modern foreign languages would be included, yet I cannot agree with the argument put forward for them regarding ensuring our increased economic competitiveness as a country resting on them. Is it seriously being suggested that a GCSE pass in German will enable someone to conduct a business meeting in that language? For this it would require knowledge of that language to degree level. Therefore the argument is void. Wouldn't it be far better to conduct the meeting with aid of interpreters who are educated to that level, with a deep knowledge of business and economics?

16. Additionally, the Prime Minister recently announced at the Conservative Party spring forum that Britain would need to utilise enterprise in order to grow our way out of recession; where is the provision for learning these skills within the EBacc?

17. Whilst on the economic theme, it is widely agreed amongst those that know that having previously been outcompeted in the manufacturing sector, the same is currently happening to the UK in the service sector. Therefore the future of the UK economy, many experts agree, is in the creative industries. Why then stifle the creativity of a generation by marginalising art and design?

KNOWLEDGE VS SKILLS

18. The EBacc proposal and curriculum review in particular are becoming a byword for the knowledge *versus* skills debate, reignited by the recent government pronouncements. Both are vital in any field, but the staunch government preference for knowledge *over* skills is alarming.

19. The ability to calculate whether a budget is being stuck-to, is a skill; regardless of whether it is a family weekly shopping budget, that of a small business or a multinational corporation. It is a skill none the less. It is also a skill which utilises, or requires, the aid of ICT skills to enhance its effectiveness. To keep my company afloat doesn't need an understanding of the history of the spreadsheet. It requires the ability to use, read and interpret one. And the same applies to any field of knowledge.

20. Please let's have a balanced debate which recognises that whilst knowledge is vastly important, it is useless without a conceptual framework to hang-off. Cognitive processes such as causation, significance, comparison, consequence, categorisation and seeing analogies are crucial to the deep understanding of any field of knowledge and must be developed at all levels of education, in all subjects.

HISTORY

21. If Knowledge vs Skills is the theatre of war, History appears to be the battlefield. The Government position is that all students should receive, and receive is the crucial term here, "our island story". I find it odd at best that there is nothing mentioned about the skills of finding something out, analysing it and then accepting or rejecting it. And contrary to Nick Gibbs' recent claim, it is the "telling" of a story and a narrative approach to history teaching which leads to teaching which becomes "far too rigid, far too prescribed and far too formulaic".

22. What is important is that students know how to find the information they require, how to process the information cognitively to form an opinion, and then know how to structure and present a persuasive argument with supporting evidence. This is surely the same in any subject, discipline and field of knowledge.

THE PATHWAY APPROACH

23. I strongly favour an approach which provides the key, core cognitive processes mentioned above for all students, around which is built a body of subject-specific knowledge which, interests, engages and motivates each individual learner in an area which they both enjoy, and wish to pursue into further and higher education and employment.

24. Each Pathway would include core subjects, an Independent Enquiry project of the students choice within which the key conceptual skills of cause, consequence, change and continuity are developed, and then a suite of subjects related to the area of interest for each student.

25. For example:

Visual Arts Bacc—English, Maths, Independent Enquiry project (length dependent upon level of study), then three from Art, Graphic Design, Photography, Art History etc.

Performing Arts Bacc—English, Maths, Independent Enquiry project (length dependent upon level of study), then three from Music, Dance, Drama, Fashion etc.

Humanities Bacc—English, Maths, Independent Enquiry project (length dependent upon level of study), then three from History, Ancient History, Art History, Geography, Geology, Philosophy, RE etc.

Enterprise Bacc—English, Maths, Independent Enquiry project (length dependent upon level of study), Enterprise Skills, then two from Business Studies, Economics, Accounting etc.

Social Science Bacc—English, Maths, Independent Enquiry project (length dependent upon level of study), then three from Law, Psychology, Sociology, Citizenship, Politics etc.

26. This Pathway approach would provide the “broad and balanced” curriculum offer which has been mentioned in the recent pronouncements. The Independent Enquiry project would consist of a topic and issue chosen in negotiation with the teacher to necessitate academic rigour through an essay length of up to 10,000 words in combination with the production of multimedia, online and other forms of presentation, and would incorporate the development of thinking skills and independent learning as a precursor to further and higher education. The remaining choices would then constitute a relevant pathway for students to progress towards their individual interests and vocations.

27. The education pronouncements since May have largely concerned the concepts of decentralisation and flexibility within the curriculum offer provided within our schools; I firmly believe that the EBacc proposal in fact will do the opposite and I urge a rethink. We have, perhaps, a once in a generation opportunity here to engage our learners and prepare for their world, let’s not waste it through prescribing a narrow set of subjects with the effect of churning out a generation of clones.

23 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Chislehurst and Sidcup Grammar School

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

If E-Bac is to be adopted, it is vitally important that the correct choice of core subjects is chosen. Chislehurst and Sidcup Grammar school strongly feel that RS should be one of the available options in line with History and Geography.

2. INTRODUCTION

Chislehurst and Sidcup Grammar have in the past seen the benefits of the full IB course structure. It is felt that the E-Bac does not give such a rich or rewarding experience to the students.

3. THE PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE E-BAC AND ITS VALUE AS A MEASURE OF PUPIL AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

We feel that forcing all students to take all E-Bac subjects would not always cater for the needs of the individual. Students not wishing to take one of the subjects not only lose the chance of getting the E-Bac certificate but also automatically lower the school’s performance rating. School policy would probably need to be amended to not allow this.

4. THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE E-BAC

Currently the required subjects for the E-Bac are: English, Mathematics, Science, MFL, History/Geography. We feel that this is the correct range of subjects, but strongly feel that RS should also be included as an option alongside History and Geography.

In a recent conference for A-level students delivered by Dr Peter Vardy of Heythrop College, he called the students to support their subject, to write to their MPs and to raise awareness of the impending threat of the English Baccalaureate to the subject of RS. Chislehurst and Sidcup Grammar School would like to echo these sentiments.

At Chislehurst and Sidcup Grammar, all students currently take the full course RS, and more specifically, the Philosophy and Applied Ethics course. Aside from contributing to the school’s ethos by encouraging a culture of responsibility, tolerance and developing the student’s thinking skills, the GCSE course forms the foundation for a very popular A-level course.

The concern is that by omitting RS from the English Baccalaureate, schools will be forced to reconsider promoting RS as a choice at GCSE or indeed scrap it altogether. As a consequence, fewer students will be

attracted to the academically rigorous and challenging course of A-level Philosophy and Ethics and overall, the Humanities faculty will lose its diversity and richness.

From law to medicine, Philosophy and Ethics has a profound role to play in piquing student's interests in embarking on such distinguished careers and lends the skills in critical analysis, argument and evaluation that are valued in many more fields.

It is the view of the school that RS ought to be included in the English Baccalaureate for the reasons outlined above.

26% of the GCSE students do not currently study History or Geography but 100% of the students sit the RS GCSE examination.

5. THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE E-BAC FOR PUPILS, SCHOOLS AND EMPLOYERS

Pupils will be encouraged to study a stem of subjects that they can then use to further develop at A level or for studying the International Baccalaureate. It will also ensure that students have and good general knowledge that they can transfer into the job market.

6. INTERNATIONAL COMPARATORS FOR THE E-BAC

The International Baccalaureate Middle years program is the first step towards the International Baccalaureate. It is based around detailed academic study of a wide range of subjects, including languages, the arts, science, maths, history and geography.

It is designed to encourage pupils to: learn how to learn, ask challenging questions, develop a strong sense of your own identity and culture, develop the ability to communicate with and understand people from other countries and cultures.

23 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Dr Christopher Ray, High Master, The Manchester Grammar School

I welcome the general character of the E-Bac. However, there are a number of problems which, if uncorrected, will tend to undermine the standing of the proposed qualification:

1. The E-Bac shares with the previous benchmark of 5 grade A*–C GCSEs (including Mathematics and English) a serious defect, namely that the qualification may produce an undesirable focus upon the “middle common denominator”, with a C grade as the ambition of too many schools. Promoting aspiration is a vital part of education and the proposals go at best half-way in this regard.
2. The present failure to include Edexcel's IGCSEs within the qualifications framework is lamentable. The current performance tables attract too much derision for such omissions and bring them into disrepute amongst very many parents as well as educationalists.
3. The lack of a place for English Literature within the qualification is unhelpful; although GCSE English is an essential qualification for young students, a failure to engage with key literary texts seriously undermines the capacity of a student to engage fully with the language. Language and literature are two sides of the same coin.
4. The narrow definition of what might count as a humanity is perplexing. GCSEs in Classical Civilisation, Religious Studies and (indeed) English Literature are all excellent programmes of study which enrich and enhance the educational experience of students.
5. The allegiance to a broad scientific education is admirable but should not be inflexible. A student who studies IGCSEs in Physics and Chemistry or in Biology and Chemistry will have a very secure scientific understanding, arguably superior to that achieved by a student who has covered all three sciences through GCSEs in Science and Additional Science. Yet such a student would not achieve the E-Bac as proposed.
6. Indeed, many students at Manchester Grammar School take only one science after the age of 14. They do so in order to take additional modern foreign or classical languages. To require them to take more than one science will have the undesirable effect of placing restrictions upon their other choices.
7. The lack of any place for Music and Art is understandable, perhaps, but sad given the extent to which these subjects can and do enrich the educational experience of a student.

Each of these concerns includes an implicit remedy. But it is the first which might be of greatest concern to the Select Committee.

If the E-Bac were to provide a range of levels of success, there may be a far better response from schools and pupils, eg grading success in terms of pass (at least C grades in all relevant subjects), merit (at least B grades) and distinction (at least A grades). One might even consider an honours grade (A* grades). There are

many variations possible. The point is simple: use the E-Bac to promote rather than depress aspiration. It provides an ideal opportunity for this.

23 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust (SSAT) National Headteacher Steering Group

The Specialist Schools and Academies Trust is a not-for-profit membership organisation dedicated to raising levels of achievement in education.

The SSAT National Headteacher Steering Group (NHSG) is a representative body of 32 leading headteachers, each of whom chairs a subsidiary headteacher steering group, together representing the nearly 4,000 English schools in SSAT's networks.

The following submission represents key points of consensus among school leaders on the English Baccalaureate as currently designed and sets out a range of views in some areas.

Question 1—On the purpose and benefits of the EBacc and its value as a measure of pupil and school performance

1. The NHSG supports the ambition of promoting study, by all pupils, of a broad and balanced range of subjects, such that provides preparation for a rapidly-changing and globalising workplace.

2. Furthermore, there is a clear case for measuring levels of participation and achievement in these subjects, making this information available to all interested parties, and enabling national and international benchmarking.

3. There are already a range of published measures relating to performance in some core academic subjects including:

- 5 A*–C including English and Maths.
- 2 Science GCSEs.
- Languages GCSE.

4. An alternative to the EBacc, building on what is currently available, would be to introduce a discrete data measure for humanities subjects (or any other priority area). An interested party would then have access to the same raw information, but without the potentially distorting effects of the EBacc (or any other particular performance measure).

5. As with any data measure, the EBacc, as currently conceived, will help to increase the information provided to pupils and parents when making school choices. It also offers more clarity about provision of “facilitating subjects” for university study as set out by the Russell Group of leading UK universities.

6. Initially the EBacc league tables will measure schools and pupils in a retrospective manner. As such, they will at first mainly provide a census of participation and performance. Policy implications will only be discerned at a later stage when schools have had the opportunity to adapt their provision where they judge necessary and once pupils have had the opportunity to make their subject choices for future years.

7. A further concern is that, like the majority of school accountability measures, the EBacc is based on a threshold and will incentivise schools to focus on pupils on the C/D borderline. It will therefore be important that schools are also held accountable for the progress and achievement of all pupils, a point that we note was made in the recently-published Wolf Report.

Question 2—On the choice of subjects included in the EBacc

8. *Sciences*—School leaders hold a range of views on the set of science qualifications that should be incorporated into the EBacc measure. On the one hand, it is argued that there is a case for including a wider range of science-based qualifications, where they can be shown to demonstrate scientific rigour and to help to develop understanding of scientific methods and abilities valued by employers. This might include some or all of applied science, technology and ICT GCSEs and Btec qualifications. Conversely, it is argued by some school leaders that the EBacc should remain focused on more academic study, with further baccalaureates or performance measures created (such as, for example, the proposed technical baccalaureate).

9. *Languages*—The drivers for learning a modern foreign language for pupils in England are often different from those of their peers abroad, who access the English language through the media and in the technical world around them. For this reason, language teaching in England must in some cases use an applied learning pedagogy. There are applied alternatives to GCSE which have similar rigour, and demonstrate ability to communicate to a high level in the language (but with improved focus on skills for employability), and which should therefore be included in the EBacc measure.

10. *Humanities*—There is a near consensus among school leaders that the humanities component of the EBacc should be extended to include religious education, which requires knowledge and understanding comparable to History. The counter argument that RE is already a compulsory subject takes no account of the fact that often it is not studied as a full GCSE. If RE is not included but remains a compulsory part of the curriculum, it may further reduce curriculum flexibility to schools offering an EBacc combination of subjects.

11. *Expressive arts*—There is wide support among school leaders for the extension of the EBacc to include arts subjects. This is on the basis that music, art and drama are demanding academic subjects. Given the economic importance of the creative industries, and noting the findings of the Henley Review (which called for the inclusion of music in the EBacc), the Group urges inclusion of a creative subject in the measure.

12. There is an overarching concern that the EBacc could have a detrimental impact on subjects that are not included in the measure—either due to real or perceived pressure on pupils to prioritise some subjects over others or for timetabling reasons. Recognising the ambition of the EBacc to promote a broad and balanced education, there may be a case for extending the measure to include a nominated additional subject, which could allow for a degree of flexibility and personalisation, with pupils retrospectively choosing a subject from amongst those passed at GCSE standard (for example, an expressive art, a technical subject, or a further language). This would help to recognise the achievements and value of the subject choices made by a wider range of pupils in areas where they excel, generating a sense of pride in their area of excellence or “niche” in a school, and produce a more rounded and personalised baccalaureate qualification.

Question 3—*On the implications of the EBacc for pupils, schools and employers*

13. Feedback from school leaders suggests that most schools will offer option subjects which facilitate EBacc combinations but will not make it mandatory.

14. There is particular concern that—without the creation of other measures such as a technical baccalaureate for example—there will be a significant group of pupils who are defined primarily or significantly by their not having attained the EBacc. This may include pupils with high levels of academic ability in niche subject areas, or those with strong and varied abilities in technical or artistic subjects.

15. If the EBacc is to become a or the definitive measure of academic success then this needs to be clearly stated as there would be a danger that it could damage progression opportunities for pupils who may otherwise be well qualified. This could pose a particular problem in UTCs and Studio Schools, for example, which may choose to focus overwhelmingly on applied subjects at the expense of more traditional subjects.

16. For this reason the NHSG would support the development of a Technical Baccalaureate—reflecting the core elements of the EBacc, but with subjects set in applied contexts, and incorporating specific technical options—such as currently is being discussed.

17. The content of the Tech Bacc, its relation to the EBacc (whether as an alternative or an additional qualification), and the final form of the EBacc or any proposed successor, should be considered alongside the Government’s full response to the Wolf Review of Vocational Education.

18. If parents and students believe that attaining the EBacc is vital for university progression it is possible that there will be pressure on subject choices, sometimes leading to pupils not taking those options in which they could excel. It is, however, likely that universities and employers will remain primarily interested in the individual qualifications of individual young people and their relevance to their course, sector or workplace.

Question 4—*On international comparators for the EBacc*

19. There is considerable support among school leaders for wider use of a baccalaureate *qualification* on the model of the International Baccalaureate (IB). The NHSG urges that the potential for moving the EBacc in this direction and modelling it much more closely on the IB be considered carefully within the National Curriculum Review. The NHSG believes that this will both better meet the stated aims of the EBacc and offer significant additional educational benefits.

23 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by the Art and Design Education Team in the School of Education, Faculty of Education, Law and Social Sciences, Birmingham City University

The Art and Design Education Team in the School of Education, Faculty of Education, Law and Social Sciences, Birmingham City University, is a team of experienced Art and Design educators and researchers. As the inheritors of over 100 years of experience in Art and Design education the team amongst other teaching commitments oversees the delivery of the Secondary Art and Design PGCE programme at Birmingham City University and is engaged in a range of current research initiatives. The PGCE programme at Birmingham City University is graded as “Outstanding” by OfSTED and is a TDA Category A provider. The team believes that its knowledge and understanding in the field of secondary education is such as to make its views on the proposed English Baccalaureate of interest to the Parliamentary Education Select Committee.

THE PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE ENGLISH BACCALAUREATE AND ITS VALUE AS A MEASURE OF SCHOOL AND PUPIL PERFORMANCE

1. The stated purpose of the proposed English Baccalaureate is to "... give special recognition in the performance tables to schools which are helping their pupils to attain this breadth of study". We believe that the term "breadth of study" is erroneous, because the English Baccalaureate does not represent a breadth of study in any meaningful sense within the context of 21st Century education. In fact, within the context of the range of studies traditionally on offer in English schools to pupils aged 14–16, it represents a diminution of choice. If implemented it will restrict the range of subjects available to pupils at Key Stage 4. This is because, despite the rhetoric of "freedom" around the English Baccalaureate, it is in fact a compulsory measure due to its linkage to school league tables. If the English Baccalaureate is imposed on schools it will restrict choice for 14–16 year olds. This will not meet the needs of all learners, and will restrict the cultural experience that schools currently offer to all pupils.

2. The result of this will be a narrowing of the selection of subjects available to those who have the ability to contribute to the UK economy by means of the creative and cultural industries. This sector is currently growing at a rate twice that of the UK economy, at current rates contributing £60 billion to the economy. In order to maintain this growth a consistent flow of arts graduates are vital to economic development. An example of this need is highlighted in an independent report (02/2011) Livingston, I. and Hope, A., working with NESTA in collaboration with Skillset and with support from e-skills UK. This report details the needs of the UK video games and special effects (VFX) industries as mapped against the skills being taught to meet these needs. The report calls for changes to the education system to transform the UK into the best source of talent in the world for high-tech creative industries such as these. A key recommendation of this report is the fusion of technology and creative skills, which is in direct opposition to the English Baccalaureate proposals. This combination would be stifled by the adoption of the proposed English Baccalaureate which would not allow for important subject combinations such as Art and Design, Design Technology, Physics and Mathematics.

3. The English Baccalaureate is not a valuable measure of school performance because it will only measure a narrow range of the achievement pathways currently available to 14 year olds. The English Baccalaureate will at best simply not measure pupils' achievements in everything that they know, understand or can do in schools today. At worse it will restrict their access to these things by forcing schools to dominate option choices with the English Baccalaureate subjects. The English Baccalaureate is an unnecessary measure, but if it were to be implemented it must include subjects in the full range of arts, technologies and humanities in addition to English, mathematics and the sciences.

THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS

4. The English Baccalaureate as it is proposed will not meet the needs of all learners because it will extend the base of text-based subjects at the core of post 14 education. This is a backward step in terms of what is known about how pupils learn, and the needs of a 21st Century workforce. The transferable skills that are developed through study in the full range of subjects currently available through GCSE's, BTEC's and other Key Stage 4 courses, which are those most at risk from the proposed English Baccalaureate, are those which are required by a flexible, creative workforce. The artificial dominance of the proposed English Baccalaureate subjects over the full range of ways of learning that will occur because of the Baccalaureate's linkage to the school league tables, will restrict access to progression for large numbers of pupils who do not need a predominance of text-based subjects in order to succeed.

5. It will restrict the breadth of the cultural offer currently made to pupils because it will restrict access to the full range of arts subjects. These are subjects that are taught by experts who have the ability to draw on a wide range of cultural references in their teaching. These cultural references are not reproducible in any other area of the curriculum, including those subjects that are proposed to make up the English Baccalaureate. Subjects such as Art and Design, Design Technology, Drama and Music cannot be classified as falling outside of a "fully rounded academic education", as is implied in the English Baccalaureate proposals, because of the wealth of cultural references available to pupils through them. The range and depth of sophisticated cultural understandings that pupils gain through these subjects, particularly in the crucial years 14–16, are a lifelong investment in their future role as citizens, and are not available through any other subjects. If the English Baccalaureate as it is proposed is imposed on schools, lasting damage will occur to the cultural education of thousands of pupils who will in the future be citizens in an increasingly complex and demanding society. In a complex and culturally diverse society it is essential that cultural understanding and global perspectives are fostered through education. The arts subjects are uniquely placed to make crucial inputs to this understanding.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE ENGLISH BACCALAUREATE FOR EMPLOYERS, SCHOOLS AND PUPILS

6. If the imposition of the English Baccalaureate leads to restricted access to the proven indicators of vocational aptitude, such as the BTEC qualifications, it will restrict progression routes for vocational learners, who are those most likely to enter the workforce directly from school. The English Baccalaureate will not present employers with the definitive descriptors of aptitude that they require. In its principal function as a measure of school performance it will be of little help to employers.

7. Schools will be forced to make a principal offer to 14 year olds that is dominated by a narrow range of subjects that do not represent the full range of learning styles that schools and teachers know well will be present in any group of learners. The potential for increased levels of disaffection and growth in NEET numbers is high.

8. Adoption of the English Baccalaureate by Secondary Heads as a means to support their positioning within the League Tables cuts against the recommendations of The Wolf Report, in particular recommendation 12—that there should continue to be no restrictions placed on a young person’s programme in terms of which level or type of qualification they can pursue. If it is appropriate for a student or apprentice to move sideways (or indeed “downwards”) in order to change subject or sector, that should be an available choice.

INTERNATIONAL COMPARITORS FOR THE ENGLISH BACCALAUREATE

9. The English Baccalaureate as it is proposed is contrary to the spirit of “Baccalaureate”. The term itself refers to study in a wide range of subjects, as can be seen in the International Baccalaureate, which is designed to encourage and register achievement in a wide range of ways of learning up to the age of 19.

23 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by the National Secular Society

1. The National Secular Society is Britain’s only organisation working exclusively towards a secular society. The Society promotes the separation of religion and state, and seeks a society where law and the administration of justice are based on equality, respect for Human Rights and objective evidence without regard to religious doctrine or belief.

2. We welcome the opportunity to comment on the proposed English Baccalaureate (EBac). The National Secular Society remains neutral on the desirability of an English Baccalaureate qualification; we intend to limit our response to our area of expertise and comment only on the the choice of subjects included in the EBac, in particular the decision to omit Religious Education (RE).

3. The NSS welcomes the decision not to include RE as one of the core EBac subjects. A stated aim of the EBac is to recognise the success of those students who attain GCSEs or iGCSEs at grade A*–C across a core of academic subjects.

4. We maintain that the current arrangements for the provision of RE precludes it from being considered as a core academic subject.

5. The Secretary of State for Education, Michael Gove, has stated that the subjects included in the EBac should be considered as “essential academic knowledge that students should be able to master”. Religion is clearly an important political and ideological phenomenon and the NSS can appreciate the potential value of a serious academic subject that teaches a variety of worldviews. However, we see no evidence to suggest that RE as presently arranged meets this description. The fact that many schools are still permitted to teach confessional RE seriously undermines any argument that RE should be considered a rigorous academic subject. Indeed, the Russell Group of universities concurs that RE is not one of the subjects that they expect students to have if they are to go on to leading universities.

6. Proponents of the inclusion of RE point to the popularity of this subject. It is true that RE has gained in popularity, with the number of students studying it to GCSE level climbing from 113,000 to 460,000 over the last 15 years. However, there is evidence to suggest that this rise in popularity is largely down to the fact that many schools and students alike regarded RE as being a “soft” subject in which obtaining a good grade is relatively easy. This has been seen as mutually beneficial for both pupils and schools keen to climb league tables. Another reason for this “popularity” is the fact that many faith schools remove the element of choice and require pupils to study RE at GCSE level.

7. The NSS has long opposed current arrangements for RE provision that make it a compulsory subject, outside of the National Curriculum, with a curriculum determined by Agreed Syllabus Conferences (ASC) and monitored by Standing Advisory Councils for Religious Education (SACREs). We also oppose the provisions that permit some faith schools to teach RE in accordance with the tenets of the faith of the school.

8. We maintain that any syllabus for a subject that covers religion and belief should be taken out of the hands of the religious establishment. Religious groups and representatives should have no privileged input and any syllabus should be nationally determined by independent educationalists without a confessional religious agenda.

9. SACREs do not require any non-religious representatives. Where non-religious representatives are members of the SACRE, they are the only representatives denied the power to vote. Such a system suggests there is a covert objective of RE—to promote the belief systems of the individual members of the SACREs. The correct objective of RE should instead be to provide pupils with a balanced and objective academic knowledge of religious beliefs and non-religious worldviews. Until this is the situation we see no grounds that merit its inclusion in the EBac.

10. In voluntary aided schools and academies with a religious character, the RE syllabus is permitted to be confessional. This means that such schools are free to teach their own denominational syllabus in accordance with the tenets of the faith of the school, which need not even mention the existence of any other denomination or belief. This permission to proselytize clearly demonstrates that RE should not be regarded as an objective academic subject and in itself provides a compelling reason to omit it from the EBac.

11. The current arrangement for RE has resulted in “patchy” provision. A 2010 Ofsted Report entitled *Transforming Religious Education*,¹⁷² published on June 6th 2010, criticized the quality of RE provision at both primary and secondary levels. RE was rated as “inadequate” in one in five secondary schools in England. Ofsted also suggested many teachers were unsure of what they were trying to achieve in the subject. The Report recommended a “review of the current statutory arrangements for the local determination of the RE curriculum, to ensure that these provide the best means of promoting the high quality and consistency of RE in schools”.

12. In 2005 a report by the QCA¹⁷³ found that—in terms of breadth and balance—only a third of schools had a “good” RE curriculum.

13. The 2007 Ofsted report *Making sense of Religion*¹⁷⁴ recommended that the RE syllabus should explore the “social reality of religion”. Unfortunately the latest non-statutory guidance offers no such advice. The Ofsted report recommended that “We should dispense with the notion that we should encourage pupils to think uncritically of religion as a “good thing”. Religion is complex and its impact is ambiguous. Pupils are aware of this ambiguity and must be given the opportunity to explore the issues openly”.

14. Another stated aim of the EBac is to provide an incentive for schools to drive the take-up of individual subjects that will provide students with a properly rounded academic education. We see no compelling reason to incentivise the take-up of RE when every maintained school in England is already obliged to teach it and many faith schools already make it a compulsory GCSE subject for all pupils.

15. Many advocates of RE have claimed that its inclusion in the EBac is essential for community cohesion. As RE is already a compulsory subject, we hope the committee will not find favour with this false argument.

16. Even if RE were not compulsory, the fact that many faith schools are permitted to teach confessional RE casts serious doubt over the claim that RE is the ideal vehicle for good community cohesion. Even in community and voluntary aided schools, we question the appropriateness of using RE as a tool for achieving community cohesion. Doing so often leads to a biased presentation of the positive aspects of religion that ignores or glosses over the much more visible negative ones—mainly about armed conflict and terrorism. The bias also evades religious and moral questions such as attitudes to homosexuality, women’s rights and start and end of life matters, where religious positions are often at variance with Human Rights.

17. While the non-statutory framework on RE also provides for “secular philosophies” and “secular world views” to be included within the syllabus, this is often ignored by ASCs and SACRES.

18. We maintain that cohesion is best served by children and young people recognising shared values and what they hold in common. Such work could be successfully covered by other educational provision such as school assemblies (with the collective worship element removed) or citizenship classes rather than RE, which inevitably emphasises difference and fits people into a particular religious categories which has a tendency to create barriers. Moreover, children are categorised according to the religion of their parents, often before they are old enough to make up their own minds. If community cohesion is the goal, the emphasis should be taken off religion which is so often the cause of division in society.

19. We conclude that there is no rational case for the inclusion of RE and we fully support the decision to omit it. We believe the current poor provision of RE is short-changing pupils. Any decision to include RE as part of the EBac would only serve to increase this disservice to young people, who deserve better from our education system.

23 March 2011

¹⁷² <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/Publications-and-research/Browse-all-by/Documents-by-type/Thematic-reports/Transforming-religious-education>

¹⁷³ <http://www.tes.co.uk/article.aspx?storycode=2174430>

¹⁷⁴ <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/Publications-and-research/Browse-all-by/Education/Curriculum/Religious-education/Secondary/Making-sense-of-religion>

Written evidence submitted by Mark Oliver

This submission focuses on the selection of subjects for the E-Bac, the value of the E-Bac as a measure of school performance, the implications for schools, pupils and parents and the comparison with international qualifications. Key points made are:

1. The value of modern languages in the E-Bac.
2. Modern languages rather than ancient languages should be included in the E-Bac.
3. The E-Bac does not obviate the need for languages to be made compulsory in Key Stage 4.
4. It is contestable that the subjects selected for the E-Bac represent the subjects most needed by our young people.
5. The E-Bac is not inclusive.
6. The E-Bac as a measure of school performance could lead to a two tier education system.
7. The nomenclature E-Bac flatters to deceive.

1. THE VALUE OF MODERN LANGUAGES IN THE E-BAC

1.1 I welcome the inclusion of modern languages in the E-Bac. This rightly highlights the importance of language learning for young people.

1.2 Modern languages are an important element in education for our young people in terms of their development and in particular:

- 1.2.1 academic development—knowledge of one or more modern language, knowledge about languages; and
- 1.2.2 personal development—intercultural understanding, language users in the real world.

1.3 The contribution languages make to learning for young people is essential to equip them for learning for life and using languages in their own life and the world of work.

2. MODERN LANGUAGES RATHER THAN ANCIENT LANGUAGES SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN THE E-BAC

2.1 The specifications for modern languages and ancient languages indicate different purposes and different outcomes.

2.2 Practical communication skills in real situations are emphasised in modern languages across the four language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing.

2.3 The study of ancient languages places more emphasis on reading and writing for academic purposes.

2.4 Ancient languages contribute effectively to academic development but do not contribute effectively to features that are related to personal development in 1.2.2.

3. THE E-BAC DOES NOT OBLIVATE THE NEED FOR LANGUAGES TO BE MADE COMPULSORY IN KEY STAGE 4

3.1 The requirement for a language for the E-Bac does not sit comfortably with the current position of modern languages in Key Stage 4. It is required for the E-Bac but languages are only an entitlement at Key Stage 4.

3.2 It would make more sense to grasp the nettle and make languages compulsory at Key Stage 4.

4. IT IS CONTESTABLE THAT THE SUBJECTS SELECTED FOR THE E-BAC REPRESENT THE SUBJECTS MOST NEEDED BY OUR YOUNG PEOPLE

4.1 Submissions will highlight a range of different subjects worthy of inclusion, whether they are the creative arts, religious education, critical thinking or other subjects deemed by different individuals or groups to be essential for a rounded education.

4.2 The selection of the subjects in the E-Bac is not the only choice for the areas of learning that are important in the education of our young people.

4.3 The E-Bac could include a degree of flexibility to reflect better the diverse needs of young people growing up today.

4.4 A more thorough consideration of the subjects to be included needs to be undertaken.

5. THE E-BAC IS NOT INCLUSIVE

5.1 The E-Bac is for the higher achieving students at GCSE.

5.2 The benefits of language learning should be enjoyed across the ability range.

5.3 Modern language departments in schools have put a lot of effort into developing relevant courses for students not able to achieve high grade GCSEs in order to ensure a wide take up of languages in Key Stage 4. The E-Bac undermines the value of alternative accreditation where it is appropriate to meet students' needs.

5.4 Schools will play the game and aim to increase the percentage of students with the E-Bac. This should not be confused with increasing the take up language learning in Key Stage 4.

6. THE E-BAC AS A MEASURE OF SCHOOL PERFORMANCE COULD LEAD TO A TWO TIER EDUCATION SYSTEM

6.1 The threshold for achieving the E-Bac favours students of higher ability.

6.2 Students of lower ability will find it harder to achieve the threshold.

6.3 Schools with a larger intake of higher ability students will in the main do better than schools with an intake that has a higher number of lower ability students.

6.4 There is a risk that the perception of good schools will be related to the percentage of students achieving the E-Bac. Schools with a lower percentage of students achieving the E-Bac may be perceived as schools that are not as good, although the outcomes for their students may be very good.

6.5 Parents may choose schools on the basis of their percentage of students with the E-Bac regardless of the school's suitability for their child.

6.6 There is a risk that the school system will be divided into a two tier system of schools whose students achieve well in the E-Bac measure and those schools where the students do not achieve well in this measure.

7. THE NOMENCLATURE E-BAC FLATTERS TO DECEIVE

7.1 Bac invites comparisons with the French Baccalaureate and International Baccalaureate.

7.2 Studying subjects to higher grade GCSE level is below the level required for the qualifications with which we are invited to compare the E-Bac.

7.3 The breadth of subjects included in the E-Bac is also more limited.

7.4 In terms of depth and breadth of study, the E-Bac is not comparable with the French Baccalaureate and International Baccalaureate.

24 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Independent Academies Association

SUMMARY

1. The Independent Academies Association (IAA) is the national association representing Academy Principals, Finance Directors and Chairs of Governors. We represent both existing academies and those being developed.

2. Academies are independent non-fee non-selective schools that are funded by central government. With over 440 already open and many more in the pipeline, academies are already an important and innovative part of education in England. The coalition government has legislated to make it easier for existing schools to acquire academy status and for the creation of new academies or "free schools", which are established on similar lines to academies.

3. Many academies are located in areas of significant social disadvantage. But their combination of strong leadership, independence and innovation is leading to fast-improving exam results, averaging a rate of improvement twice the national average. New academies with strong attainment are expected to work closely with other schools to help them improve.

4. We welcome the opportunity to contribute to the Education Select Committee's inquiry into the English Baccalaureate.

5. There is support for the concept of a Baccalaureate with the association and the association stands ready to advise and assist in developing it into a fully inclusive qualification.

6. Academies have greater freedoms over the curriculum than other schools, though they are legally required to teach a broad and balanced curriculum, and each uses those freedoms to develop what it believes is the right mix of subjects for its students. Many academies, for example, offer vocational courses such as BTECs and Diplomas alongside academic subjects, and find that those courses motivate some otherwise disaffected students to achieve good GCSEs in English and Maths. Other academies have used the freedoms to offer the International Baccalaureate for 16–18 year-old students. Academies often also use their freedoms to enable some students to take GCSE or AS level courses earlier than the normal age for such qualifications.

7. The IAA believes that academy autonomy is an important part of school improvement. The freedom to have greater curriculum flexibility is an essential element of that autonomy. Schools should be free to offer the

qualifications that will most enable students to progress to further and higher education, apprenticeships or a good job, depending on their aptitudes and interests.

8. We recognise the importance of strong accountability in schools. But we do not believe that academies or any other schools should be penalised for encouraging pupils to study a wide range of subjects and qualifications by excluding their results from league tables, or by focusing media attention on achievements in a limited range of subjects.

9. We recognise that it is reasonable to judge schools on achievements in English and Maths, as well as GCSEs and other relevant qualifications.

10. We are concerned that the English Baccalaureate covers too narrow a range of subjects. Many academies believe that the subject range for humanities, for example, should be broadened to include religious education and art. Equally, applied science achievements should be recognised alongside academic subjects.

11. However, we also believe that it is inappropriate simply to score schools on their achievements in a limited group of academic subjects. We support a growing body of opinion that argues for a Technical Baccalaureate, where achievements in subjects like ICT, engineering or design and technology could be credited alongside English, Maths and Science. If such a mix were accredited equally in the league tables with a revised English Baccalaureate, we believe this could provide a fairer assessment of school achievements.

12. While many of our members would support the move to the English Baccalaureate, some would go further and argue for more radical alternatives, through a range of Baccalaureates, with a return to the principles of the Tomlinson report, and an overarching Diploma which accredited both academic and vocational qualifications as well as wider skills through project work and work or voluntary experience.

BACKGROUND

13. The English Baccalaureate was introduced into the January 2011 achievement and attainment tables as an indicator of GCSE achievement. In the future, the Government has said that students will receive a certificate if they meet its requirements which are that they achieve a C grade or higher in English, Maths, Double Science, History or Geography, and a modern or ancient language. An aggregate figure for schools showed that 15.6% of students nationally achieved this mix of subjects in 2010. However, only 22% of students were entered for all the component parts of the E-Bac, which had not been announced until after students had sat their GCSEs in 2010.¹⁷⁵

14. Academies were established in 2000 largely to provide a better education for pupils in disadvantaged urban areas with a tradition of poor exam results. Until 2010, academies were required to have sponsors, a requirement that still applies where academies replace failing or underperforming schools. Since 2010, the academies programme has been rapidly expanded to include primary and special schools, and to allow schools with outstanding or good with outstanding features to convert rapidly to academy status, provided they agree to work with a lower performing school when they do so.

15. Most academies with GCSE results in 2010 had replaced failing schools or were operating in areas of traditional educational failure. 43.1% of pupils in academies achieved five or more A*–C grades at GCSE in 2010, representing a rate of improvement in those schools of twice the national average.¹⁷⁶ 38.8% of academy students achieved this grade (albeit with a smaller cohort of participating academies) in 2009.¹⁷⁷ Looking just at academies replacing failing schools or in areas of great disadvantage, the Department for Education has calculated that academies in 2010 “continue to show improvements in getting five good GCSEs (or iGCSEs or equivalents) including English and mathematics at a faster rate of 7.8 percentage points compared to other schools, which improved by 4.5 percentage points.”¹⁷⁸

THE PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE E-BAC AND ITS VALUE AS A MEASURE OF PUPIL AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

16. The Department for Education believes that the English Baccalaureate will “encourage and facilitate a more rounded educational experience for all students.” According to the White Paper, *The Importance of Teaching*, “Schools will retain the freedom to innovate and offer the GCSEs, iGCSEs and other qualifications which best meet the needs of their pupils. Pupils will, of course, be able to achieve vocational qualifications alongside the English Baccalaureate.”¹⁷⁹

17. The Education Secretary, Michael Gove, says that the E-Bac is supposed to stop schools from “gaming”—putting through students through qualifications to maximise league table performance. The Association supports this move.¹⁸⁰ However, schools inevitably respond to the latest league table challenges, for good or ill. Few would argue that it is important for young people to have English and Maths GCSEs, and

¹⁷⁵ DFE SFR 01/2011 GCSE and Equivalent Results in England 2009–10 (revised).

¹⁷⁶ *ibid*

¹⁷⁷ DCSF SFR 01/2010 GCSE and Equivalent Results in England 2008–09 (revised).

¹⁷⁸ DFE press release 12 January 2011.

¹⁷⁹ “The Importance of Teaching” White Paper (DFE, 2010).

¹⁸⁰ *ibid*

league table pressure has encouraged many schools to focus on those who could gain C grades in those subjects. Equally, it is generally accepted that some vocational qualifications were overvalued at four GCSEs in the league tables.

18. Academies recognise that their freedoms come with accountability. We support intelligent accountability through performance tables and independent inspections, as well as robust self-evaluation. But, it is vital that the league tables accredit the right qualifications for every student.

19. We accept that there is a need, for example, to change the tariff for vocational qualifications. But we believe it is essential that high quality qualifications, including the BTEC and Diplomas, are properly accredited, as these will be more appropriate options for some young people. Equally, it is important that the subjects included in the E-Bac are not too narrow so that they exclude strong applied options or other arts and humanities subjects, including religious education and art.

THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE E-BAC

20. Only History/Geography and languages are to be accredited in the E-Bac as currently constituted alongside English, Maths and Science. We support opportunities for more young people to study languages, history and geography, and some academies will want to see most of their students taking these subjects as GCSEs.

21. However, there is a danger that a focus on these subjects to the exclusion of others will make it harder to offer the broad and balanced range of subjects that a comprehensive school or academy should provide. Students with a practical aptitude need a curriculum rich in practical, vocational, technical and applied subjects if they are to thrive. Achieving in such qualifications often also enhances their English and Maths.

22. It is also important that the humanities strand is not confined to history and geography. It would be more appropriate to offer an arts and humanities strand, which accredited achievements in subjects like art and religious education as well. Church-sponsored academies are particularly concerned at the exclusion of RE from this strand.

23. We recognise that ministers are concerned to ensure a robust range of vocational qualifications, and that the Wolf Review is making recommendations in this respect. However, it is essential that once there is agreement on which qualifications are recognised at level 2, achievement in those qualifications is properly accredited in the league tables. Failure to do so could simply increase disaffection, truancy and NEET numbers as students lose the motivation to learn. It could also cause real difficulties as the participation age is raised to 18, unless there are well-regarded practical alternatives from age 14.

24. We believe that, at the very least, consideration should be given to introducing a technical baccalaureate and potentially other Bacs alongside a revised E-Bac. This Tech-Bac could accredit achievements in subjects just as design and technology, ICT and engineering alongside English, Maths and Science. If a Tech-Bac is introduced, it should be of equal rigour and league table value to the E-Bac, and reporting for academies or schools in the league table should reflect total achievement in both certificates.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE E-BAC FOR PUPILS, SCHOOLS AND EMPLOYERS

25. Students should have qualifications valued by employers and universities. Such qualifications should measure both academic and vocational achievements, and certificates covering several qualifications could reflect wider social and personal achievement through projects, work experience, volunteering and other team activities too.

26. Academies are increasing aspirations of students, and seeing a growing proportion of students going into sixth forms and applying to universities. The English Baccalaureate may be a useful indicator of academic achievement for students with the ability to go to elite universities. It is right that they are encouraged to take a good mix of academic courses at GCSE, and this already happens in academies.

27. However, even with university expansion, not every young person will go to university. So it is important that academies and schools have the freedom (both in name and practice) to offer a choice of routes to students from the age of 14, including practical and vocational qualifications that are valued by employers or which provide progression to such qualifications, including apprenticeships.

28. The Government has also confirmed that it will require all young people to continue in education or training until the age of 18 from 2015. Without the right options from 14, there is a danger of creating a growing group of young people who are unable to benefit from this reform or who will not actively wish to participate in learning. We believe it is essential that academies have the true freedom—one that is not distorted by narrow league table measures—to provide an engaging and robust curriculum that meets the needs of all their students.

29. Many of our members are close to employers and universities who sponsor their academies. As sponsors and governors, they are in a strong position to take a strategic view of the curriculum being offered. They want the freedom to continue to address the needs of their students with appropriate accountability and accreditation for student achievements.

INTERNATIONAL COMPARATORS OF THE E-BAC

30. The Secretary of State has compared the E-Bac with qualifications in other countries, including the Netherlands, Singapore and Germany.¹⁸¹ But he has underplayed the role that vocational and technical qualifications, typically from the age of 15, play in our competitor nations and the strongest performing education systems in the world.

31. For example, two thirds of German students have vocationally-oriented courses in their upper secondary education, which can start from the age of 15.¹⁸² French students have the option of studying for a traditional or vocational *baccalauréat* from the age of 15.¹⁸³ Korean students can attend vocational high schools from age 15,¹⁸⁴ while there are strong vocational options in the Singapore curriculum.¹⁸⁵

32. It is also important to note that there has been a trend towards developing a wider range of skills in the most successful education systems in the PISA international rankings. For example, Shanghai has split its curriculum since 2008 into three: the *basic curriculum*, to be experienced by all students, mainly implemented through compulsory courses; the *enriched curriculum*, which aims to develop students' potential and is realised mainly through elective courses, and *inquiry-based curriculum*, which is mainly implemented through extra-curricular activities such as research projects.¹⁸⁶ There are concerns that a narrow E-Bac could reduce opportunities for developing such wider skills, which are accredited, for example, in the International Baccalaureate.

RECOMMENDATIONS

33. We would ask the Committee to consider the following recommendations that we believe could strengthen accountability whilst ensuring that students are able to study subjects that best meet their individual aptitudes:

- If the Government wishes to retain the E-Bac as a measure of attainment in the league tables, it should review the range of subjects accredited, and consider widening the options in the humanities section to cover other “arts and humanities” subjects such as art and religious education. Applied subjects with rigorous qualifications should be accredited where appropriate, including in science.
- Academies should not have the curriculum freedoms that are essential to their students' progress undermined by accountability measures that are too narrow.
- Vocational, practical, technical and applied skills and qualifications should continue to be available to young people from the age of 14, possibly including the development of other Bacs where appropriate, and they should be properly accredited and funded.
- Alongside the E-Bac, a Technical Baccalaureate with accreditation for ICT, design and technology, engineering and other appropriate qualifications alongside English, Maths and Science. It should be reported with the E-Bac and given equal weight in any league table rankings.
- The IAA would welcome the opportunity to assist and advise, from a practitioner standpoint, in developing the Baccalaureates into mature qualifications.

24 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Theresa Madden

SUMMARY

- If the E-Bac is introduced it should not be applied retrospectively or included in league tables until 2013.
- The range of subjects included as Humanities subjects should be increased to include Religious Studies.
- All Modern Foreign Languages should be included.
- The inclusion of ancient languages should be reconsidered.
- A balanced science education should contribute to the EBac.

PERSONAL INFORMATION

I am Assistant Head teacher at St Thomas More Catholic High School in Crewe, Chair of the Local Curriculum Planning Consortium, a member of the 14–25 Learning and Achievement Executive for Cheshire

¹⁸¹ Speech by Michael Gove to the Education World Forum on DFE website.

¹⁸² “Organisation of the Education system in Germany 2009–10” (European Commission/Eurydice).

¹⁸³ Organisation of the Education system in France 2009–10” (European Commission/Eurydice).

¹⁸⁴ Korean education ministry <http://english.mest.go.kr/>

¹⁸⁵ Singapore Ministry of Education; <http://www.moe.gov.sg/>

¹⁸⁶ “Shanghai and Hong Kong: Two distinct examples of education reform in China” (OECD, 2010).

East and a Foundation Governor at St Margaret Ward Catholic High School and Arts College in Stoke-on-Trent. I have been a teacher for 25 years and my specific area of expertise is curriculum modelling and design.

1. The purpose and benefits of the E-Bac and its value as a measure of pupil and school performance

1.1 Since school performance measures already include; five or more A* to C grades including Maths and English, the percentage of pupils achieving two or more A* to C grades in Science Subjects and the number of pupils achieving an A* to C grade in a Modern Foreign Language, I do not see what purpose would be served by the introduction of another qualification which would in effect merely replicate what already exists.

1.2 If the E-Bac is introduced retrospectively, it will give a false impression of the performance of both pupils and schools since it will be measuring performance in a group of subjects that the pupils may or may not be studying. The choice of subjects was made by the pupils at a time when there was no requirement to study a Language, History or Geography.

1.3 The retrospective introduction of the E-Bac as a measure of performance for young people who have already taken their GCSEs, is prejudicial to those young people in that it is making a judgement about them and their ability based on a set of circumstances that are completely beyond their control. Young people who are currently in Y10 and Y11 have already made option choices and are unable to change at this late stage. The advice given to them, when they made their option choices, was the best advice for them at the time. It is completely unfair to them to penalise them because their choices do not fit the narrow range of subjects chosen for inclusion in the E-Bac. If the E-Bac is introduced it should not happen until it is a true measure of how the young person has performed, based on an informed choice of subjects at the beginning of KS4. This would mean that the measure would not be introduced until 2013, when the current Year 9 will complete their GCSEs.

2. The choice of subjects included in the E-Bac

2.1 Many young people are currently studying a wide range of academic subjects at GCSE. The value of these subjects will be significantly reduced if they are not included in the E-Bac.

2.2 The introduction of the E-Bac in its present form will severely restrict the option choices for all pupils at KS4. For instance, any pupil who wants to study science at A-level will opt for all three sciences at GCSE, or a pupil who wants to be a linguist and so studies a second language, will have little curriculum space for any other subjects.

2.3 The list of Humanities subjects is far too short. The idea that the only subjects that are fit to be included as Humanities subjects is a real concern. This gives the impression that no other Humanities subjects have any academic value.

2.4 I am particularly concerned about the failure to include Religious Studies in the list. The number of students taking GCSE RS over the last 15 years has increased from 113,000 to about 460,000. This reflects the success of subject teaching, and is a key contribution to the development of good subject learning. In RS, pupils learn to respect themselves and understand their own identity and to respect others as well. The multi disciplinary nature of the subject, involving textual study, philosophical thinking, ethics, social understanding and the skills of analysis and reasoning make it a valued and rigorous academic qualification. Unless it is included in the E-Bac, the value of RS will be significantly diminished and is unlikely to be studied in many schools. In addition value of RS as a subject goes beyond the purely academic in our multicultural society, where it is vital that we promote understanding and tolerance of all faiths and belief systems.

2.5 In an increasingly constricted curriculum it is unlikely that schools will be able to offer RS as a full GCSE alongside an additional Humanities subject. This will consequently devalue RS as a subject by reducing its academic worth. As a school we already offer History, Geography and RS to our students but since we want them to have access to a rounded education we do not insist that they do more than one as a full GCSE.

2.6 Young people should study at least one Modern Foreign Language. This should include all languages, not just European languages. In addition, the inclusion of ancient languages and Biblical Hebrew in the E-Bac seems completely anachronistic, if we want to prepare our learners for the 21st Century workplace.

2.7 The manner in which Science is included in the E-Bac is also a concern, since the two GCSE qualifications that are required do not have to be balanced science but can be two from Biology, Chemistry and Physics. If this is allowed to stand, then there is a real possibility that some schools, who already have real difficulty recruiting Physics teachers, will drop Physics as a GCSE qualification at KS4.

3. The implications of the E-Bac for pupils, schools and employers

3.1 Schools will be forced to offer a much narrower range of option choices at KS4 which will have a directly negative impact on pupils. Forcing a pupil to study a subject that they have no interest in or aptitude for, is not only damaging to them but is also potentially damaging to those pupils who have chosen to do those subjects. A pupil who is not motivated to learn will have a negative impact on teaching and learning.

3.2 The most positive aspect of recent changes to education has been the personalisation agenda. The ability to provide each young person with a curriculum that truly meets their need means that they are more likely to

want to learn and to engage with education. It is possible to encourage young people to work harder in Maths, English and Science because we are able to offer them a range of complementary subjects which meet their needs. If the E-Bac is introduced, it will make it very difficult to fit any personalisation at all into an already over-full curriculum.

3.3 I am also very concerned by the emphasis that the E-Bac places on the acquisition of knowledge. We need to prepare our young people to be resilient learners who are able to acquire new skills rather than merely amassing more knowledge. In the 21st Century, we need focus on a skills-based curriculum to ensure that our young people are employable. Employers need resilient learners who are able to change and adapt to whatever is required in our increasingly technological world.

3.4 If young people are offered a significantly reduced curriculum choice at KS4 this will have a negative impact for employers since they will be less motivated when they enter the workplace.

24 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Mr Brendan Conboy, Headteacher

I write as a Headteacher of a VA Roman Catholic comprehensive of 1,000 students based in the North West of England.

I would urge you to consider carefully the inclusion of Religious Studies as a Humanities component in the English Baccalaureate award. You will be aware of the significance of the subject for the curriculum offer in faith schools, such that Religious Studies is a compulsory subject for almost all learners in a large number of secondary schools in England and Wales.

As an RE teacher of many years' experience as well as a school leader, I believe firmly that Religious Studies offers our pupils the opportunity to engage with the most profound questions of human existence and to consider the pressing moral and ethical contemporary questions. The subject is broad based and demanding—success at GCSE requires skills of enquiry, empathy, understanding and evaluation and serves as an ideal preparation for many A level courses. It would therefore serve as an ideal humanity subject for the EBacc.

Furthermore, the omission of RS as a humanities subject limits greatly the breadth of the curriculum we can offer our senior students—many students will be unable to study a technology or performing arts option to examination level as the demands of the EBacc will leave insufficient space on student timetables.

I would be delighted to discuss the matter further with yourself or a DfE official and in the meantime I urge you to consider this issue as a matter of priority.

24 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Peter Robottom

1. The Government's proposals concerning the make up of the Humanities component of the proposed English Baccalaureate are deficient in so far as they omit Religious Education. While I strongly support inclusion of both history and geography, the understanding of the history of Britain and Western Europe cannot be separated from the Christian Heritage and culture that has so shaped it. Similarly an understanding of the world is deficient without an appreciation of the faith traditions that have and still do influence it, probably to a greater degree than any political systems.

2. In recent years the numbers of students taking RE in public examinations has increased sharply, but to omit Religious Education from the Baccalaureate on which the performance of schools will be assessed would be to run counter to that trend of increased interest.

3. Moreover, although there has been this trend, in line with the increasing interest in spiritual matters more generally in Britain, recent Ofsted reports have highlighted poor teaching of the basics of the Christian faith in many schools. Omission of Religious Education from the Baccalaureate is likely to make this situation worse as there are likely to be less specialist teachers employed. Indeed, although it is only anecdotal, there have been reports of contracts being ended of some RE teachers since the Government announced its proposals.

4. If we are to have a Baccalaureate at all, it is essential that it is sufficiently broadly based that it does ensure a properly rounded education and not one that is too narrowly constrained.

24 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Ofqual

1. The Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual) is the independent regulator of qualifications, examinations and assessments in England and of vocational qualifications in Northern Ireland.

2. It is for Government to decide the performance measures it uses to assess school performance. Ofqual's role is to:

- (a) Secure the standards of regulated qualifications.
- (b) Promote confidence in and awareness of regulated qualifications.
- (c) Secure efficient delivery of regulated qualifications.

3. The use of qualifications and aggregated groups of qualifications impacts on each of these aspects of our role.

4. This submission to the Education Select Committee inquiry into the English Baccalaureate covers Ofqual's view on four aspects:

- (a) the need for transparency in the creation of performance measurements for schools;
- (b) the clarity needed by learners, teachers, parents and employers about the use of the English Baccalaureate to indicate individual performance;
- (c) the English Baccalaureate should use only regulated qualifications; and
- (d) the use of such performance measures affects the choices that schools make and potentially drives inefficiencies in the qualifications market.

BACKGROUND

5. On 1 April 2010, the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning (ASCL) Act 2009 formally established Ofqual as a non-ministerial government department which reports directly to Parliament and the Northern Ireland Assembly.

6. The ASCL Act 2009 gave Ofqual five objectives. These are: qualifications standards objective, the assessments standards objective, the public confidence objective, the awareness objective and the efficiency objective.

7. Ofqual regulates and maintains standards by recognising awarding organisations. Only recognised awarding organisations can offer regulated qualifications. All organisations registered can be found at The Register of Regulated Awarding Organisations and Qualifications;

The need for transparency in the creation of performance measurements for schools

8. Section 155 of the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 gives Ofqual a duty to keep under review any system used by the Secretary of State for allocating values to qualifications for the purpose of a qualifications based performance management system. This duty has not yet been commenced. If it is commenced, Ofqual's key concern—in support of our public confidence objective—would be that regulated qualifications should be used clearly and transparently in school performance measures. For example, the current headline performance measure for schools at age 16 (five A*–C passes at GCSE including English and maths) includes a wide range of qualifications other than GCSEs, and there have been concerns that some qualifications that have been treated as equivalent, particularly in terms of their size, are not really equivalent. We think it is important that the Government puts in place transparent and clear mechanisms for determining which qualifications are used in the English Baccalaureate, and how equivalencies are determined.

The clarity needed by learners, teachers, parents and employers about the use of the English Baccalaureate to indicate individual performance

9. We have no issue with the principle of the introduction of the E-Bac, but it is important to recognise that it is not a qualification, and it is not regulated by Ofqual. Unlike a qualification, it does not indicate attainment of a particular set of skills or knowledge, but rather a certain combination of qualifications which the Government wishes to encourage. However, we recognise that this distinction is likely to be lost on many people, and it may be generally assumed that Ofqual has a role in decisions taken about the use of regulated qualifications. We would therefore be keen to contribute to discussions about its introduction, because of the risk of it undermining confidence in the wider qualifications system if it is not introduced fairly.

10. In particular, if the E-Bac is to be certificated, whether by the school or by the Government, it is important that the certificate makes clear what the E-Bac does (and does not) mean. It is also important that the process of "awarding" an E-Bac is done fairly and transparently and that lessons are learnt from the past.

The purpose and benefits of the E-Bac and the use of regulated qualifications

11. The E-Bac places emphasis on the benefits of getting a particular group of qualifications over others.

12. Ofqual's view is that only regulated qualifications should be selected for inclusion in the E-Bac. Ofqual is unable to verify that any unregulated qualifications are comparable to qualifications on the register of regulated qualifications.

13. To include unregulated qualifications:

- (a) would not be in learners' best interests, and would risk undermining public confidence in the qualifications system; and
- (b) could create potential inequalities between different types of schools.

The impact of Performance Measures on the Qualifications Sector

14. The market for qualifications is complex. There were 161 awarding organisations and approximately 12,000 qualifications provided as at September 2010. A key feature of the market has been the growth in achievements other than traditional GCSEs and A Levels from 3.7 million to 6.8 million (an 87% increase) over the period 2004–05 to 2009–10. In Ofqual's consultation on Economic Regulation (<http://www.ofqual.gov.uk/files/2010-10-19-4777-consultation-on-economic-regulation.pdf>) we highlighted the impact of the current accountability measures as potentially creating distortion incentives to those purchasing qualifications and as a potential driver of inefficiencies in the market.

15. The decision, about which qualifications to promote through the accountability system, and which qualifications should be funded with public money, is a policy issue for Ministers. In making these decisions, however, we would urge Ministers to consider the implications for the qualifications market—both the qualification choices made by schools and the investment decisions of awarding organisations. In particular, we would encourage Ministers to set an accountability framework for the long term, to provide stability and certainty at both school and awarding organisation level over a number of years.

24 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Revd John Fellows

PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE EBAC AND ITS VALUE AS A MEASURE OF PUPIL AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

1 The proposed EBAC places too much emphasis on a limited number of studies and restricts the purposes of education. It directs the energies of schools into a narrow curriculum that will fail to equip children and young people for a contemporary world. In a modern world that values creativity, enterprise and imagination, children need a greater range of skills than those that are set out in the E-Bac. The subjects proposed suggest an outdated view of the curriculum that would appear to be more suited to civil servants running an empire! There are already measures that are used to gauge school and pupil performance that are less restrictive than the proposed EBac. The five A*–C grades including Mathematics and English are a very effective measure.

2 Bearing in mind the restrictive nature of the measure it will only be suitable for a limited number of children (In my estimation about 20% of the population) and serve no purpose for the vast number of children in secondary school, which it will only demotivate. While it may be true that “every working class child should have the right to study a modern foreign language” (Mr Gove) a child's educational needs may not be best served in compelling him/her to do so in order to achieve a qualification that will in the end only be used to increase the status of the school in any proposed league table rather than addressing the need of the child him/herself.

THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE E-BAC

3 The choice of subjects is very restricting to both schools and pupils. Many other subjects demand the academic rigour that is behind and I would particularly single out RE and drama as two subjects that should be included. The GCSE full course in RE is recognised as an academic subject requiring high standards of knowledge, understanding and evaluation of evidence and argument to achieve high grades. This means that substantial numbers of young people have been going out into society with vital knowledge and understanding for today's world. In addition, GCSE religious studies is a qualification that is approved in every English and Welsh university. This reflects the fact that RE is one subject of the curriculum where England and Wales lead the world. Countries from Africa, through Europe to the Far East look to Britain to provide models of RE that promote deep understanding of the religions and beliefs of traditional heritage alongside those of their neighbours. It is a foundation for university courses in subjects such as philosophy and theology.

4 Drama is a similarly demanding subject. It has a history steeped in our culture and the world. Arguably, the world's greatest exponent of our language was a dramatist. Pupils studying drama gain a deep awareness of the world around them and how people interact. Many companies use drama techniques to analyse interpersonal issues because of its rigorous approach to working with characters, plot and expression.

INTERNATIONAL COMPARATORS FOR THE E-BAC

5 It is difficult to find an international comparator for the E-Bac. A quick overview of international Baccalaureates offer an exciting and stimulating curriculum however, they have a far broader range of disciplines than those suggested by the E-Bac and include the Arts as well as technology—two areas that are missing from the proposed E-Bac.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE E-BAC FOR PUPILS, SCHOOLS AND EMPLOYERS

6 In its present form the E-Bac will be restricting for all. Because it will prioritise some disciplines over others, it will direct pupils into areas and subjects where they are less likely to achieve and be fulfilled and make the maximum contribution to society. When used as a measure of schools' performance, schools will be forced into providing a narrower range of subjects than will meet the demand of children in a modern society.

7. I would encourage the Select Committee to urge a complete review of the proposed baccalaureate to make it more compatible with international standards and to reflect the demands of a modern society.

24 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Steve Gerlach

ABSTRACT

My case is that it is the threat to RE GCSE that is of concern. The statutory nature of GCSE is not to be confused with its status at GCSE. Religious Education is academically rigorous and an absolute necessity for educating our children in our world of challenging behaviours and beliefs. Removing it from the E Bacc will have serious consequences for its take up at GCSE and will allow Head Teachers to feel it necessary to remove resources from it in a very competitive timetable. RE is naturally and historically one of the humanities.

THE ENGLISH BACCALAUREATE AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

I write to ask for your considered support in persuading your colleague the Secretary of State for Education, to include Religious Education as a humanities subject within the English Baccalaureate.

As Head of Religious Studies at one of your constituency schools where RE is a successful part of the school curriculum and life, I am concerned that the arguments put forward not to include RE are flawed. The Statutory status of RE within the curriculum is known and understood by schools, and should provide for RE being taught across all key stages. It is the effect that non inclusion will have on GCSE RE which is of real concern. The statutory position of RE and the teaching of it at GCSE have to be viewed separately.

GCSE RE is academically rigorous. Students are required to deploy knowledge and understanding of a large number of concepts and religious teachings as well as constructing reasoned arguments for evaluation.

GCSE RE is socially rigorous. It is an obvious point, but in an ever changing world of competing ideologies, beliefs and political systems, with the threat of extremist views challenging the norms of society and the need for society to become more cohesive, RE as studied at GCSE is more important than ever.

Therefore, RE should be included in the humanities choices for the baccalaureate. It is a major contributor to educating pupils about issues of national and international importance. With RE's non inclusion it will force many pupils to make a narrow choice between two subjects—Geography and History. As the stated aim of the baccalaureate is broadening choice the exclusion of RE seems to defeat that objective.

There is a distinction between the EB and the NC. However, as a consequence of RE being excluded from the EB it will inevitably lead to students (and parents) making a choice based on utility, there will be no need to choose RE because it is not part of the EB. There is a problem with timetabling—with more students choosing Geog or Hist, more time will need to be created to accommodate more teaching time for those subjects, consequently many Heads will take the view that RE will be squeezed.

The assertion that History and Geography are the “most natural definition of humanities” is false as religious studies (theology) has been the foundation of liberal studies for centuries. It is surprising that anyone should consider the study of belief and human interaction and the social issues arising from these not a “humanity”.

The universities of Oxford, Bristol, Durham and Manchester (these bodies surely carry some weight) all provide schools of Humanities—all of them include religious studies/theology. It is interesting to note that their working definition of humanities also covers a number of other subjects including English, Music and classic and modern languages. Rather than having a “tight” definition they have, in the spirit of “Humanities” included a much broader base of subjects. I'm sure that many other universities also provide humanities on the same basis. Geography (a subject which has high regard in my family—two of my sons have studied to post grad level, one of whom is now completing a DPhil at Jesus, Oxford) is, on the other hand, placed within the

sciences. Logically therefore, it is beyond question that RE should be included as one of the humanities. And, if further proof were needed, a glance at the definition in the OED and wikipedia would confirm my point.

24 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Gary Shilladay, Head of Latin, Dorothy Stringer School

I am writing to you to voice my concern that the WJEC certificates in Latin have been deemed unsuitable in quality for inclusion under the English Baccalaureate. I have just begun this year to teach this course in a large secondary school in Brighton. As a comprehensive school, we are incredibly proud to be able to offer a course in Latin for our pupils and feel that a study of this level of academia helps to bridge the gap between private and state education; opening doors into further education which may otherwise have been closed. It is clear from personal anecdotes of my current year 11 that the local colleges are impressed by the inclusion of Latin on their application forms and regard it highly.

The decision to move from GCSE Latin to the WJEC certificates was taken by my predecessor as a response to the fact that previously our pupils were compared with private school pupils who had been studying Latin from year 7. This demand to catch-up created an unfair gap and meant that the teaching of the subject was too rushed, skimming the surface as oppose to a stimulating and deep study which must surely be more engaging.

I personally have taken on this new syllabus alongside promotion to Head of Year and my time certainly is very stretched. This decision about the WJEC is going to increase the pressure of my workload, as now I will need to also look into teaching a new syllabus as you have effectively made the certificates I currently run less desirable to schools and pupils based upon an arbitrary worth instead of the intrinsic value of education, which these certificates truly support in their scope, challenge and interest.

Furthermore, I second the points made by the "School Classics Project at the University of Cambridge":

- (1) That the Department for Education allows what it refers to as "accredited IGCSEs"
<http://services.parliament.uk/hansard/Lords/bydate/20110202/writtenanswers/part029.html>.
- (2) That OfQual clarifies that there are no such things as "accredited IGCSEs" and that such qualifications are rather Level 1 and Level 2 Certificates
<http://www.ofqual.gov.uk/for-awarding-organisations/96-articles/379-accreditation-requirements-of-igcse-qualifications-for-pre-16-students>
and an example here
http://www.cie.org.uk/docs/qualifications/igcse/0685_y12_sy.pdf.
- (3) That the Certificates in Latin are such Level 1 and Level 2 Certificates and have been accredited under exactly the process and standards OfQual states it uses for accrediting so-called IGCSEs. Logic would suggest, therefore, that they ought to be included in the same way as the CIE Level 1/Level 2 Certificates have already been included.
- (4) That it would be bizarre if, in order for the Certificates in Latin to be included in an "English" Baccalaureate, WJEC would simply have to write on the syllabus cover of the Certificates "International GCSE", when that title is entirely unregulated and undefined and is unaccepted for use by OfQual in England.
- (5) Those schools which use the Certificates in Latin have already reported a significant rise (a doubling or tripling) in the number of students studying Latin at KS4 and intending to study Latin at KS5.
<http://www.cambridgescp.com/downloads/CSCPNewsletterJan2011.pdf>
Inclusion of the Certificates in Latin would promote this growth, exclusion will cause a reduction in the number of students studying Latin in the UK.

24 March 2011

Further written evidence submitted by Burntwood School for Girls

We are a Year 13 Religious Studies class from a large multi-cultural comprehensive in South West London called Burntwood. We all hold a passion and desire for the subject believing that it should be emphasised as heavily as other humanity subjects, like History. It therefore seems outrageous that the subject is being excluded from the new proposed education plans.

You and your government talk of returning to 1950s style education but was an emphasis not being placed on the study of religion then? Religion educates us about the past, teaching how belief systems such as Islam and Christianity originated. Religion teaches us about other cultures, allowing our multi-cultural society to thrive. Religion is the basis for philosophy and ethics, the very foundation that our society is built upon. It is as valuable as studying the other humanities you are emphasising: History or Geography.

Out of a class of 16 Year 13 RS A Level students, only two of us have achieved the sufficient GCSEs to have achieved the English Baccalaureate without RE. By not including subjects such as Religious Studies, Media Studies and the Arts which we all study amongst ourselves, it will create a culture focused entirely on

academics, marginalising the more creative. We are all planning on going to university next year to study subjects such as primary school teaching, law, theology and history. Does it not seem ridiculous that the school leavers this year are going to be seen, as less employable, if the English Baccalaureate is introduced?

We are asking you to reconsider and revise your education plan.

24 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Mark Warren, Deputy Headteacher, Harrow Way Community School

1. I am a Deputy Headteacher in a 11–16 comprehensive school and have taught French and Spanish successfully for 25 years. In November 2009 our school was graded as “good with outstanding features by OFSTED” under the new framework and our curriculum was graded “outstanding.”

2. We are about to move towards a three year Key Stage 4 with two Sciences and a language being compulsory for some students because we need to ensure we do not close off the “A” level science route for some and because many top universities now require a C at least in a Modern Foreign language for entry on to any degree programme. You will note that we are doing this for entirely student centred reasons rather than for any performance table reasons.

3. I fail to understand why a student who has a good GCSE in say Maths/English/One or two Sciences, Spanish, Music and Law (or Economics, or Classical Civilisation, or Graphics, or RE, or ICT) is apparently less valued by our society than one with the E-bac subjects.

4. We need to broaden the acceptable GCSEs for the performance tables rather than encourage a narrowing of the curriculum to meet performance table requirements rather than student need.

5. We know that the issues have arisen because of the governments concern about the amount of points/grades available for non-GCSE courses. Why not rationalise the points and grades equivalences and make a BTeC or NVQ the same as a GCSE. I agree the points awarded are far too high and flawed.

6. Another option is to only allow one non-GCSE course worth a maximum of two GCSEs to count in any performance measures—however you would not need to do this if the points scales were more appropriate.

7. Let us not forget “the Arts” We moved to BTeCs in Performing Arts because the “business”/practical model was more appropriate rather than a two hour written exam about dance. I have also been to many conferences/seminars about new and innovative ways to teach our more “traditional” subjects and almost exclusively these methods are derived from good “arts” teaching being interactive/using role-play/providing kinaesthetic opportunities etc so we marginalise the Arts at our peril and should not underestimate the self-esteem they bring to many of our students.

8. If we stay with the same subjects for the E-bac we risk narrowing the curriculum considerably not only pre-16 but post 16 as well and in turn post 18 as students will have the bases on which to build.

9. I would be happy to discuss or enlarge on any of these points but what we must ensure is that we do what is best for all our students of all abilities and not what suits any given government. I have just read the Wolf report and agree wholeheartedly with its findings, which seem to concur with my points above.

24 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Dr Irene Bishop and the Senior Leadership Team, St Saviour’s and St Olave’s School

We believe that students should be entitled to a broad range of well-respected qualifications, however, we feel that the English Baccalaureate will narrow the curriculum. We are also concerned that Religious Studies is not included as a humanities subject in the English Baccalaureate. It is an academic subject requiring a high standard of knowledge and understanding together with skills of evaluation of evidence and argument, so vital to young people in today’s world.

St Saviour’s and St Olave’s is situated in one of the most deprived areas of the country and reflects the cultural diversity and challenges of its inner city south London location. 83% of the students are of ethnic minority with over fifty different home languages. 27% of children are on the special needs register and over 30% are entitled to free school meals. All figures are much higher than the national average.

Despite the challenging circumstances of the school we have been reported three times in HMCI’s report to Government as an outstanding and effective school. Our students take a range of GCSE subjects (without Btecs) and achieved 72% 5 A*–C including English and Maths in 2010.

There are numerous examples of high achieving students who, if taking the English Baccalaureate as it stands, would have a limited choice of Geography and History; when their interest may be to take triple science, a second language, engineering or music etc. They would then have the choice of following their passion or attaining the English Baccalaureate. This could have an effect on motivation.

At St Saviour's and St Olave's we pride ourselves on providing a curriculum which meets the individual needs of all our students whether they progress to Oxbridge, one of the Russell group universities or whether they take a vocational route. We ensure that there is rigour at whatever level or stage the student is at.

Our recommendation is that students be provided with a stimulating curriculum which offers breadth, balance, and challenge appropriately. Skills and process should be equal partners to content and knowledge. We should be allowed to continue to enrich the lives of our students through the arts as opposed to narrowing their experience. We do agree, however, that the excessive use of "equivalent" qualifications has restricted progression routes for some students in some schools, and we would be pleased to see measures taken to curb that. The English Baccalaureate, as it currently is proposed, is not the best way to achieve this. We would prefer to see more flexibility in the English Baccalaureate and at the very least it should include Religious Studies.

24 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Derek Jay

1. I strongly believe that Religious Education should be in the EBac.
2. I have been involved in Religious Education for thirty-seven years as a secondary teacher, head of department, teacher-trainer and SACRE member.
3. In a religiously and culturally diverse society such as Britain, knowledge, understanding and celebration of the variety of belief systems that exist has never been more important. In order to be part of the Big Society, young people need to understand current events, many of which have their origin in religion, and the values which underpin volunteering in the community. RE also helps young people to understand and refine their own views whilst learning to respect those whose views are different.
4. Most schools timetable RE takes alongside History and Geography as part of the Humanities. Removing RE from the Humanities sends out the message that understanding of different religions and cultures is not valuable.
5. To argue that RE remains compulsory is to ignore the reality on the ground. If schools obey the letter of the law, RE will return to the one lesson per week timetable slot—and less because senior staffs in some schools commandeer pupils out of it to do litter clearance or arranging chairs in the hall.
6. Pupils don't take it seriously when thus timetabled but muck about—and it is hard for the RE teacher to keep order when such timetable results in him/her teaching about a thousand different pupils and it is difficult to know their names.
7. Other schools will simply disobey the law and not teach RE at all—who is going to police them to ensure compliance when OFSTED recently said it will no longer inspect compliance—this is to be left to local SACREs but SACREs have no power to require schools to tell them anything.
8. According to the Times Educational Supplement, "Almost one in three secondary schools is planning to slash the time devoted to teaching RE from September" and "Schools appear to be feeling that it's quite safe to cut RE without any fear that they will be held to account" are just two comments which indicate the nature and extent of the problem facing RE.
9. A National Association of Teachers of RE survey—which gathered almost 800 responses from 4,200 state and independent schools—found planned cuts to both short and full-course GCSEs in religious studies from this September. In some cases schools are reported to be ignoring their statutory duty to offer RE at all.
10. I know of two schools that have already switched pupils, mid-course, off RE into History or Geography and made three RE teachers redundant
11. I heard, only today, from a colleague: From September 2012 we will not be offering GCSE Full course RS only short course. This will be delivered in Year 10 so the students will not have any taught RS in Years nine and 11. I had to battle to secure this situation with some colleagues happy to see RS disappear from the curriculum completely.
12. There has been a massive cut, 30%, bigger than in other subjects, to the number of initial teacher training places for R.E. specialists and the bursary is going to be removed. This further marginalises the subject.

24 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Penelope Summers

As a former teacher and Head teacher with forty years of professional experience and currently serving as a member of Swindon Borough SACREI offer the following points for your serious consideration. These are however my own views and not representative. My key point is:

THAT RELIGIOUS EDUCATION [RE] BE RETAINED AS A MANDATORY PART OF THE CURRICULUM AT ALL STAGES OF COMPULSORY EDUCATION.

- Historically legislation has recognised the need to educate the whole child and included intellectual, physical, emotional and *spiritual* development
- The spiritual development of pupils is of great importance, impacting on their emotional well being and their understanding of their roles and responsibilities. RE has a unique position within the curriculum in that it addresses the deep issues that confront individuals and society, enabling pupils to connect with the vast repository of scholarship and wisdom to be found in the world's religious and philosophical traditions.
- RE is a credible and established academic discipline which promotes intellectual rigour and a depth of understanding. Where RE is taught well it enables pupils to appreciate that many core values are shared by the world's religions. On the other hand, good teaching in RE does not address issues of difference superficially but encourages pupils to discuss these in an informed manner, within a respectful safe environment.
- RE makes cognitive demands upon students, encouraging critical analysis as they reflect on and express their personal opinions and beliefs in the light of religious and philosophical teachings. It is my belief that if the requirement to include RE in Key Stages 3 and 4 is watered down the perception will be that RE is not valued which will have a negative impact on the Foundation Stage and Key Stages 1 and 2.
- RE enables pupils to develop moral and ethical attitudes, to begin to recognise their rights and responsibilities as individuals and as members of "the big society". In an increasingly diverse and potentially fragmented society, a rigorous and credible RE curriculum has the potential to be a positive force for understanding between people of different religious beliefs and indeed those who profess none.
- We need to ensure that the increasing influence of what might be termed "evangelical secularism" is considered in a context where pupils can make informed decisions, based on credible, sound information. RE is the only subject which can deliver this, and has a vital role to play in helping pupils develop their own beliefs and values.

In conclusion I would urge the select committee to consider the above points very carefully before abandoning the place that RE has traditionally been accorded in past legislation and consigning it to some undervalued peripheral role.

24 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Cassandra Garbutt

I have included a brief introduction, factual information and evidence from student and professional experience, and a request for action. Paragraphs are numbered and no supplementary material is attached.

1. I am a Subject Leader for Art at Huntington School in York, a high performing secondary school with a fantastic Headteacher. Our school's core purpose is to "Inspire confident learners who will thrive in a changing world". We strive to achieve this core purpose as we believe this will provide our students with the education and life skills to make a difference in a fast paced global society.

2. At our heart is an academic curriculum, though we do offer a minority of vocational courses, as this is what best suits our cohort of students. We are also in our second year of teaching the International Baccalaureate at Diploma Level, as we wish to offer our students the best choices for them. During the first year we offered Theatre Studies as our group six subject and due to interest we now offer Visual Arts. The IB sees the value in the arts, and it seems baffling that the E-bac fails to do so. During a recent task with TOK students, they were asked to design their own curriculum and all students included a creative arts subject in it. After speaking perhaps the brightest student in our school, Natalie Harney (an outstanding, once in a career student) I asked her how she felt if she were to start KS4 without the option of an arts/creative subject. She felt it would have been detrimental to her education and thought it very short-sighted that creative subjects not be in a curriculum model as so many life skills come from studying creative subjects. Natalie thought it would also affect many careers post education as where would they go?

3. I know the arts are still encouraged in the curriculum but this focus will force Headteachers hands. They know they are accountable for attainment, and the benchmark measure and this surely will be their main aim now. I am lucky in having a forward thinking inspirational Headteacher, who believes massively in education and not building exam factories. An easier thing to say when you are in an academic school. However we are

already feeling the cuts of the government; we have lost Specialist status, Teaching School status, Leading Edge and others. We do not have many students who qualify for Pupil Premium and so have massive cuts to be made. I hope Art is not an area where he will look to cut as we are not a measure but maybe his and many other Headteachers hands are tied.

4. Arts have been an integral part of societies for centuries and provide an experience completely different to English, Maths, Science, Languages and Humanities but nevertheless an important one.

5. I can understand the worry that too many students have studied less academic subjects and this has been abused and given unfair standings in league tables, however art, music, drama, technologies are not easy options, on the contrary they are difficult and require dedication and commitment. Moreover, many disaffected students achieve in these subjects and often finds that interest or talent that can bloom into a career path or an entrepreneurial goal.

6. I would like to recommend that you consider carefully the decision to exclude the arts from the E-Bac as I am sure you will. Societies from all corners of the earth, both developed and tribal believe in the arts, and have done for centuries. It would be a massively detrimental move to not include it in the valued and broad KS4 education measure.

7. In conclusion, I am sure you have heard the reasons the arts should be in the Ebacc; but now you must imagine a world without Mozart, Picasso, Leonardo, Lawrence Olivier, Raphael or Beethoven? Is this one that would be better? I think you have your answer.

24 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Languages Group, University of Plymouth

THE E-BAC ENQUIRY: CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE E-BAC

1. We would like to express our whole-hearted support for the inclusion of a Modern Foreign Language as one of the five core subjects required in the proposed E-Bac. Including a language will help give a clear message that languages are an integral part of a broad, well-rounded mainstream education for all, and not simply an optional luxury for the few.

2. Since languages became optional at 14, the drop in uptake at GCSE has been catastrophic. The reduction in numbers at GCSE has been followed by a predictable decline in uptake at A level and, equally predictably, in uptake at university level. Many HEIs have ceased to teach particular languages, or closed down language departments altogether, removing the opportunity for students who dropped languages at school to make good the gap whilst at university.

3. Besides providing opportunities for personal educational enrichment, languages have a vital contribution to make to business and thus to the economy. The 2009 CBI Education and Skills survey highlighted the existence of a significant skills gap in the foreign language competence of UK graduates, with a significant proportion of employers dissatisfied with graduates' language skills. Languages matter to Britain's global reach in other ways. Jose Manuel Barroso, European Commission president, recently expressed dismay at "shockingly low" number of Britons applying to work in Brussels, and the dwindling number of British officials at EU institutions. A special "English-only" entrance exam to work in Brussels, may need to be introduced in an effort to boost applicant numbers.

4. This cannot be a healthy situation for a country aiming to make a vigorous and effective contribution to a globalised economy. Our competitors are able to operate in more than one language. In other countries, a language is a standard component of an educated, employable adult's skill set. This needs to start at school. We are selling our young people short if we do not make this opportunity available for them. Hence our strong support for the inclusion of a modern foreign language as a core subject for the E-Bac.

24 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Society of Italian Studies

As a representative of the Society of Italian Studies, a national body supporting the academic study of Italian, I am writing with our response to the E-Bac inquiry, commenting on the points raised in turn:

1. THE PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE E-BAC AND ITS VALUE AS A MEASURE OF PUPIL AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

1.1 We would fully endorse the E-Bac as a move towards a broader educational base for all, and for future higher education students. We particularly welcome the focus on modern languages, which will play a major part in boosting the competitiveness of the UK. All university students, whether or not they choose to study degree programmes in languages, benefit from knowledge of a foreign language, which brings them new intercultural competence in their studies, as well as improved employability upon graduation. Some UK

universities are considering making foreign language study a compulsory part of any degree study, so this move would serve to prepare pupils for a study environment that privileges internationalization.

1.2 We believe that the E-Bac measure is an important move towards redressing the damage done to modern language study in the UK in 2004, when languages were made optional at GCSE level. Numbers choosing modern languages in Key Stage 4 have declined since 2004, falling from 61% in 2005 to 47% in 2007 and remaining low at 44% in 2010. This decline has had a significant impact on the skills base of the United Kingdom, as shown in the number of students choosing to study a degree in Modern Languages, (and the consequent closure of several university language departments). Smaller languages such as Italian are particularly vulnerable in this situation, and we stand to lose much international expertise in this field, which the UK will need in the future for its engagement with a key international partner, unless we reverse the decline as soon as possible.

1.3 We also believe that the E-Bac would encourage the study of modern languages across the social spectrum and therefore help to re-balance the current bias towards the study of languages in independent schools (see note 7 of the recent British Academy report, *Language Matters More and More*). There is a danger that students from less well-off backgrounds will be denied the economic competitive edge that languages give, and we think that more support for modern language teaching in state schools would help to reverse this trend and to widen participation.

2. THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE E-BAC

2.1 From our perspective, the primary advantage of the E-Bac is that its inclusion of assessment of one foreign language fosters the continued study of a language, giving students the opportunity to carry on language-learning at a higher level. This sends a clear signal to students and parents about the importance of languages, both for the individual student, and for the UK's future prosperity and wealth creation. A greater demand for language learning will also encourage schools to offer a broader range of languages, including Italian.

3. THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE E-BAC FOR PUPILS, SCHOOLS AND EMPLOYERS

3.1 The E-Bac will promote the study of modern languages, improving the level of intercultural competence and linguistic skills in pupils, preparing them for the increasingly globalized workplace that they will all encounter. According to the 2010 employers' skills report (CBI Education and Skills survey, 2010), over two thirds of employers are not satisfied with the language skills of young people. UK employers and the UK economy will benefit from an increased take-up of language study, particularly to GCSE level, since according to the same survey most employers seek conversational skills as a bare minimum.

3.2 Schools will need support in rebuilding language teaching, and in maintaining pupil interest over the transition from primary language learning to secondary. Indeed we feel that the E-Bac would be better supported by a reversal of the decision taken in June 2010 to withdraw languages as a statutory requirement in the new primary curriculum.

4. INTERNATIONAL COMPARATORS FOR THE E-BAC

4.1 As linguists, we would suggest that the term E-Bac is potentially misleading, since the baccalaureate is a term usually applied at sixth-form level. We would however support the concept of the E-Bac in the name of a move towards greater integration on a European level. It is very unusual for any student in Europe outside the UK to leave school without at least one foreign language taken to GCSE level. As it stands at the moment, the situation leaves our school-leavers and graduates at a serious disadvantage in the global marketplace.

24 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by John Oakes, Headmaster, Dartford Grammar School

THE 2010 ENGLISH BACCALAUREATE: AN ALTERNATIVE GRAMMAR SCHOOL RESPONSE.

The introduction of the EBacc in 2010 will drive Selective Schools to introduce a rigorous core element to the curriculum and could become an important additional performance indicator for many schools. Dartford Grammar School, a boys selective school in North West Kent, achieved a 97% pass rate for the EBacc in 2010, an achievement that placed the school as second highest in the country.

Dartford Grammar School has placed considerable importance on the learning of languages for many years. All students study two GCSE modern languages. We tend to buck the trend, we have not, and will not, take the easy option and drop languages for the sake of a league table position. They are harder at GCSE than other subjects but they are vital for the future.

Three years ago Dartford Grammar School introduced its own performance indicator for publication to parents to reflect the type of education offered by this school. A seven A*-C GCSE performance measure (English Language, English Literature, Mathematics, at least two Science GCSEs and two modern Language GCSEs). In 2010, 89% of the 154 year 11 students achieved this benchmark. The purpose was simply to show

the nature of the school's curriculum and to give parents information to allow them to make an informed choice between schools. There are many good schools in this part of Kent all with different specialisms and strengths, crafting their GCSE curriculum for different reasons.

Schools should be accountable for the success of their own curriculum whatever they choose it to be and it is nonsense to measure all schools against just one performance indicator. We believe, that for many schools, the EBacc curriculum is a useful tool and a step towards promoting a core element to a national curriculum that is the best preparation for future success.

A student at Dartford Grammar School continues with these core subjects throughout their seven years. The presentation of post 16 results against a similar performance indicator would provide fascinating reading indeed and would be an interesting piece of research into university preparation. We firmly believe that a core element in education provides all students with the skills for university success—schools are not universities and they should not pretend to be universities, but they can, with a coherent and challenging curriculum, prepare students in the best possible way for future specialism and university success.

Our curriculum is not traditional, it is dynamic and innovative. We teach and explore the core subjects at GCSE using the framework of the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme. We have no intention of abandoning GCSE subjects but we do tend to make them more exciting by designing units of work with cross curricular themes (Art and Japanese, Languages and PE, DT and ICT). We have “collapse days” and “creativity weeks” when traditional subject boundaries disappear and project based learning and exploration take over. There is an emphasis on learning through discovery and assessment, and through exhibition and partnership. It is this blend of academic rigour and inspirational teaching that produces such remarkable results.

The location of Dartford Grammar School on the cusp of the continent and the city of London, together with the globalisation of the job market in a rapidly changing world, made us realise that it is no longer good enough to keep doing what we have done in the past but just a little better each year. Schools are preparing young people for an uncertain future, for jobs that may not yet exist and for careers were they will need to be able flexible and learn new skills. In other words they will need to know how to learn, they will need to know “what to do when they don't know what to do”. Students will be competing in the job market against students who have experienced a much broader and more rigorous and coherent education up to the age of 18.

Many of our students aspire to the medical sciences and we have also been a Science College for the last two years. All of our students study at least two sciences up to the age of 16, most do three. The Royal Society, the Russell Group of Universities and the Confederation of British Industry all lament the decline in numbers of students tackling rigorous GCSE and post 16 subjects.

Some schools will object to the introduction of this new additional performance indicator as their current curriculum does not reflect the core of the EBacc, or the EBacc does not recognise some demanding courses such as Edexcel iGCSE Mathematics. But schools should be accountable for the success of their own curriculum what ever they choose it to be. It is widely acknowledged that it is nonsense to measure all schools against one performance indicator.

There are concerns with the argument that the use of the EBacc as a performance indicator will be more acceptable in the future, when schools have had time to adapt their curriculum. It could be argued that schools will, once again, start to chase league table position and that the results published this year are a true reflection of what individual schools choose as preparation for future success. League tables and ranking exercises are the real problem, the driving force should be the recognition of the importance of an academically rigorous, international and outward facing curriculum with a focus on Languages.

24 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Royal Opera House

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The arts are central to a well-rounded education, equipping students with skills for life and the workforce.
- Learning within the arts has a positive impact on social development and contributes to raising standards and reducing the attainment gap.
- The idea that arts subjects are a “soft” option is hugely misguided.
- We urge the Government to ensure that the English Baccalaureate includes an arts subject.

The Royal Opera House reaches some 70,000 people each year, and several hundred schools, through its education programme. The programme embraces opera, ballet and orchestral education and, in relation to the Curriculum, therefore addresses dance, music and drama particularly. (Paul Reeve is Director of Education at ROH, and has worked in education within performing arts organisations for 17 years, during which time he has served on various advisory committees for initiatives such as the development of the Music Specialism for Specialist Schools, and Learning Outside the Classroom.)

1.1 The arts are central to a well-rounded education, and to developing young people as well-rounded citizens. They equip students with skills for life and the 21st century workforce, particularly in relation to the crucial development of creativity. The best schools, not least within the Independent sector, recognise and reflect this in their rich arts offer to their students. However, arts learning should be an entitlement for every student, at every stage of their school life. The inclusion of an arts subject within the English Baccalaureate, acknowledging the importance of cultural learning, would be a major step to achieving that entitlement.

1.2 Furthermore, our consistent experience at the Royal Opera House of working with schools is that, in and through arts learning, students frequently discover potential and motivation that they did not previously realise they possessed. This has a positive impact on social development, self-confidence and self-esteem and, as the Government acknowledged in commissioning the recent Henley Report on Music Education, contributes to raising standards and reducing the attainment gap.¹⁸⁷ These benefits are not limited to music but can be achieved by education in all art forms. The transformative effect of arts learning can be especially pronounced among students who may “struggle” in other areas of the Curriculum and school life.

1.3 Any notion that arts subjects are a “soft” option is hugely misguided. Just one day spent around the stage and in the rehearsal rooms of the Royal Opera House would dispel this; the discipline, application, creativity, technical rigour, understanding of cultural heritage, continual self-reflection and quest to improve demonstrated by musicians, dancers and singers are on a par with any profession, and far greater than in many. When well taught, arts subjects challenge and enable students to acquire all those skills and capacities.

1.4 Recommendations for action: We urge the Government to ensure that the English Baccalaureate includes an arts subject, thus ensuring that it reflects a genuinely broad, balanced learning experience and range of skills. If the arts are excluded from the new qualification, there is a real danger that a large number of students, for whom arts learning is central to educational development and success, will be excluded. There is an equal danger that schools will be dis-incentivised from placing the arts and creativity at the centre of their culture and curriculum.

24 March 2011

Written evidence submission by Esri UK

STATEMENT OF BACKGROUND, EXPERTISE AND INTEREST

- (a) ESRI (UK) Ltd is a provider of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) technology and related services to over 4,000 organisations spanning Central and Local Government, Commercial, Defence, National Security, Education, Public Safety, Utilities and Telecommunications in the UK. We know that location underpins the majority of decisions made by government and businesses every day. Our expertise lies in the provision of GIS technology, services and advice so that our customers harness their geographic information to make better decisions.
- (b) Founded in 1989 and headquartered in Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, Esri UK is a privately owned company employing 300 people across six UK offices and is part of the Esri Global Network including some 80 distributors and more than 300,000 customers in 150 countries worldwide.
- (c) Esri UK takes a direct interest and role in the development of geography teaching and GIS. Esri UK are already helping schools introduce GIS into the geography curriculum. In 2009 we launched our GIS for Schools Programme on a not for profit basis. In 2010 Esri UK became a strategic partner to the Geographical Association¹⁸⁸ (GA) and have jointly developed a successful GIS Continuous Professional Development (CPD) course for teachers. In 2010 Esri UK became the corporate partner to the Royal Geographical Society (with IBG)’s Geography Ambassador Programme.¹⁸⁹ Our support is for Ambassadors to continue to inspire young people to study and pursue careers in geography and GIS. 22 Esri UK staff are joining the programme.

2. THE PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE E-BAC AND ITS VALUE AS A MEASURE OF PUPIL AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

- (a) Esri UK is not in a position to be able to comment on this question at this stage.

3. THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS IN THE E-BAC

- (a) Esri UK supports the proposed structure of the E-Bac including English, mathematics, two sciences, a language and the choice of history or geography. As an employer we recognise the important grounding this range of subjects provides potential employees of the future.
- (b) At Esri UK, we value geography and geographic skills very highly. Our partnerships with the Royal Geographical Society (RGS) and GA in support of their work are driven both by two factors. Firstly, a concern in the low take-up of geography at GCSE and A-Level in recent years and the implied declining interest at a tertiary level. Our second driver is recognition of the vital roles well trained

¹⁸⁷ Speech to the Westminster Academy, 6 September 2010: <http://www.education.gov.uk/inthenews/speeches/a0064281/michael-gove-to-westminster-academy>

¹⁸⁸ <http://www.esriuk.com/aboutesriuk/pressreleases.asp?pid=625>

¹⁸⁹ <http://www.esriuk.com/aboutesriuk/pressreleases.asp?pid=612>

geographers are undertaking and will undertake on behalf of government, business and society in the future. Our view is the inclusion of geography as part of the E-Bac will almost certainly lead to the increased take-up of the subject.

- (c) Reasons for including geography as part of the E-Bac include:
- (i) Geography provides part of a rounded education. Modern geography is a multi-disciplinary and all encompassing subject that develops an understanding of the earth, the environment and all human interactions that is not covered by any other subject. In the wider business world the value of this understanding should not be underestimated.
 - (ii) The skills acquired through the study of geography are highly valued by employers. In November 2010 Esri UK undertook a survey¹⁹⁰ of 200 business leaders across the public and private sectors that showed nearly one in five (18%) of business leaders have a degree or equivalent in geography. A further two thirds (67%) would recommend a geography-based qualification to their children. The survey also shows key skills they are looking for include critical thinking (nominated by 78% of businesses leaders as key for graduates), advanced analytical skills (76%) understanding and interpreting complex data (71%), advanced technology skills (57%) and understanding socio-economic environments (54%)—all skills gained from a studying geography. Nearly all (97%) of employers said that they would like more employees with these skills in their organisations. This will help them to address their priorities such as making processes more efficient (nominated by 73% of businesses as important) and delivering more for less (66%).
 - (iii) Industry is in demand of GIS skills taught as part of the geography curriculum from KS3. GIS is also taught at A-level and widely across the Higher Education and University sectors. As a demonstration of this demand, a snapshot¹⁹¹ of Esri UK's customer base shows the following:
 - More than 70% of UK Local Authorities¹⁹² use GIS to deliver front and back office services.
 - A significant proportion of central government departments, agencies and ministries are heavily dependent on GIS to meet their policy making and service delivery responsibilities.
 - Esri UK is a major supplier to the MoD, defence and national Security sectors who are increasingly dependent on geography and GIS for the efforts in Afghanistan and the war on terror.
 - Police, fire and emergency services are also reliant on our GIS technology to support resource analysis and command and control systems.
 - Demand for geography and GIS knowledge is increasingly heavy from gas, water and electricity utility companies. These include National Grid and Scottish Power, two of the nations biggest utility companies.
 - GIS take-up is also strong in insurance, oil, petroleum and retail sectors as well as engineering consultants and telecoms businesses.
 - Some 150 UK charities and non-profit organisations use Esri GIS to support their charity development and community programmes.
 - (iv) The solutions to some of society's biggest challenges increasingly rest with the knowledge and skills of geographers. Undertaking spatial analysis, collecting, managing and storing complex geographic data and interpreting results are all skills held by geographers. These skills are already increasingly in-demand to identify and solve some of society's biggest challenges such as crime reduction, population change, alleviating poverty or climate change. This is backed-up by a statement in the recent Ofsted report "*Developing a deeper understanding of people and places, and of the need to live in balance with an increasingly fragile environment, is more important than ever in today's world.*"¹⁹³

4. THE IMPLICATIONS FOR ENGLISH BACCALAUREATE FOR PUPILS, SCHOOLS AND EMPLOYERS

- (a) In a statement made on the 4 February 2011,¹⁹⁴ Esri UK welcomed the findings of the recent Ofsted¹⁹³ report and supported the delivery of its recommendations. The inclusion of geography in the English Baccalaureate in our view reinforces this need. The report itself refers to the "enormous potential of GIS" which is "revolutionising and extending" the experiences of a few students. But it makes clear that "most teachers are reluctant to use such technology, despite the requirements of the Key Stage 3 curriculum and examination syllabuses to teach its use." Some of the concerns identified in the report can be addressed with GIS. For example, GIS can support the teaching of geographic core knowledge and its practice through fieldwork, provide a resource for non specialist teachers, and inspire Key Stage 3 students to continue studying geography to GCSE.

¹⁹⁰ Skills, Location and GIS in Business Survey, Esri UK 2010

¹⁹¹ ESRI (UK) Ltd internal market review—available on request

¹⁹² This is not exclusive use of Esri technology, Local Authorities commonly use GIS from a number of GIS suppliers

¹⁹³ Ofsted—Geography—Learning to make a world of difference

¹⁹⁴ <http://www.esriuk.com/aboutesriuk/pressreleases.asp?pid=656>

- (b) Our recent survey identified business leaders are looking for the skills gained through teaching geography and this community should welcome the inclusion of geography as part of the E-Bac. A summary of the survey is included in the previous section of this submission.

5. INTERNATIONAL COMPARATORS FOR THE E-BAC

- (a) Esri UK is not aware of International comparators for the E-Bac at this stage.

24 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Historical Association

The Department for Education has issued a call for evidence regarding the impact of the new English Baccalaureate. History constitutes a key player in the new Baccalaureate, being one of the two choices that students may opt for in the Humanities section. Therefore, as the subject association and voice for history in schools, we at the Historical Association feel compelled to respond to this call for evidence and with a teacher membership of over 6,000 teachers, we are well placed to do so.

In many ways, it is very early to be measuring the impact of the English Baccalaureate, given that league table positions to date are retrospective, and we are yet to see a full year of timetable implications for schools, or a cohort of students and schools having fully been through the new process. However, some early conclusions can be drawn and issues raised.

1. THE PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE ENGLISH BACCALAUREATE AND ITS VALUE AS A MEASURE OF PUPIL AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

The Historical Association supports the access of all pupils to history education. The first thing to note about the English Baccalaureate is that it gives history a place as a core subject and the Historical Association fully supports this move as a method of enabling far greater numbers of students to gain access to the study of history post-14. As an organisation representing over 6,000 history teachers, we are delighted that this move will offer both ourselves and the teachers that we represent the opportunity to spread passion for history and enthuse a whole new generation of students. History gives students the fundamental knowledge of the forces that have shaped the society in which they live, and equips them to make informed decisions about the future. We are also fully appreciative of the implications in terms of the status of history at Key Stage 3 that this will have. Whilst we fully support the English Baccalaureate, there are issues concerning the implementation that need to be addressed.

By nature, the English Baccalaureate is an academic qualification. Whilst academic rigour is important and the assumption should not be made that students with additional educational needs will not be able to access academic subjects such as history; the problem arises that not every child fits this academic mould. The Historical Association supports the right of *every* child to access history up until the age of 16, but if the English Baccalaureate is to stay, then the process of assessment in history will need to adapt if we are to avoid this qualification becoming a divisive mechanism. If the English Baccalaureate is to be an effective measure of pupil progress then attention will need to be paid to meaningful level 1 qualifications in subjects such as history; we have to remember that the average grade at GCSE in this country is a grade D. The history pilot GCSE currently run by OCR offers a potential model of assessment that grows naturally out of classroom teaching and learning and whilst maintaining academic rigour, appeals to several different types of learner. However, even within the pilot, there are still issues regarding accessibility of level 1 qualifications for all students. This is an issue that can easily be addressed in order to make the English Baccalaureate a highly effective qualification for all.

Secondly, it appears that a two-tier system is developing in schools: those that have always adopted a traditional curriculum on one side, following the Baccalaureate; and those that have opted for more vocational pathways on the other, choosing to ignore it. Of course, this is where the possibility of a divisive system becomes a real threat. Similarly, there is evidence to suggest a socio-economic link to this trend, with schools in more affluent circumstances offering a greater amount of history to pupils.¹⁹⁵ This could result in a lack of mobility for those pupils in schools where the English Baccalaureate is not aspired to, thus perpetuating current inequalities. The English Baccalaureate needs to cut through this trend rather than perpetuate it. It is interesting to note that in 2008 only 17.9% of pupils who received free school meals entered for a history GCSE, and this number is falling.¹⁹⁶ Therefore much rests on to what extent the latter tier of schools will be allowed to ignore the English Baccalaureate and to what extent school inspection and performance will rely upon it. If the current situation remains and schools are able to ignore the Baccalaureate, then there will probably be little change in terms of GCSE take-up (currently around 30 %.) If the Baccalaureate becomes an essential tool for the inspection of schools and a measure of school performance, then clearly, the government has a great deal of work to do, not only in terms of reforming the GCSE qualifications, but also at Key Stage 3. The Historical

¹⁹⁵ Historical Association Survey of Secondary Schools 2010 http://www.history.org.uk/news/news_869.html

¹⁹⁶ Source: *Hansard*

Association surveys of 2009 and 2010¹⁹⁷ revealed worrying trends concerning time allocation and specialist teaching of history at Key Stage 3. Our surveys pointed to a lack of time allocation for history at Key Stage 3 with 48% of academies reporting that they spent an hour per week or less on history and with 35% of academies and 20% of comprehensives and grammars reporting a decrease in teaching time. The survey also picked up a correlation between GCSE uptake and time allocation at GCSE with findings that schools that gave over 1 hour per week, or were increasing teaching time, were far more likely to see raised GCSE numbers as a result and that those with a decreased teaching time or options for year 9, were more likely to see a decrease in uptake. The English Baccalaureate means that there will be a definite need for increased time allocation at Key Stage 3.

If pupils in all schools are to have hope of success in history in terms of achieving the English Baccalaureate with history, then they must receive a decent grounding in the subject at Key Stage 3, which can only be achieved through quality teaching by well-trained specialists who are allowed the time to teach their subject effectively. Our 2010 survey revealed that almost 2/3 of teachers were concerned about history being taught by non-specialists at Key Stage 3.¹⁹⁸

2. THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE ENGLISH BACCALAUREATE

Taken as a whole, the subjects of the English Baccalaureate can provide an excellent provision for students wishing to go on to further study and well paid employment. The Russell Group makes this very clear in its list of facilitating subjects.¹⁹⁹ It is also interesting to note that the recently published Wolf Report²⁰⁰ appears to recommend a steer to a broad academic programme of study for students up to the age of 16, moving away from vocational pathways at this age. The English Baccalaureate will go a long way towards providing this. History is a rigorous, academic, challenging and relevant subject that is ideally placed to prepare students for adult life and work. The qualification will prevent specialism too early and narrow vocational pathways that restrict options for students later on.

As the subject association for history in schools, the Historical Association welcomes the place of history within the Humanities section of the English Baccalaureate. However, the rationale of the Humanities section remains unclear. Firstly it was named as Humanities and Arts and history was named for inclusion alongside other subjects such as art. However, this has changed and now only Humanities are included. Whilst the Historical Association supports the concept of a Humanities section and applauds the place of history within that, a clear idea of the rationale behind the choice of subjects in this section is needed to inform teachers, pupils and parents.

The rationale behind the inclusion of ancient history and yet the omission of classical civilisation also appears unclear. Whilst the Historical Association supports the inclusion of all history on the curriculum and is pleased to see that attention has been paid to ancient history, we would argue that classical civilisation is also an historical subject and worthy of inclusion. It is having something of a come-back in schools and a subject that was the preserve of grammar and independent schools for many years can now be found taught in many different types of schools. 4,463 pupils took AQA or OCR classical civilisation in 2010.

3. THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE ENGLISH BACCALAUREATE FOR PUPILS, SCHOOLS AND EMPLOYERS

The Historical Association welcomes the fact that through its place in the English Baccalaureate, history's status as a core curriculum subject is being re-asserted. It provides a wonderful opportunity to safeguard the subject by permitting fewer students to move away from the study of history before the age of 16. We also welcome the implication that if enforced across all schools, history will no longer face being actively barred as an option choice to some pupils as is currently the case in 16.8% of English schools.²⁰¹ It will also mean that the current 269 schools who failed last year to enter any students for GCSE,²⁰² effectively not offering that option, will need to change. There will also be a rise in the number of students opting for history at GCSE from the current c.30%. This is interesting because whilst 70% of students expressed enjoyment of history at Key Stage 3, the up-take at GCSE does not meet this.²⁰³ Potential explanations for this concern a perception that history is too difficult and inaccessible, which, with the right assessment models need not be the case. Another possibility is that school option pathways that pay high regard to possible league table positions are actively barring students from opting for history. The English Baccalaureate will have potentially a great impact upon history and mean that take-up for the subject could meet the 70% enjoyment levels reported at Key Stage 3.

¹⁹⁷ The Historical Association survey of secondary schools 2009 and 2010.

http://www.history.org.uk/news/news_415.html

http://www.history.org.uk/news/news_869.html

¹⁹⁸ Historical Association Survey of Secondary Schools 2010 http://www.history.org.uk/news/news_869.html

¹⁹⁹ The Russell Group, *Informed Choices* <http://www.russellgroup.ac.uk/informed-choices.aspx>

²⁰⁰ The Wolf Report on vocational education <http://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationDetail/Page1/DFE-00031-2011>

²⁰¹ Historical Association Survey of Secondary Schools 2010 http://www.history.org.uk/news/news_869.html

²⁰² Source: *Hansard* <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm101018/text/101018w0002.htm>

²⁰³ Historical Association Survey of Secondary Schools 2009 http://www.history.org.uk/news/news_415.html

However, the points made here will fail to have an impact until the English Baccalaureate's purpose is made clear to schools. At present it could be argued that the impact could be divisive. Implications for schools ought to be minimal as schools should be making curriculum decisions on the basis of need rather than league table position, a fact that is difficult to argue with. However, if the English Baccalaureate becomes enforced and certified, then it changes into more of a gold standard that employers and higher education will be looking for, and would therefore have a much greater impact on a pupils' future. This possibility creates a whole different set of issues. It could mean that the English Baccalaureate would act as a qualification to stay on for 6th form study, which in turn would also have a knock on effect in terms of university applications and potentially be limiting and divisive. If the C grade is the possible qualifying factor, then this too could actually mean that students are steered away from the subject if they are unlikely to reach this grade. The Historical Association supports the right of all students to access history education, but would like to raise the possibility that the English Baccalaureate in the longer term could actually serve to reduce the numbers of students who opt to study history post-16. This is because if the qualification becomes a gold standard for entry to 6th form, and from there, university, it may become impossible for students of lower ability to go on to further study of history. It may also be possible for a student who has gained a good GCSE in history to fail to gain the English Baccalaureate. Will this bar them from entering 6th form study?

There is also the possibility that 6th forms and universities will use the English Baccalaureate as qualifying criterion even if it remains unenforced. Therefore a kind of lottery may begin to exist whereby some schools choose to offer it, and others don't. If a child happens to attend a school that does not offer it, then where does this leave that child, especially if they were interested in studying one of the baccalaureate subjects such as history at higher level in later years?

Overall, the Historical Association strongly welcomes the fact that the English Baccalaureate will serve to increase the status of and access to history for pupils across the country up to the age of 16, but would urge that the English Baccalaureate's use as an entry requirement for further study will need to be addressed. Although issues can be raised concerning the long-term implications of the qualification, we are confident that once voiced, they can be addressed and solved in due course.

4. INTERNATIONAL COMPARATORS FOR THE ENGLISH BACCALAUREATE

Rather than offering a broad programme of study, the English Baccalaureate is a benchmark and acts as a gold standard for having achieved success in specific subjects. Whilst the Historical Association views the English Baccalaureate as a positive step towards improved access to the study of history for all and therefore welcomes it as a qualification, the term Baccalaureate is somewhat misleading as this is not the broad programme of study that is evidenced in the International Baccalaureate.

Our members are confused and express concerns about what the Baccalaureate will mean in the long term for history and for them. This is what the government needs to respond to first.

The fact is that in terms of history international parties come to this country to view good practice. The teaching of history has long been recognised as very good, as Ofsted Highlights.²⁰⁴ Despite this strength, international research shows that as a curriculum in its entirety, this country is out of line with international counterparts. We are one of the only countries that allows our children to cease the study of history at the age of 14, and sometimes as early as 13 with the advent of two-year Key Stage 3 courses in some schools. The International Baccalaureate could go some way to providing a remedy for that situation. When one looks at the curricula of for example our Dutch, Swiss, American, Australian or Portuguese counterparts, one finds the compulsory study of history at least to the age of 15, with many Australian states operating a very similar qualification to the English Baccalaureate. The most obvious link to the English Baccalaureate is the International Baccalaureate middle years programme,²⁰⁵ however even here great differences exist. The middle years programme consists of eight subject areas of which Humanities is one. Pupils also follow the programme from 11–16 and will undertake a personal project. Within the humanities course, the students may undertake study in many different areas as well as the usual humanities subjects, such as civics, economics, sociology and anthropology and it is up to schools as to whether they integrate these or teach them discretely. This therefore forms a far broader qualification than that of the English Baccalaureate. However, it should be noted that there are issues with the International Baccalaureate programme as a qualification in schools that are part of a national system of education.

It is pleasing to note that the English Baccalaureate will bring this country more into line with others by allowing greater access to the study of history, which is not only essential to develop one's sense of self and place, but also for equipping students with knowledge and skills that will take them forwards into their careers. Teachers need to be reassured of the positive rationale behind this and be informed of successful international comparators.

24 March 2011

²⁰⁴ Ofsted history subject report 2007

²⁰⁵ <http://www.ibo.org/myp/curriculum/group3/>

Written evidence submitted by 13 individuals from Durrington High School

1. A strength of curriculum design in recent years has been the departure from “a one size fits all model”. Unfortunately, I perceive the “E-Bac” and many other aspects of the White Paper as being retrograde as opposed to improving and advancing educational experiences for our young people.

PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE E-BAC AND ITS VALUE AS A MEASURE OF PUPIL AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

2. I would like the educational philosophy, rationale and benefits behind the E-Bac to be shared with us and it to be explained why this group of subjects is deemed to be the most appropriate qualification on which to judge young people and schools. I think its value is limited and will not reflect equitably the performance of all children and schools nationally. The way in which this process is being imposed seems to have no grounding in strategic vision or operationally be linked with really developing global citizens with all of the qualities and skills they will need to lead not only happy and successful lives but be the driving force in moving us out of the recession we are currently in. To measure schools in terms of raw outcomes is naïve and shows a complete lack of understanding. I totally support the view of every child having access to an excellent school and an excellent education and would welcome an Education Bill which moved us closer towards this. National tests and contextual data once abandoned will not recognise the huge success of some schools or will go back to hiding the lack of progress of some, where raw scores may look positive but hide underachievement. Secondary schools, as with all schools, should be accountable for outcomes, but starting points and base lines must be considered. A child with significant behavioural issues and low literacy requires a highly skilled range of staff support to achieve success. Can you realistically compare such a school with an independent/selective school who may have no students requiring this type of support?

3. I fully endorse that there should be a national progress measure which has international credibility. I would propose English and mathematics being compulsory and other subjects to make up the five+ measure A*-C. Vocational qualifications as long as they are meaningful should also be counted. Schools who make huge progress will not necessarily be recognised within the “E-Bac”. Are they any less successful or are the achievements of their students any less important?

4. Schools have worked very hard at personalising their curriculum and the curriculum should not be seen in isolation. When students follow a curriculum they can engage with and achieve success there is a strong correlation with positive behaviour and attendance. So when students are made to follow a constrained curriculum, such as the E-Bac, there will be less engagement by many students which will lead to poorer behaviour and reduced attendance.

CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE E-BAC

5. I fully endorse and support English and mathematics as a progress measure as they are essential in life and the workplace; I can also accept science within this. If there is to be more than these subjects, then on what basis have geography, history and languages been selected? Which group of people made this decision and on what evidence that it is the right thing to do? It concerns me that these important decisions are not made by educational experts who have a range of practical experience across the state and independent sectors nor linked with what successful business and organisations seek? Humanities have always included RE so why not here? Languages—if one is serious about the acquisition of additional languages by our children, why is it exempt from first and primary schools and we begin at teaching it at 11 or 12 years old? It should be from five years old. There is currently a shortage of language teachers and when it was formerly part of the compulsory curriculum poor outcomes were achieved nationally. Where will these additional teachers come from and how will they be funded? Who decided what languages are to be selected? Again, your choice is biased towards the independent sector (Ancient Greek, Latin). How are these languages useful to the work of commerce? Who decided French was to be included? Yes they are a geographical neighbour but it is a historic part of our curriculum. French is not a world business language. If the E-Bac is seen to be advancing our young people in the global economy and languages to be a compulsory subject, why not Mandarin?

6. Why languages, geography and history have been chosen at the detriment of others confuses and surprises me. Successful organisations do not constrain, the “E-Bac” does. Where are the subjects which develop creativity? Where is the place of ICT and enterprise? More importantly where is the “skill” development? A fault of previous education systems and examinations were that they were content and knowledge driven. Whilst there is a need for this, unless you possess the skills of solving problems, flexibility, are enterprising, can work as part of a team and at other times lead you will not be successful in the 21st century.

7. In relation to history and geography I do not support their inclusion at the exclusion of other foundation subjects but I would welcome a compulsory element of the new national curriculum to include our current and recent history and the geography of our own county.

8. IMPLICATIONS OF THE E-BAC FOR PUPILS, SCHOOLS AND EMPLOYERS

- The challenges our young people face in the coming years are immense.
- Entering further/higher education at an increased cost.

- Procuring employment.
- Assisting the recovery of the economy.
- Meeting the needs of business/organisations.

9. Employers want employees who are literate, numerate, possess interpersonal skills, can solve problems, are creative and who can utilise technology. The “E-Bac” does not fulfil these requirements. It is a limited model which does not meet the requirements for young people’s futures.

INTERNATIONAL COMPARATORS FOR THE “E-BAC”

10. I totally endorse seeking best practice; we should learn from the best and also from different systems. However, to make knowledge and skills transference a success, you must understand current systems and structures and what the differences are.

11. What is not recognised in the White Paper are the huge social differences which exist when comparing us with other countries. Many other countries do not expect their school is to address pastoral issues. Those mentioned do not have the huge social, emotional and behavioural issues that many teachers and schools face on a daily basis in this county.

12. In summary, I am passionate about achieving excellence for all students. This narrow approach will create greater inequalities and reduce the richness that so many schools offer.

13. I sincerely hope we see changes in what is being proposed; the future of our young people and our country is not a toy to be played with. I welcome the opportunity to expand upon any of the points made.

24 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Mark Billingham

I write in response to the proposals for the E-Bac, and submit the following points.

1. In general I agree that there is a need for a more stringent measure of school success which does not allow schools to “inflate” pass rates through over-valued qualifications. However, I believe any new measure should reduce the impact of certain vocational qualifications on school achievement rates. The E-Bac seems to be more than just an anti-vocational movement but instead is pro a very select set of subjects. Here is an opportunity to give value to other subjects besides the core three (English, Maths, Science) but instead presents a very narrow view of what a “good education” is. I am surprised to see well established subjects—such as R.E., Music, Art—discounted from the E-Bac, as well as more contemporary subjects which have demonstrated academic rigour—such as ICT, Business and Psychology. I am not suggesting that the E-Bac is extended to include more than five subjects—after all, I am sure (like me) the government is a supporter of choice. However, I am particularly arguing what is counted as a Humanity should be broadened.

2. I am concerned that the E-Bac does not become the primary measure of a school. It clearly values a traditional education which is one way of measuring a school but not the only. For certain parents, carers and communities it may be important to know what percentage students achieved the E-Bac, but other achievements should be valued too—such as overall pass rates and pass rates per subject. There is also an opportunity to provide reliable measures of value added achievement. In short, I am arguing that schools should be measured on a number of criteria which are made readily available, and then stakeholders may select the information which is important to them rather than it being dictated from the top down.

3. I would also like to see recognition given to Psychology GCSE in the E-Bac qualification. I could make an argument for it being recognised as a Science or as a Humanity, but either way I think this subject has proven itself to be both demanding and rigorous. Like other sciences, it demonstrates empiricism, cause and effect relationships, generalisability, objectivity and predictability—key skills we would want any scientist to understand and develop. Similarly, its focus on themes such as cultural development, human progress, human insight, social processes and atypical behaviours means it qualifies well as a Humanity too. In the same way that commentators have disputed whether Geography is really a Science rather than a Humanity, or Latin a Humanity rather than a Language—I would say that the “label” given to Psychology is less important than finding a place for it. Its disadvantage will be that it is a “new” subject and the E-Bac seems so very concerned with the “old”. However, if the government is truly committed to an academic education, then I think it is important to review this and other subjects (including those referred to earlier) in terms of what they have to offer in the re-establishing of standards.

4. There are so few subjects in the current E-Bac that there is the potential that certain subjects become very elitist and unjustified divisions are created within schools and the education system. It is based on personal experience admittedly, but my suspicion is that some of the country’s best teachers are delivering subjects not included in the E-Bac. In my own school, I am confident that the headteacher would identify her best teachers as a dance/performing arts teacher, an art teacher, a media studies/English teacher, a science teacher and a psychology teacher. Meanwhile, schools struggle to find decent maths and science teachers, yet these are the subjects that schools continue to “guarantee”. The point is that learning is not just about the subject but about

the experience—and I am concerned that by marginalising certain subjects, you are marginalising certain (very good) teachers leaving students disenfranchised—a much bigger problem than whether they have a language GCSE or not, for instance. I have already said that I support the E-Bac in principle—but I do think it needs to include more subjects to address the issues raised in this paragraph.

5. If I understand my politics correctly, the current government is pro-choice, yet the E-Bac clearly limits choice. I know that it is not prescriptive and that schools have some freedom in whether to offer it and students have some freedom in whether they follow it. However, the proposals to make it a primary measure of attainment sends out a clear message about what is important and what is not—so schools and pupils (and parents/carers) will feel they do not have a real choice. In the same way that there is a wide choice given in terms of what counts as a language, I think there could be a much wider choice in what counts as a Humanity—rather than what seems to be a rather personal agenda-led “choice” of two. I would also like to see a more open minded approach to what constitutes a science—whether that includes Psychology or not—I think the current qualifying courses do not acknowledge the range of ways in which students can be taught about and can learn about scientific principles.

24 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Mr Flint

1. I am a teacher of three years experience, having recently retrained. My education was publicly funded. I gained a degree from Oxford University and then qualified as a Chartered Accountant. I have worked in the pharmaceutical, tourism and security industries before founding and growing two successful companies providing software to the telephony and banking sectors. I have management roles in the science department and in a whole school capacity. Unfortunately the Fast Track Scheme was scrapped with no replacement.

PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE E-BACC AND ITS VALUE AS A MEASURE OF PUPIL AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

2. The governors, SLT (senior leadership team), teachers and staff know that school success is measured on published statistics. They will adjust the application of school resources to score as highly as they can on these criteria. The E-Bac will therefore have an enormous impact on how schools are run. The parents of prospective school pupils/students will make a choice of schools on the published measures of school success. 6th form colleges and other institutions of higher education are the main clients of the proposed E-Bacc. Students leaving at 16 years old rarely go into employment and those that do generally are those who would not be achieving 5 GCSE's (A*–C grade).

3. A “one size fits all” philosophy/rational doesn't seem to fit any of the clients needs, except for headline comparisons. I think its value is limited and will not reflect equitably the performance of all children and schools locally or nationally. Raw outcomes can be as skewed and massaged as much as adjusted scores. Surely the public is more sophisticated and wants access to excellent schools for all pupils/students, with an education which is tailored to each pupil/student. If the E-Bacc is to be the “gold standard” for education it would be a shame if it penalised successful pupils/students or schools. The proposal as it stands will do both.

4. Learning has become personalised, due in part to government initiatives and in part due to its success. Every child should be given the chance of succeeding in school. Children brand themselves as failures if they don't measure up to the criteria placed on them for success. We should look for a measure which we can compare school performance and pupil/student performance. By introducing the current white paper ideas, we would immediately brand some successful schools and pupils as failures.

CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE E-BAC

5. English, mathematics and science to GCSE (C grade) should be standard. The other two GCSEs (A*–C) could include other GCSEs in English, mathematics or science. A broad range of other “academic” subjects could also be included. Making the list too proscriptive will force schools again to change the syllabus to include those subjects. A specialist technology, science or maths college could be so easily penalised for producing a cohort of well educated STEM specialists. Specialist schools increase competition in the education sector and that should be encouraged. The current proposals would penalise them. An E-Bacc standard should be flexible enough to include a good yet specialist education.

6. BTec and other non-exam based GCSE's (could be included as long as each subject studied at BTec was considered as only one subject. (Some BTecs are considered to be worth more than one GCSE.)

7. History, geography, RE, and other core subjects are already compulsory to the end of year 9. By making them effectively compulsory in year 10 and 11 will remove valuable resources and teaching time from other newer and perhaps more relevant subjects to our changing society.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE E-BAC FOR PUPILS, SCHOOLS AND EMPLOYERS

8. We are trying to educate pupils/students with the skills to perform jobs, some of which don't even exist yet, (science and technology continue to change our lives.) The world is changing at a rapid pace. The challenges they face are immense. Many will bear a high cost for their higher education. Jobs are often filled on the basis of the personality, character, experience and skills of a candidate; their educational qualifications being a door opener. The current E-Bacc proposals will affect schools and therefore pupils much more than employers.

INTERNATIONAL COMPARATORS FOR THE "E-BAC"

9. I don't know enough about international comparators to make a meaningful comment.

24 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Laura Rutherford

THE IMPLICATIONS OF EXCLUDING RELIGIOUS EDUCATION FROM THE ENGLISH BACCALAUREATE: AN RE TEACHER'S OBSERVATIONS

1) **RE teaching time will be reduced in many schools.** If RE remains a statutory requirement, but not part of the EBacc, this will mean that many schools will deliver RE in as minimal a way as they can in order to free up curriculum time. Circumstantial evidence from OFSTED and from colleagues at other schools already reveals that some schools are, in fact, ignoring the statutory requirement altogether, or delivering RE through assemblies, PSHE/tutor lessons or off-timetable sessions. This is likely to become the norm in many schools, even schools where RE is currently strong.

2) **Schools will have no incentive to offer full-course GCSE RE.** I have noted the Secretary of State's comments that students will be expected to follow other GCSE courses outside of the EBacc, but in order to allow a wider range of subjects it seems likely that many schools will opt for short course GCSE (if at all) in RE. While the short course has its merits, it does not stretch and challenge students in the same way as a full course and is by definition worth less than a full course in RE or in any other subject. This is likely to add to the possible perception that RE is a "second-string" subject.

3) **There are likely to be specialist RE teachers who lose their jobs.** This is likely to be a knock-on effect of the potential reduction in teaching time. Heads on tight budgets are likely to use other subject specialists to deliver RE, and in schools where RE goes into decline as an examined subject, heads are likely to argue that RE specialists do not represent value for money.

4) **RE is currently one of the fastest growing subjects at GCSE and A level— this trend will be reversed.** The growth in the subject over the last few years is not due to it being a "soft option", rather, students appreciate the academic rigour and challenge, but most of all, they appreciate the fact that it addresses areas of education that other subjects only touch upon. For instance, debating the rights and wrongs of fertility treatment, capital punishment and the drug laws at GCSE or discussing the nature and value of human life at A-level brings out the best in many students and truly engages them. This engagement cannot be achieved in the small amount of teaching time to which RE would be reduced.

5) **The value of RE will be diminished in the eyes of students and parents.** Years of experience, as well as feedback from universities, has shown us as teachers that RE is valued as an academically rigorous, even difficult, subject. RE students become clearer thinkers, more skilled communicators, increasingly spiritually aware and able to use their knowledge of religions critically and effectively. It provides routes into a range of careers including law and medicine. It is, in every sense, a humanities subject. If, however, History and Geography are portrayed as having more value, student numbers will drop and parents will not want their children to take RE as an academic subject. In a relatively short space of time, this could undo all the good work that has been done in recent years to dispel myths about RE and develop it as a subject that has something to offer all students.

24 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Sarah Brooks

1. The following submission outlines my support for the inclusion of Languages in the English Baccalaureate but also outlines concerns that I wish to express, based upon discussions with languages staff working in schools in the East Midlands. It describes the initial reactions of classroom teachers, Heads of Department and also senior management teams. It outlines challenges that the introduction of the E Bac will present and also paints a picture of how languages within the E Bac could form part of a coherent, life-long learning experience. It makes some recommendations for how the government might protect the growth of language study and ensure that schools continue to make decisions about their provision based upon what is right for their individual contexts.

2. I am an independent consultant, specialising in Modern Foreign Languages and have been working as such since 2008. During this time I have worked as a Regional Subject Adviser for the Association for Language Learning, as part of its teacher support programme for the introduction of the new secondary curriculum. I have also worked as a Regional Trainer for Links into Languages and with schools as a mentor in the LinkedUp project. I have worked with both primary and secondary schools across the East Midlands and have regularly worked on behalf of Northamptonshire Local Authority to support county secondary schools. Prior to this, I held positions as a Head of Spanish and Deputy in Department in a Specialist Language College in Derbyshire and also as an Advanced Skills Teacher in a Specialist Language College in Northamptonshire. My main languages are French, German and Spanish, all of which I have to degree level.

3. The evidence I wish to submit is largely based upon discussions I have had with language teachers and Heads of MFL Departments in my contact with them, whilst undertaking the consultancy work outlined above. As many of these teachers speak confidentially during training and use it as a platform to express their concerns, particularly where they are having an unsympathetic response from Senior Management teams, I feel it would be inappropriate and a breach of trust to name them and their establishments within my submission. I will therefore allude to the region and the kind of school only.

4. In principle, I welcome the inclusion of languages in the English Baccalaureate. The study of a foreign language develops countless transferable skills, makes many links to other areas of the curriculum, supports and reinforces literacy and is an excellent arena in which to hone Personal Learning and Thinking Skills. It is a subject which easily embraces all kinds of learning styles and supports the three aims of the new curriculum in developing responsible citizens, confident individuals and successful learners. In addition, it is crucial to economic success in the increasingly global commerce in which we engage.

5. Since the study of languages has been non-compulsory at KS4 and as it is often perceived as a “difficult” subject, many schools have seen a terrible decline. Nationally uptake at KS4 was 44% in 2010 (Modern Language Achievement & Challenge, OFSTED Jan 2011 page 7) and the CILT Language Trends Survey 2009, found that in the East Midlands, where I principally operate, 62% of maintained schools surveyed had less than 50% of their pupils studying a language in Year 10. In many cases, certain languages can no longer be offered at KS4 and departments have consequently dwindled, sometimes down to just one member of staff. I have worked with one particular teacher in a comprehensive in South Derbyshire who was the only member of staff in her department and was teaching a GCSE class of just one pupil. These members of staff have often fought hard to maintain provision where they have had small class sizes and others have had to counter-act the knock-on effect and fight for timetable space in order to offer a feasible learning experience in KS3. Marking languages as one of the five key subjects has already given them renewed status and I have met teachers who are anticipating significant increases in KS4 cohorts, where previously they have been small or indeed, non-existent. In Greater Manchester, I spoke to a teacher, who thanks to newly introduced guided pathways for Year 9 students taking their options, was looking forward to two GCSE classes running in the next academic year, where previously there had been none. Schools have also informally reported a renewed parental interest in their child’s language learning. A specialist language college in Northamptonshire which had recently held a parental information evening regarding the English Baccalaureate and option choices, had reported a much greater level of parental support for languages, where this had previously been an area of difficulty. On the other hand, where schools have experienced dramatic decline in languages, they are now facing a sudden surge of demand, so staffing and resourcing this in the current climate of budget cuts is a key issue for them.

6. If the implications of links to performance tables are not carefully considered and alternative accreditation is simply dismissed, there is a real risk of knee-jerk reactions being made. This will leave a legacy of only the most able having access to languages, in cases where schools offering NVQ and similar qualifications over the last few years, had reported higher numbers of students gaining a qualification and maintaining motivation and purpose in their learning. I have heard many schools, who were either considering the introduction of alternative accreditation for students who were unlikely to continue language learning, or schools who already had qualifications such as NVQ in place with measured success, state that they were considering changing their plans due to the emphasis that the White Paper placed on GCSE. This was largely due to the fact that support from senior management teams for forms of alternative accreditation had dwindled, in favour of pushing more students through GCSE. This shows a real danger that decisions could be made, which are based on school data, rather than needs and capabilities of individual students.

7. Inclusion of E Bac performance data in current performance tables has meant that many schools appear to be underperforming, when in fact they may well have a thriving language provision. This has caused some schools to make ill-considered decisions based on a response to data, rather than a response to carefully considered needs of pupils and communities. In some cases, early entry (sometimes as early as Year 8) is seen as the pathway to higher E-Bac results. I have had discussions with a comprehensive school in South Nottinghamshire, where GCSE study was to begin in Year 8 and also a specialist school in Northamptonshire, where it was suggested by senior management, that pupils take their GCSE in Year 8, on the basis of their prior learning at Key Stage 2. This simply sees primary languages as an earlier provision of the secondary diet, which of course is not the case, as primary language builds skills gradually at an age appropriate level, rather than preparing them specifically for GCSE level work. These decisions also ignore the fact that GCSE is intended to be taken after five years of secondary study at an appropriate age of maturity. It could conversely, see pupils entering early and achieving lesser results than if they had taken it in Year 11 and could also mean

that languages are studied less or not at all during KS4. This would have a knock-on effect on KS5 and life-long learning of languages, as with no access to continued language learning in KS4, it would be very difficult to bridge the gap and take up languages again in Year 12.

8. Focusing on GCSE as the only form of accepted accreditation should bear in mind the limitations of this qualification as it currently stands. If GCSE is to be the aspiration for many students, it should equip them with and reward them for transferable skills and not simply be a test of memory. The new GCSE is currently a 60% test of memory in terms of the written and spoken element, with many of the interactional elements watered down. Students themselves are the first to comment upon this and struggle to see the purpose of their learning for the qualification. There is little room for the creative curricula and compelling learning contexts encouraged by the new secondary curriculum and the focus remains on content rather than the linguistic skills that progress throughout the KS2 and KS3 curriculum. This has been a common complaint of secondary teachers during my training sessions when discussing making changes to the content of their KS3 curriculum. Teachers feel constantly tied to the constraints of the GCSE examination further up the school.

9. It is important to ensure that policy is consistent throughout the key stages; that each key stage builds upon the progression in the last and that the language learning experience is consistently weighted in importance throughout. If the Government is encouraging language learning to the age of 16, KS2 languages should move from an entitlement towards statutory provision. It should also emphasise the importance of the progression within key stages. For example, where schools are shortening their KS3 in order to make time for the content of GCSE, Year 9 framework objectives are also being disregarded in some cases. When questioned about this, a further specialist school in Northamptonshire who had introduced a three year Key Stage 4, stated that the Year 9 objectives were simply not being addressed.

10. My recommendations to government based upon my experiences with language teachers would be the following:

- That primary languages are made statutory.
- That E Bac is not measured in performance tables immediately, to enable schools affected by factors such as staffing and serious decline in the past, to improve provision.
- That alternative accreditation for students unlikely to achieve grade C or above is supported, as a means of life-long language learning.
- That government emphasises the importance of age-appropriate study within the context of the Key Stages.

24 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Mrs J Parker

1. I agree that all children should have the opportunity to have a broad and well rounded education.
2. In my child's school, year 9 students are allowed to choose three GCSE subjects in addition to maths, English, science, ICT and R.E., however the students in the top set language classes (approximately 120 children) are only allowed to choose one option. They have been instructed by the school that for two of their options they must choose a language and humanity. I have read comments on the internet by a spokesperson from the DfE saying that the language and humanity options have not been made compulsory thus giving students a choice, however in practice this is not the case. As the school is being measured for league tables on these results the school insists that these subjects are taken. The needs of the league tables are being put before the needs of the individual students.
3. The students are already taking a full RE GCSE. Why does this not count as humanity? Mr Gove has been reported as saying that R.E .is not included as it is a compulsory subject however Maths is a compulsory subject yet it is included.
4. I firmly believe that the range of humanities is too narrow. I realise that the intention is to raise the number of students taking history and geography but I believe that a significant number would rather study art or music or classics. This would still give them a well rounded and balanced education. At the moment, geography and history compete against a large number of other subjects. If they only had to compete against music, art, classics and RE, the number of students taking geography and history would still increase but the students would have a wider choice and would be able to pick a subject that they would enjoy. Not every student likes geography and history.
5. In conclusion, please widen the range of humanities to include RE, Art, Music and Classics. If RE especially was included, the students at our school would then be free to choose two subjects that interest them. Please re-emphasise to the schools that the languages and humanities as part of the E-Bac are not compulsory. The only way to do this may be to change what is reported in the league tables as most schools

will always do anything to increase their standing in the tables, even if it is not what is best for the individual students.

24 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by St Marylebone Church of England School

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The status of the English Baccalaureate should be spelt out to parents and pupils clearly prior to April 2011 in order to inform pupils in their academic choices *this year*.
2. The Government need to explain what value the English Baccalaureate certificate carries.
3. The Humanities element of the English Baccalaureate needs to be re-considered in particular with reference to RE, Music or any business subject.
4. A full GCSE in RE should be recognised as part of the Humanities element of the English Baccalaureate as this is not currently a compulsory exam but it is a Humanity subject.
5. The Government should recognise the restrictive impact this measure has on pupil choice at GCSE. The government needs to understand the impact from a pupil's perspective in practice.

1. THE CONTEXT OF ST MARYLEBONE SCHOOL

1.1 St Marylebone School is a Church of England comprehensive school situated in the centre of London serving some of the most deprived wards as well as some of the more affluent. Its intake is diverse socially, ethnically and religiously. It takes in pupils who start below the national curriculum as well as those attaining at a high level at KS2. It has been awarded specialisms in Performing Arts, Maths & ICT and Communication.

1.2 Results have risen from 35% 5 A*-C in 1997 up to 95% in 2010 and has been over 90% for the past eight years. This has been achieved using GCSE exams rather than courses that award "four GCSE equivalence" as some schools have done. The current 5 A*-C with English and Maths figure is 88%. The estimated English Baccalaureate pass rate for 2010 was only 36%.

1.3 St Marylebone has been rated as *outstanding in every respect* in its last OFSTED and the Head teacher has been recognised for her leadership both by the National Teaching Awards but also through the award of an OBE. Neither the staff of this school nor the Head teacher were given any chance of consultation on the introduction of this measure.

1.4 The curriculum at St Marylebone has always offered all pupils the subjects included in the English Baccalaureate and actively encouraged pupils to consider keeping a language GCSE amongst their options; we have never forced them to do so. We have prided ourselves on the broad range of subjects on offer to pupils at GCSE; most pupils take around 10–11 GCSEs. The core offer is English, English Literature, Maths, Two Sciences (with the chance to take this as a triple), ICT and RE. On top of this pupils can take four additional courses from a wide range of academic and vocational subjects. Extra-curricular Latin has recently been put in the list to be chosen within the options process.

2. THE PURPOSE AND BENEFIT OF THE ENGLISH BACCALAUREATE AND ITS VALUE AS A MEASURE OF PUPIL AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

2.1 As far as we can gather from the speeches Mr Gove has made, the purpose of the English Baccalaureate is to correct the countries standing in international league tables and to prescribe a chosen set of subjects as being representative of a rigorous academic education. The benefits of trying to improve performance by simply measuring performance would appear to have been discredited in Mr Gove's pre-election and post-election arguments. The English Baccalaureate does more than just measure performance; it is proposed to be an award of a certificate that pupils can achieve or fail. No other school performance measure has done this and it is our belief that it is major failing of this measure to award pupils a certificate that is of no more value than its constituent parts and to suggest that this award is the measure of an academic education. This leads schools such as ours to assume that we must tell pupils that out of their four optional choices, two must be from a prescribed narrow list as decreed by the current government [given that the other three are already compulsory].

2.2 The current English Baccalaureate score for our school for 2010 is 36%. This, when read with the messages coming from Mr Gove about schools failing their children and putting them through soft subjects just to get a higher league table figure, suggests that this school is failing more pupils than it succeeds with. No OFSTED inspection has suggested this to be the case but in one fell swoop the English Baccalaureate score does this. It also obscures the fact that pupils leave with around 10 GCSEs each in academic subjects. It obscures the success of pupils in subjects such as Economics, Music, RE, and Business Studies to name a few additional academic courses. The 36% also suggests that the other 64% of pupils failed the English Baccalaureate, where in actual fact this is not the case as the majority did not take it due to choosing different options. Had the English Baccalaureate meant either MFL, History or Geography the rate would have been 76%; a very different picture.

2.3 The English Baccalaureate sits in a vague position as a measure of school performance. In the debate on the second reading of the Education Bill Mr Gove reminded parliament that the English Baccalaureate was not compulsory, yet it is the measure his government is introducing as the indicator of academic rigour. It is at once essential all pupils attain a good academic education and yet not compulsory that the measure of academic rigour as chosen by Mr Gove should be taken. The statistics of pupils not passing the English Baccalaureate are quoted as being a measure of the failure of schools such as ours yet he is suggesting that the English Baccalaureate does not have to be followed. This vague position needs to be clarified for the benefit of schools, parents, pupils and employers. It is either important or it is not. The future of students driven into History and Geography is also vague. Mr Gove has slashed funding to University departments teaching Humanities but simultaneously told pupils at GCSE level that these subjects are vital.

2.4 We do not find any of the constituent parts of the English Baccalaureate to be without value; all of them are clearly academic subjects which would make up a good collection of GCSEs.

- 2.4.1 A modern foreign language is clearly an asset and we have encouraged pupils to follow a language if they can. However to judge a pupil and therefore the school as failing if a percentage of pupils do not choose to take a language is in our opinion misleading. Over 50% of our pupils have English as a second language; their first language such as Arabic and Bengali is not credited as worth inclusion. It might be argued that Arabic has more value in a global political and economic sense than German, Welsh, Latin or Hebrew, yet the latter are included. Over two billion of the world's population in India and China who represent our students' future economic competitors speak languages which are not listed as part of the English Baccalaureate. Why is that?
- 2.4.2 It would appear that Mr Gove is unhappy that some minority of schools do not offer pupils a language at all at KS4. The inclusion of a modern foreign language, Latin, Greek or Hebrew, seems to be penalising all schools and all students in order to get a few schools to comply. In terms of class discipline he is falling back on a failed approach of keeping a whole class back for detention because a few are misbehaving.
- 2.4.3 Whilst we would argue that all pupils should have the opportunity to study a modern foreign language at GCSE, and while we would always encourage pupils who can do well at a language to take one, what is the value in driving more pupils into the study of these subjects if they have shown no aptitude or desire over KS2 or KS3, even if they are academically able? Why is pupil and parent choice not to be trusted?
- 2.4.4 Humanities are also valuable subjects but the definition of Humanities in the English Baccalaureate is exceedingly narrow. Whether a pupil passes History or Geography is recorded in each school's exam statistics and these could be made available to all. But to measure a school as failing or a pupil as failing in an academic curriculum because they choose music over geography or economics over history seems to us to be misleading.
- 2.4.5 RE is declared to be not included because it is already compulsory. However the teaching of non-examined RE and the teaching of examined RE (at GCSE level) are very different. Pupils who wish to take extra RE as part of their optional choice as a Humanity are being disadvantaged by this measure because to gain an English Baccalaureate they have to choose an additional Humanity.

2.5 We wonder what an English Baccalaureate means as a measure. Take for example the following two pupil's results from St Marylebone in 2010:

Pupil A:

English B, English Lit B, Maths, C, Core Science C, Additional Science C, Spanish C, Geography C, Design Technology C, ICT C, RE short course C.

(10 GCSEs at A*-C with a **pass in the English Baccalaureate**; average grade C)

Pupil B:

English A, English Lit A, Maths A, Statistics A*, Biology A, Chemistry A, Physics A*, Spanish A, Economics A, Art A, ICT B, RE A.

(12 GCSEs at A*-C—**a fail in the English Baccalaureate**; average grade A)

One is recorded in our 36% of English Baccalaureate successes and one is recorded in our 64% of English Baccalaureate failures for 2010. But which one has the more successful and academic passes? The bald percentage of the English Baccalaureate as published in league tables would suggest pupil A represents success but pupil B does not. This, in our view, is misleading. It also seems unreasonable that pupil A is awarded a certificate from the government to recognise her academic achievement when pupil B is not recognised. Is it really pupil B that is leaving us so low in the international league tables that Mr Gove worries about so much?

2.6 If the English Baccalaureate is to be a success as a measure of school performance and of pupil performance, and of any use to employers then parents, pupils and employers will need to understand what the English Baccalaureate means and what it doesn't mean. In an evening held to inform our parents about the white paper no parent could understand why one is seen as successful and one is not.

3. THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE ENGLISH BACCALAUREATE

3.1 In addition to the submission made under points 2.3 and 2.4 we would argue that the choice of subjects is too narrow and we would argue for them to be widened; particularly in the field of humanities and in the omission of arts.

3.2 RE is by any definition of the Humanities, a member. The University of Oxford certainly includes theology and any student leading that way will take RE at GCSE to begin with. Yet RE is not included in the English Baccalaureate. The only argument put forward by the Department of Education or indeed Mr Gove is that RE is already compulsory. But it is not compulsory to take a GCSE in the subject and this is where the academic rigour is added. The exclusion of subjects that are compulsory certainly doesn't seem to include English, Maths or Science which are of course included. Our argument for the inclusion of RE is not merely from our position as a Church of England school. The GCSE course that our pupils take whether in a study of the Gospels or a comparative study of Islam and Christianity includes academic rigour equivalent to that found in Geography or History. The comparative study of Islam and Christianity would also seem to us to hold particular significance at this time. RE is academic, it is rigorous and has direct relevance to pupils lives today; particularly those taught in multi-cultural, cosmopolitan cities such as London.

3.3 What would be the impact of adding another subject or two subjects to the English Baccalaureate? In our view, when we look at the diversity of our pupils, their aspirations and their various skills, it would mean that they can express their own free will a little more in their choice of studies whilst still keeping an academic core of subjects that allows them to meet the government's wish and achieve this new standard called the English Baccalaureate.

3.4 The exclusion of Economics, Business Studies or any inclusion of an Arts subject such as music would also seem to us to be truly regrettable. It is true that once pupils have taken their core subjects they have four choices of course. However pupils agonise over these choices and frequently wish to take five out of four possible choices. For those pupils wishing to take a language and either history or geography the English Baccalaureate will make no difference, but in our school that is a minority. The majority choose a language. The majority also choose one of the humanities, but not always in combination. Now they are to be coerced into choosing both leaving them just two other choices. This will squeeze out other subjects that are equally important to developing a well rounded education; Music, Art, Dance, Drama, D+T subjects, Economics, Business Studies etc. Some of these subjects will inevitably close leading to narrower choice for all.

3.5 At a time when all pupils and their families are feeling the effects of the global failure in banking and the subsequent cuts in government spending, it would seem odd that the study of Economics or Business is excluded in a measure of education, while the study of Latin, Welsh and Classical Greek is included. The rationale for this seems unclear other than it being the opinion of the Russell Group of Universities. The views of schools were not asked for as there was no consultation on the measure as far as we were concerned.

3.6 In order to accommodate the English Baccalaureate it has been suggested that we shake up our curriculum and create a streamed system of choices where the more able take the English Baccalaureate and the less able do not. The merits of cutting the pupil body in two at aged 14, or the merits of re-structuring our curriculum offer we believe should be determined by the school management and governors. It should not be done as a rapid response to central government prescription of a list of academically worthy subjects.

4. THE IMPLICATIONS FOR PUPILS

4.1 A lot of what we believe on this matter has been expressed earlier in 2.1, 2.4, 3.3 and 3.5

4.2 Pupils need to understand the value of the English Baccalaureate and currently this has not been explained by government, yet time is short. Pupils choose their GCSE options in April of 2011 and it is now March. They need to understand what impact this certificate will have on their future. No previous school performance measure has been awarded a separate certificate so pupils and parents are wondering "does it matter?" And if it does matter, "how much does it matter?"

4.3 In the absence of clarity on the questions in 4.2 pupils will inevitably want to play safe and make sure they have a chance of achieving this award. As a school we have to give them the best advice and therefore as this measure has been launched with such haste and with such value attached to it by the Secretary of State our advice has to be that it is going to be incredibly relevant to their futures but in ways which we cannot yet fathom. This doesn't give pupils great confidence. The Government needs to make a statement to pupils, parents and schools on this with the utmost urgency.

4.4 What will the English Baccalaureate certificate do for pupils? Is it a passport to future university entrance? Mr Gove argues that it is the Russell Group of Universities that are driving him to introduce this measure but does this translate into pupils being required to get three A*s at A level and an A* English Baccalaureate to gain entrance? Or does it mean an A* English Baccalaureate will be needed to be considered for an interview? The implications can only be guessed at because Mr Gove has not explained whether this measure is important or not, and whether it is the measure of academic success or not.

4.4 Pupils who would otherwise not have chosen a language and Geography or History will be left with a selection of subjects that are not their favourites and ones which may not represent any future aspiration. It will mean that their diet of subjects is shorter on arts, business or design elements in which they may flourish. For pupils who did want to take the English Baccalaureate subjects it will mean their classes contain pupils who are only doing the subjects out of compulsion rather than choice or interest, and inevitably by the mid-point of Year 10 or Year 11 this will start to affect the learning atmosphere of a class.

4.5 We don't believe that the Mr Gove really understands the range of pupil choices at GCSE and in the absence of a re-written National Curriculum how many subjects pupils take in practice. Most pupils in this school take around 10–11 GCSE subjects of which only four are optional. That is not unusual in successful schools such as ours. The impact of this English Baccalaureate measure is to reduce four choices to two choices unless the pupil already wished to take the subjects listed. Adding RE to the Humanity element would not lessen the academic impact of the measure but would give pupils just a little more choice.

We would be happy to attend the select committee hearing if it would be helpful.

24 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Edge

SUMMARY

1. The English Baccalaureate is intended to ensure all young people have access to courses and qualifications which will enable them to gain places at elite universities. Edge supports this aim. However, we believe the E-Bac could lead to unintended consequences, such as schools withdrawing high-quality technical and vocational courses. We therefore recommend creating a suite of three Baccalaureates—English, Arts and Technical, to be known as the E-Bac, A-Bac and T-Bac. Sir Mike Tomlinson has led work on a curriculum for University Technical Colleges which could form the basis for the proposed T-Bac.

2. Elsewhere in the submission:

- we highlight England's long-standing failure to value academic, technical and vocational learning equally;
- we argue that academically-able young people should be entitled to take technical and vocational courses;
- we point out the need to fill skills gaps, particularly at qualification levels 3 and 4; and
- we draw attention to evidence from the USA and elsewhere.

THE EDGE FOUNDATION

3. Edge is an independent education foundation dedicated to raising the status of practical, technical and vocational education. The Foundation sponsors the Bulwell Academy (Nottingham) and Milton Keynes Academy, and has supported the development of University Technology Colleges, Studio Schools, a hotel school, and work-based higher education.

ENGLISH BACCALAUREATE SINGULAR OR BACCALAUREATES PLURAL?

4. Michael Gove has said:

We introduced our English Baccalaureate ... to encourage more children—especially from poorer backgrounds—to take the types of qualifications that open doors to the best universities and the most exciting careers.²⁰⁶

5. We agree that talented young people should have the opportunity to go to the best universities, if that is what they want to do. We therefore support the aims behind the English Baccalaureate. However, we are concerned that “best universities” and “most exciting careers” have been bracketed together in this way, when there are, in fact, many paths to success.

6. Fortunately, Mr Gove has also said:

I'm absolutely clear that every child should have the option of beginning study for a craft or trade from the age of 14, but that this should be complemented by a base of core academic knowledge.

If one looks at those countries around the world that have the best technical education systems, core academic subjects are taught and assessed alongside—not in place of—technical learning until students reach 15 or 16.

That's why I have floated the idea of an English Baccalaureate ... But it's crucial to note that securing this core base of knowledge would not preclude the study of technical or vocational subjects. It's not either/or but both/and.²⁰⁷

²⁰⁶ <http://www.education.gov.uk/inthenews/speeches/a0073212/michael-gove-to-twxford-church-of-england-high-school>

²⁰⁷ <http://www.education.gov.uk/inthenews/speeches/a0064364/michael-gove-to-the-edge-foundation>

7. We agree. The modern world calls for a wide range of knowledge, skills, aptitudes and abilities, including what the CBI calls employability skills. Young people should choose the paths best suited to their interests, aptitudes and talents.

8. However, by introducing a single measure—the English Baccalaureate—the Government is signalling that some subjects matter, and others don't.

9. Furthermore, league tables drive the behaviour of many schools. In order to protect their position in the new league table, schools will encourage students to drop technical and vocational education (TVE) in favour of E-bac subjects. Young people who could benefit from TVE as part of their Key Stage 4 curriculum might be unable to access it, because they have been directed to take a foreign language, history or geography instead. We believe this is already starting to happen.

10. We therefore recommend that there should be three Baccalaureates—the E-Bac itself, plus the A-Bac and the T-Bac—in order to give equal status to different combinations of subjects:

The **E-Bac** should be even more stretching than suggested by the Secretary of State. It should recognise achievement in three separate science, technology or engineering subjects, plus English, maths, an arts or humanity²⁰⁸ subject and a foreign language.

The **A-Bac** (Arts Baccalaureate) would recognise achievement in at least three subjects from the arts, humanities and languages curriculum, plus English, maths and science. In this context, “science” could mean a combined (dual) award, or two separate science, technology or engineering qualifications.

The **T-Bac** (Technical Baccalaureate) would recognise achievement in a technical or vocational qualification approved by the relevant employer body and Ofqual, plus English, maths, science and an arts, humanities or language subject. Again, science could mean a combined (dual) award, or two separate subjects.

11. Edge and the Baker Dearing Educational Trust have a particular interest in the T-Bac. Sir Mike Tomlinson has helped develop a curriculum for University Technical Colleges, which will be schools for 14–18 year olds. There will be no entry test: young people will choose to transfer to UTCs at 14, based on their interests and preferred styles of learning. At Key Stage 4, students will spend 40% of their time on technical studies (eg engineering) and 60% on general education. This will include English, maths, science, a modern language and humanities. As far as possible, these subjects will be taught in the context of the chosen technical subject. For example, if engineering is the chosen technical subject, students will apply mathematical concepts to engineering problems, learn about the history of inventions and the great engineers, and study a foreign language (not necessarily at full GCSE level), such as German for engineering. The aim is to bring the whole curriculum to life by showing how knowledge is used in the modern economy. The T-Bac could be developed from this initial work and used by schools throughout England.

12. Each Bac would be extremely stretching. Each would provide clear paths into post-16 and higher education. Importantly, however, they would provide a broad education so young people could change direction at 16 if they wish. In addition, having three Bacs will show that there is more than one way to succeed in life.

THE LASTING INFLUENCE OF THE GRAMMAR SCHOOL CURRICULUM

13. The School Certificate and Higher School Certificate were introduced in 1917. In order to pass, candidates had to demonstrate reasonable attainment in three groups of subjects: (1) English, (2) languages and (3) science and maths. The aims were to test the results of a course of general education and qualify pupils for admission to university or the professions. The second aim rapidly assumed more importance than the first.

14. Doing well in these subjects meant—very largely—remembering facts and using them in written tests. Other abilities, including the ability to make things, were regarded as less important and less worthy of esteem.

15. After the Second World War, it was believed that intelligence and aptitudes could be accurately assessed at the age of 11. Those who scored high marks in 11+ tests were expected to do well in the School Certificate and to have the potential to go to university. Those who scored low marks were assumed unlikely to thrive in a grammar school: indeed, they were not expected to take any exams before leaving school at 15. Technical schools—the third element of the tri-partite system—were often seen as suitable for young people who narrowly missed getting a grammar school place, and therefore as second best.

16. In the mid-1960s, the Labour Government encouraged a move to comprehensive education. Their slogan was “grammar schools for all”, and the core curriculum continued to be based on traditional academic subjects.

17. However, the Newsom Report noted in 1963 that:

Too many [pupils] sit through lessons with information and exhortation washing over them and leaving very little deposit. Too many appear to be bored and apathetic in school ... Others are openly impatient. They “don't see the point” of what they are asked to do.²⁰⁹

²⁰⁸ Restricting the term “a humanity” to geography and history is controversial. However, Edge's role is to promote technical and vocational education, and we will comment on this issue only in the context of the T-Bac.

²⁰⁹ The Newsom Report (1963)—Half Our Future: A report of the Central Advisory Council for Education (England). HMSO

18. A lack of interest in academic subjects and/or the way they are taught translated into persistent absence from school, failure to achieve good qualifications at 16, and failure to stay in education or training after 16.

19. Faced with this waste of talent, there have been many attempts to offer alternative forms of secondary education, such as City Technology Colleges. In 2004, the national curriculum was scaled back for 14–16 year olds. Since then, there has been a rapid expansion in technical and vocational provision at Key Stage 4. Teachers believe this has helped more young people achieve qualifications by the age of 16 and continue into post-16 education and training.²¹⁰ A growing number of people with technical and vocational qualifications are progressing into higher education, too.

20. The British economy has a persistent skills gap at the upper technical/associate professional level (qualification levels 3 and 4). This has held us back relative to other economies, including Germany, where there is a much stronger tradition of TVE. Opportunities to experience TVE at school will help fill these gaps.

21. The expansion of TVE has been criticised for several reasons. First, vocational qualifications have been deemed equivalent to as many as four GCSE grades A* to C. Some of these claims are hard to justify. Second, teachers are said to encourage young people to take these qualifications because they count towards their school's position in the league tables, not because they are in young people's best interests. Linked with this, Russell Group universities value some A levels more highly than others, and it is difficult to get them without first getting good grades in related GCSEs. In other words, choosing the wrong subjects and qualifications at Key Stage 4 can limit access to Russell Group universities.

22. Professor Alison Wolf's excellent review of vocational education upholds these criticisms. However, she is clear that all young people should be able to access vocational courses for up to 20% of their Key Stage 4 timetable if they wish.

23. As for access to Russell Group universities, this can be tackled by:

- (a) giving young people access to the full suite of Baccalaureates described above;
- (b) giving young people access to impartial information and advice before choosing they choose KS4 options; and
- (c) helping admissions tutors appreciate that people with technical and vocational qualifications can succeed in higher education. Lifelong Learning Networks are already doing this: for example, VETNET, a network of veterinary schools, universities and colleges committed to providing opportunities for students on vocational courses to get into higher education.²¹¹

ACADEMIC, TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL FORMS OF LEARNING HAVE A LOT IN COMMON

24. Connections between the brain, hands, eyes and senses are understood and recognised in the context of the arts. A violinist needs to understand and interpret the notes on the stave, but must also master fingering and bowing. Indeed, each process reinforces the other. The same is true in other arts, and in sport. It is also true—but less well recognised—in carpentry, plumbing, cooking and myriad other forms of human activity.

25. Further, cognitive science tells us that the habits of mind employed by successful learners are the same whether learning is “academic”, “technical” or “vocational”. People show curiosity, imagination and determination when they learn about Shakespeare and when they learn to cook a meal. They investigate and experiment when studying maths and when learning to fix a refrigerator.²¹²

26. Edge commissioned Professor William Richardson and Dr Sue Sing (University of Exeter) to look at what happens when academically-able young people experience practical and vocational learning.²¹³

27. A sample of 170 12–16 year-olds in six schools in England and Wales told researchers that they derived very strong satisfaction from practical and applied learning, which they felt helped them explore the world and understand their place within it. In fact, they enjoyed physical, expressive and experiment-based learning more than analytical forms of learning. A very large majority considered that practical learning was more, or just as, important as mandatory subjects such as English and maths.

²¹⁰ See, for example, Marianne Burgess and John Rodger (York Consulting), 14–19 Qualifications Strategy Research (Research Report DFE-RR055), Department for Education, November 2010. We are disappointed that in her otherwise excellent report on 14–19 vocational education, Prof Wolf underplays the importance of vocational qualifications in motivating young people who are bored by a conventional academic curriculum.

²¹¹ <http://www.vetnetln.ac.uk/>

²¹² See “Bodies of Knowledge”, by Guy Claxton and Bill Lucas (Centre for Real World Learning, University of Winchester); Edge Foundation, 2010

²¹³ Their report will be published shortly.

28. The Government says that all young people should be entitled to choose strongly academic courses and qualifications, if they wish. We agree. Based on the research evidence, however, we suggest there should be a parallel entitlement: all young people should be entitled to choose technical and vocational courses, if they wish. This can be achieved by offering all young people access to a full suite of Baccalaureates.

LESSONS FROM ABROAD

29. In 1997, the city of Chicago introduced a new high school curriculum. The aim was to make sure young people from disadvantaged backgrounds and neighbourhoods had access to academically-rigorous courses so that they could progress to college (ie higher education). According to the University of Chicago:

The policy required four years of specific English courses ... three years of specific math courses ... three years of laboratory science ... and three years of social science.

One of the key premises of mandatory curriculum policies is that greater equity in course-taking will lead to improvements in student learning (as measured by tests and grades) and college readiness (as measured by test score gains and increases in advanced course-taking) ... Researchers found no evidence of these kinds of broader impacts on academic outcomes as a result of the new curriculum policy. Specifically, test scores in math and English were unaffected by the increase in college-preparatory coursework in the ninth grade. Furthermore, grades declined in both subjects for lower-skill students, and these students were significantly more likely to fail their ninth grade English or math course. Absenteeism also significantly increased among students with stronger skills in both subjects.

Another key argument for mandatory curricula is that these coursework reforms will help students get to college and complete their degrees. Yet the researchers found evidence to the contrary in Chicago Public Schools.²¹⁴

In short, a strongly academic curriculum is not a panacea.

30. The US Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, argues that more American teenagers should have access to stretching, academic courses. However, he has recently spoken of the value of technical and vocational learning, known as Career and Technical Education (CTE):

CTE has an enormous, if often overlooked impact on students, school systems, and our ability to prosper as a nation.

It is the responsibility of educators to prepare all students for both college and a career. This must be “both/and”, not “either/or”.

[When I was] CEO of the Chicago Public Schools (CPS) ... we launched an overhaul of Chicago’s CTE program ... The 10 new curriculums implemented by CPS last year included IT-Game Programming, Early Childhood Education, and Broadcast Technology. And CPS launched a novel Employability Assessment last fall that assesses student skills in areas like problem-solving abilities, work ethic, and computer literacy.

The number of industry certifications earned by CTE students in Chicago nearly tripled from 2008–09 to 2009–10 [and] the percentage of CTE graduates enrolled in college rose 2.3% during the most recent school year.²¹⁵

31. CTE is not uniformly implemented across the USA; nor is it consistently excellent. However, some important lessons are being learned which are useful to us. For example, one study showed that student performance in maths improved when it was clearly and explicitly linked to the CTE curriculum:

The Math-in-CTE study began as a pilot in the spring semester of 2004; the full-year study spanned the 2004–2005 academic year. Volunteer teachers assigned to the experimental groups worked with math teacher partners to examine the CTE curricula and develop math-enhanced CTE lessons. The experimental CTE teachers implemented the math-enhanced lessons in their classrooms, while the control group teachers taught their courses without changing their curricula. After one year of learning math-enhanced lessons, students in the experimental classrooms performed significantly better on two of the three standardized measures of math achievement.²¹⁶

This type of integration is one of the aims of the UTC curriculum developed by Sir Mike Tomlinson.

32. Finally, a quotation from a recent OECD report which examines education systems in a number of countries which perform well in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA):

There seems broad agreement all over the world that education should be about much more than preparation for work. But there is also agreement that preparation for work is a very important goal of education. The evidence strongly suggests that effective preparation for work entails success in academic courses, the acquisition of strong generic work skills—everything from showing up on time

²¹⁴ College Prep for All? What we’ve learned from Chicago’s efforts. Policy brief by Christopher Mazzeo, University of Chicago, August 2010

²¹⁵ Arne Duncan, US Secretary of Education, 2 February 2011

²¹⁶ Capitalizing on Context: Curriculum Integration in Career and Technical Education, National Research Center for Career and Technical Education, 2010

and putting in a good day's work to being an effective team member and working to meet deadlines—and technical competence in the job-specific skills needed to do the entry-level work in careers that pay well. Countries vary widely in the degree to which they provide each of these bundles of skills and knowledge. In countries that do well on all three, youth unemployment tends to be lower, it takes less time for young people to get and keep good jobs, and economic competitiveness is higher.²¹⁷

24 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Nower Hill High School

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This submission advocates:

- The inclusion of the WJEC Certificates in Latin in the E-Bac subjects list.
- The inclusion of Classical Civilisation GCSE in the E-Bac subjects list.
- Prompt publication of the E-Bac subjects list once these subjects have been included.

1. I am writing with regard to your inquiry into the English Baccalaureate. As a National Leader of Education and headteacher of a maintained community school with a thriving Classics department, I felt compelled to put forward my concerns about the fact that neither the WJEC Certificates in Latin nor Classical Civilisation GCSE has been included in the 2010 E-Bac list. I would strongly encourage you to remedy this situation for future years.

2. With regard to the WJEC Certificates in Latin, the Department for Education allows what it refers to as “accredited IGCSEs” in, for example Latin and Greek, to be included towards the E-Bac. However OfQual clarifies that there are no such things as “accredited IGCSEs” and that such qualifications are rather Level 1 and Level 2 Certificates.

3. The WJEC Certificates in Latin are exactly these: Level 1 and Level 2 Certificates, they thus have the same status as IGCSEs. They have been accredited under exactly the same process and standards that OfQual states it uses for accrediting so-called IGCSEs. Logic would suggest, therefore, that they ought to be included in the same way as the CIE Level 1/Level 2 Certificates have already been included.

4. That it would be bizarre if, in order for the Certificates in Latin to be included in an “English” Baccalaureate, WJEC would simply have to write on the syllabus cover of the Certificates “International GCSE”, when that title is entirely unregulated and undefined and is not accepted for use by OfQual in England.

5. Moreover the WJEC Certificates in Latin far exceed the minimum requirement for linguistic content for a GCSE qualification; therefore fears that this qualification is easier than GCSE are entirely misplaced and must not cloud the judgement of those making the decision about whether to include these certificates in the E-Bac list. Since Oxford and Cambridge Universities are happy to recognise the WJEC Certificates as valid pathways to entry to their highly challenging courses, it seems ludicrous for the Government not to include them in the E-Bac list.

6. The principal examiner for the WJEC Language Certificate, Ashley Carter, was until last year a principal examiner for OCR Latin GCSE and is currently a principal examiner for OCR Latin A level. This indicates that there is no difference in approach or rigour between the two qualifications, but that the OCR GCSE qualification did not provide all that WJEC Certificates do—otherwise they would not have been able to attract staff of this calibre. The difference is that the WJEC Certificates provide far greater flexibility and thus enable schools to design appropriate and engaging courses for their students, which OCR GCSE simply did not allow. This is why numbers of pupils studying Latin, particularly in the maintained sector, have dramatically increased since the introduction last year of the WJEC Certificates.

7. Schools which use the WJEC Certificates in Latin have already reported a significant rise (a doubling or tripling) in the number of students studying Latin at KS4 and intending to study Latin at KS5. These schools include many comprehensive schools such as the one I teach at, Nower Hill High School. We currently have 10 pupils wishing to continue to AS Level Latin having studied the WJEC course, compared with five the previous year and two the year before that, after following the OCR GCSE course.

8. If you wish to broaden the availability of Latin to less privileged pupils, it is vital that these certificates are included in the E-Bac, because headteachers will not support the often expensive choice to timetable Latin at Key Stage 4 if it will not help them achieve greater numbers of pupils achieving the E-Bac. Inclusion of the Certificates in Latin would promote the growth of Latin at Key Stage 4, whereas exclusion will cause a reduction in the number of students studying Latin in the UK.

9. With regard to Classical Civilisation GCSE, the Department for Education states that it wishes to encourage a wider take-up of geography and history. However, it has created a category for the E-Bac which it calls “Humanities”. No argument has been put forward by the Department for Education that Classical

²¹⁷ Strong Performers and Successful Reformers in Education: Lessons from PISA for the United States, OECD 2010

Civilisation is not a Humanities subject (nor, indeed, has the Department anywhere defined what the Humanities are).

10. The Department states that it did not judge the historical element of Classical Civilisation to be sufficient. Yet no element of the content of either Classical Civilisation syllabus is less than 1,800 years old. Surely the literature of the ancient world is historical content in its own right? I hope that the Department for Education does not wish to discourage the study of the Iliad, the Odyssey or of Greek tragedy. I would also question on these grounds the inclusion of the Geography GCSE course, which appears to have been included in the E-Bac list despite having zero historical content.

11. If a concern is that pupils will study Classical Civilisation instead of History if it is included in the E-Bac, please consider that only 2,000 state school students took Classical Civilisation GCSE in 2010, while 198,000 students took History GCSE. Many students will have taken both. Even if all students studying Classical Civilisation were to study History, it would not create a significant increase in the total History GCSE entry. On the other hand, current projections based on a Cambridge Schools Classics Project survey of schools (in February 2011) indicate that exclusion from the E-Bac will cut Classical Civilisation entries from state schools by 29%. The potential educational loss, therefore, is much greater than the potential gain.

12. It is important to be aware that students are making option choices for entries for summer 2013 now. Yet the list of subjects and qualifications which will count for the E-Bac of 2011 has still not been released. Schools, students and parents are therefore being asked to second guess what decisions the Department for Education will make. This situation is, at best, unfortunate and unhelpful.

13. I urge you to include both the WJEC Latin certificates AND Classical Civilisation GCSE in the E-Bac list of subjects immediately, and to make the list available as soon as possible. To miss this opportunity to bolster the place of Classical subjects in the curriculum, particularly in state schools, would put the study of Classics back and risk denying thousands of our young people the chance to appreciate the wonders of the classical world.

COMMENTS FROM HOWARD FREED, HEADTEACHER, NOWER HILL HIGH SCHOOL:

The E Bac is not, in its present form, a Baccalauriate.

20 years ago we were under severe pressure to deliver a severely restrictive national curriculum to KS4. Bold, brave schools worked against these restrictions and delivered a curriculum suited to the needs of their students rather than a one size fits all curriculum. They were subject to huge pressures not to do this but to deliver the NC as required. Please do not take us back to these days, something that will happen as Heads feel under pressure to deliver the E Bac in its current form.

The E Bac threatens the outstanding development of the curriculum that has taken place in so many schools especially over the past decade.

If we are to have a Baccalauriate (or more than one) then it must be a real Bac. An “academic” Bac must not exclude academic subjects from across the curriculum. It must not be confined to Core plus Geog/Hist and a Language. There is a place too for consideration of a more vocationally based Bac if we are going down the route of Bacs.

There is a massive tension between the Government’s stance that “schools know best” (hence the drive towards academies, which I support) and the centralising force of the current E Bac.

24 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Sally Long

1. THE PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE E-BAC AND ITS VALUE AS A MEASURE OF PUPIL AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

The purpose of the E-Bac seems to be to compel schools to teach a fairly narrow academic curriculum to more pupils. This seems tie in with concerns about the number of “easy” vocational subjects delivered as part of the Key Stage 4 Curriculum in order to boost performance in league tables and with the view that the purpose of any curriculum is to impart a body of knowledge. Obviously the E-Bac was devised without the benefit of the Woolf report which places great emphasis on the importance of ensuring that young people leave school with good passes in English and Maths. It would seem to make much more sense to concentrate on good passes in English and Maths as a measure of school performance. English and Maths are the two subjects in the E-Bac that lay the basic foundations for success in other subjects either.

2. THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE E-BAC

The choice of humanity subjects in the E-Bac seems to be quite random. The three subjects allowed at the moment are History, Geography and Ancient History. It does not seem logical that Religious Education is not allowed as this is an humanities subject. Humanities itself is excluded. If Ancient History can be taken then Classical Civilisation should also count.

3. THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE E-BAC FOR PUPILS, SCHOOLS AND EMPLOYERS

One key purpose of education is to give students the skills that they will need to take their place in the workforce once they finish full time education. Obviously English and Maths teach key skills that every adult needs. It is difficult to justify the place of a subject such as Biblical Hebrew which no one will use outside unless they teach Old Testament studies at a university. Employers need employees who have skills such as problem solving, the ability to work as part of a team or the ability to use research skills. The E-Bac appears to be weighted towards acquiring a body of knowledge which may well become obsolete at the expense of giving students a grounding in skills and qualities that they will need to continue to develop in later life. It does not therefore seem to serve the needs of employers. In the school setting it steers students towards an academic curriculum which is fine for some students but undervalues the achievement of those students who follow a vocational curriculum. It will also add pressure to schools as many will need to employ more language, history and geography teachers at a time when funding for education is being severely cut.

24 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Council for Subject Associations

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The use of the term English Baccalaureate is incorrect in this context. It is being used as an indicator of school performance not an individual qualification. Its introduction is a government initiative to encourage schools to promote specific academic subjects. This has been applied retrospectively which has led to flawed indicators in the 2010 performance tables. The lack of a rationale for the subjects included or omitted, did not assist its position as a valid indicator.

2. An English Baccalaureate could become a worthwhile qualification that was valued by employers and used for access to further education and training. It would need to be carefully designed to recognise what students have achieved in core skills, academic subjects, and wider educational achievements. Curriculum breadth is important for all students up to 16 and everyone is entitled to a good basic education in core skills and knowledge. Qualifications need to be designed and courses provided that engage and challenge young people and measure their achievements.

3. The current use of the term English Baccalaureate to measure the achievement of particular GCSE grades is confusing for students, parents and employers. There is no official “qualification” in terms of a certificate for a school leaver, and so it has no currency for employers in its current form. The way in which it has been introduced has skewed the option choices that students are being given for 2011–12.

RECOMMENDATION

4. The CfSA recommends that the Government should cease to use the current English Baccalaureate as a performance indicator for schools. It should introduce a carefully planned English Baccalaureate qualification to assure a broad and rounded education for students up to 16; and provide a leaving certificate that recognizes a range of achievements and has currency with both employers and for access to future education.

INTRODUCTION

5. The Council for Subject Associations (CfSA) is a membership organisation with charitable status that exists to strengthen the role and influence of subject associations. It promotes subject association membership to teachers in all sectors of education for the benefit of learners, and offers a single voice in representing the interests of its members to the broadest range of education stakeholders. It currently represents the Chief Executives and Chairs of 24 subject associations that represent the majority of subjects taught in schools and colleges in the United Kingdom.

THE PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE ENGLISH BACCALAUREATE AND ITS VALUE AS A MEASURE OF STUDENT AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

6. The White Paper, *The Importance of Teaching*, published on 24 November 2010 announced the introduction of the English Baccalaureate and that it was to be reported in the School Performance Tables in January 2011. The stated intention was to encourage the take-up of “individual science subjects, humanities such as history and, especially, foreign languages.”

7. The use of the term English Baccalaureate is incorrect in this context. As currently adopted it is not a qualification, and the intention expressed in the White Paper that achieving the stated combination of GCSEs “will entitle the student to a certificate recording their achievement” has not materialised. No one is responsible for issuing certificates to individual students. The websites of the examination boards make it clear they are not doing so. Therefore, as it stands the English Baccalaureate it is a government initiative to encourage schools in England to promote specific academic subjects to 16.

8. The widespread concern expressed by schools immediately on the introduction of the English Baccalaureate was because it was applied retrospectively and because the range of subjects included was felt

to be too narrow and not inclusive of all students in the school. This led to flawed indicators in the performance tables because the students who took the summer 2010 examinations were unaware which courses that would be counted as part of the English Baccalaureate when they embarked on them. Therefore, many students unknowingly disqualified themselves. Undoubtedly, schools will now guide their students towards the named courses. Inevitably, more students will be successful in achieving the English Baccalaureate targets in the next two years, purely because more of them will be entered for the qualifying examinations. The significant improvements in school performance that will appear on paper will not directly reflect better teaching or higher student achievements. It will not be a true, comparative measure of school performance.

9. It is accepted that there has been a concern that some schools have encouraged students to follow “easier” courses that are highly rated for GCSE equivalence in order to improve their position in the performance tables. This needed to be addressed. However, reforms could have been made in a different way. The lack of a rationale for the academic subjects that have been included or omitted in the English Baccalaureate does not assist its position as a valid indicator. For example, many perceive the definition of humanities and languages GCSEs in the list of “approved” GCSEs to be narrow and arbitrary.

10. An English Baccalaureate could have a role as a “leaving” certificate for students if it recognised what they have achieved in core skills, academic subjects, and wider educational achievements. It would need to be carefully designed, piloted and reviewed by teachers, academics and employers. If this were done successfully the English Baccalaureate could become a worthwhile qualification that was valued by employers and used for access to further education and training. The CfSA would strongly support this.

11. This approach has, for example, been adopted in Wales. The Welsh Baccalaureate is a qualification for 14–19 year olds that combines personal development skills with existing qualifications to make a wider award. It aims to help students to develop the knowledge and skills that higher education and employers want school leavers to demonstrate.

THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE ENGLISH BACCALAUREATE

12. There are aspects of the Government’s intention as set out in the White Paper that the CfSA strongly supports, for example that students should pursue a broad and rounded range of subjects until the age of 16.

13. It is very important that everyone has a good basic education in core skills and knowledge. Curriculum breadth is also very important, and all should have an education up to 16 that includes the humanities and languages, creative arts, physical education, mathematics, science and technological study alongside the development of essential skills and values.

14. The notion of an English Baccalaureate is to be applauded if it encourages students to keep their options open rather than specialise too early. A baccalaureate system should be devised that identifies the knowledge that students need to have and the skills they need to acquire if they are to succeed as effective and capable learners, citizens and employees. Qualifications need to be designed for this curriculum and courses provided that engage and challenge young people and measure their achievements. We must avoid the idea that there is a divide between academic and vocational pathways and focus on what young people need to equip themselves for the future.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE ENGLISH BACCALAUREATE FOR STUDENTS, SCHOOLS AND EMPLOYERS

15. The use of the term English Baccalaureate for the achievement of particular GCSE grades is confusing for students, parents and employers. It offers nothing new or different. Since there is no official “qualification” in terms of a certificate for a school leaver, it has no currency for employers in its current form.

16. In many schools, the way in which this English Baccalaureate indicator has been introduced has skewed the option choices that students are being given for 2011–12. It is reported by several of our member associations that some schools have radically changed their options at 14 in a knee-jerk reaction to this government action. Options to study subjects like art and design, music, religious education, drama, technology, business and ICT, as well as vocational subjects, are being reduced or even removed. These subjects could be perceived as less valuable by students as a result of the rhetoric of the English Baccalaureate. There is a danger that the English Baccalaureate will be a disincentive to learning for more students than it will help, if it steers them to study courses which are inappropriate for them.

RECOMMENDATION

17. The CfSA recommends that the Government should cease to use the current English Baccalaureate as a performance indicator for schools. It should introduce a carefully planned English Baccalaureate qualification to assure a broad and rounded education for students up to 16; and provide a leaving certificate that recognizes a range of achievements and has currency with both employers and for access to future education.

Written evidence submitted by Association of British Orchestras

1. Music at GCSE level is a challenging, rigorous academic subject that contributes to a broad, excellent education. The decision by the Secretary of State for Education not to include music in the English Baccalaureate is of grave concern and we hope that the Education Select Committee will consider this matter.

2. Including Music GCSE in the English Baccalaureate will not jeopardise the intent of the Government—pupils will still study a broad-range of subjects that remain challenging, rigorous and academic. Darren Henley, in his independent review of music education published in February, made the key finding that Music “should be included as one of the subjects that go to make up the new English Baccalaureate.” And the Government responded by saying that music is an “enriching and valuable academic subject”.

3. There is no doubt that the English Baccalaureate as it is currently framed will lead to schools deciding not to offer music at GCSE level. The net result will be the loss of the very real benefits of a music education and an adverse impact on educational standards generally. It will also undermine our currently vibrant creative and cultural economy.

4. We believe that the Government will reward schools with academic children at the expense of those who teach more vocationally minded children, despite their assurance that “Pupils will, of course, be able to achieve vocational qualifications alongside the English Baccalaureate”. This will ultimately create a two tiered system instead of working on a more evenhanded approach. Currently, 15% of children get good enough GCSEs in the English Baccalaureate subjects: English, Maths, Science, a modern foreign language, and a humanities subject (history or geography). Meaning therefore that 85% do not. Schools who follow an academic focus will be rewarded, those that don't will be penalised, which means that the inner-city school where pupils tend to come from poorer backgrounds will lose out to suburban schools with less deprivation. Those schools teaching many students with English as a second language will be at an even greater disadvantage.

5. Music is an important and difficult academic subject that incorporates creativity. It also has numerous extrinsic benefits: improving numeracy and literacy, supporting social cohesion and developing children's emotional intelligence. In the UK, music education is world class and generates both the audiences of the future as well as the professional musicians who contribute so significantly to our constantly growing creative and cultural economy. Its importance is also backed by public polling conducted by YouGov, with 97% of those offering an opinion backing the provision of music in schools.²¹⁸

6. The Greater Manchester Challenge example:

During three years of school improvement in Greater Manchester (involving some £50 million), introduced by the last Government, standards were raised by creating networks of schools across the ten boroughs who were prepared to share and disseminate good practice. One lesson from the Challenge was that where schools were starting to fail, the best remedy was to widen the curriculum, bringing in the arts and sports etc. and as a result, on a number of occasions, these new focuses allowed maths, literacy and numeracy to improve of their own accord. Where schools narrowed their curriculum to concentrate more on literacy, numeracy and science, the problems worsened because staff and pupils became more downhearted and bored with failure. On this basis the English Baccalaureate could cause more schools to fail without the means being available to rescue themselves.

TWO GENERAL POINTS

7. We believe that the English Baccalaureate will not stretch the bright pupils, for whom the A* grade was introduced. The system as a whole needs more rigour, so that the subjects taught enable young people who are either suitable for university or more prepared for work and are employable. The English Baccalaureate is an attempt to improve secondary education. We believe that it is not needed—what is needed is an overhaul of the secondary education system.

8. Whilst we agree that giving teachers a greater say on the education of their children with less red tape is good, much of the measure of success of the new system will rely on the quality of teaching. We already hear that teacher training levels will be reduced. However, until we know how the government intends to dismiss those teachers who are not of the highest standard, the overall system will not improve.

9. We urge the Committee to encourage the Secretary of State to include music within the English Baccalaureate.

10. A list of ABO member orchestras in England forms the appendix to this document.

24 March 2011

²¹⁸ Incorporated Society of Musicians (ISM)/YouGov poll, January 2011

Written evidence submitted by Simon Spencer

1. THE PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE E-BAC AND ITS VALUE AS A MEASURE OF PUPIL AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

1.1 To have applied an “English Baccalaureate” retrospectively as a measure of GCSE results for the academic year 2009–10 was to misappropriate the term and the purpose of introducing such a tool. Moreover, it seriously undermined the significantly hard work over a sustained period of time by teachers, the accomplishments of young people and the support of their parents and carers. It was imposed without consultation and was an outrageous gesture that has weakened the international credibility of any subsequent development of an English Baccalaureate.

1.2 If the E-Bac is to be used as a measure of pupil and school performance, then it is unreasonable to impose it retrospectively, since what is measured is not the pupil or school performance but a random item for which neither pupils nor schools have prepared.

1.3 The measurement of pupil and school performance should be based on what is taught and assessed. What is taught and assessed needs to reflect what is valued in education. There is a distinct danger of valuing what we can assess rather than assessing what we value. There is no value, purpose or benefit in attempting to apply a system of measuring performance unless it is part of a taught programme of study that is assessed and leads to an award.

1.4 An English Baccalaureate must be far more than an additional measure for school accountability.

1.5 An English Baccalaureate should be a carefully designed programme of study that addresses the needs of young people in the 21st century and: cover a broad and rich range of subject areas; embrace skills for international citizenship, employability and life-long independent learning; offer considerable student ownership and challenge; include balanced assessment methods such as performance, portfolios and products in addition to final examination, and have currency with employers and higher education institutions at home and abroad.

2. THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE E-BAC

2.1 The choice of subjects included in the current E-Bac is far too limited and limiting. Inevitably schools will tailor their curricula to whatever is reported in league tables, despite government claims otherwise; there is anecdotal evidence of this happening already. To limit young people’s education to five subjects is inadequate, reductionist and a retrograde step. The five subjects identified do not reflect current needs of, and aspirations for, education.

2.2 The wisdom of including modern and ancient languages in the E-Bac must be questioned. Whilst there is a need to change attitudes toward the learning of languages in this country, it is unrealistic to seek to change this culture through a programme of enforcement. It is clear that the current shortage of language teachers will mean that, in the short to medium term, this goal will be unachievable. Clarification of the role of community languages is necessary.

2.3 What is the rationale for requiring history or geography to be included rather than other humanities subjects? Humanities might additionally include: religious studies, politics, philosophy, psychology, sociology, business studies and more. To require either history or geography only denies choice and flexibility.

2.4 There are two serious omissions from the current choice of E-Bac subjects: arts and technology. The arts and creative industries currently form a major part of GB plc in terms of bringing funding into this country. To fail to include education in and for the arts and creative industries is to omit to deal with one of our major exports and revenue providers as well as denying achievement and attainment in subject areas that are fundamental in creativity as a means of human expression. The subjects which form the arts and technology are vital to twenty first century education.

2.5 The relationship of Science, Technology, English and Mathematics (STEM subjects) to E-Bac seems to be at best functional and at worst to have excluded technology. In the light of para 2.4 above, the taught English Baccalaureate might follow a model similar to that of the International Baccalaureate and include assessment in English, mathematics, science and three other curriculum areas; the arts, humanities and technology.

3. THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE E-BAC FOR PUPILS, SCHOOLS AND EMPLOYERS

3.1 The current proposals for the E-Bac are far too constraining for pupils; they do not measure or value the breadth of pupils’ ability, progress or attainment. They offer neither breadth nor balance, which the Secretary of State tells us he wishes to support. Pupils will be forced into a very narrow range of subjects which significantly undermine individuality, personalisation and creativity. The proposals deny growth, challenge, employability and the wider purposes of education. Pupils should be partners in their own education. By shoehorning them into a predetermined mould, where subjects rather than skills, values and attitudes are assessed, we are likely to train, rather than educate, a generation of pupils unable to think for themselves or become independent learners.

3.2 As indicated above, head teachers and school managers are already changing the curriculum in an attempt to satisfy the current E-Bac proposal. For example in one West Midlands school, where Bengali is a community language, it may in future not be taught in order to conform to what the Head and Governors see as the requirements of the E-Bac (see para 2.2 above). This reduction in choice is being met with hostility and opposition from students and parents and is leading to resentment and demotivation, neither of which will assist in the raising of standards.

3.3 A further consequence of the proposed E-Bac is that schools will no longer be able to cater for particular local needs. For example, if construction, engineering and motor mechanics are represented locally and the school has positive connections and a good record of school leavers gaining employment in such areas, what else will schools be able to offer, really? There will be little variation in what students have to offer to employers, besides pass grades in a limited number of subjects.

3.4 How will schools with specialist status use their specialism in future: in particular those schools whose specialism is not one of the E-Bac areas such as Performing Arts, Enterprise or Technology? This expertise will be lost.

3.5 The E-Bac, as currently proposed, will be little more than packaging for a student's five A*-C grade GCSE passes. This will be of little consequence to employers.

4. INTERNATIONAL COMPARATORS FOR THE E-BAC

4.1 The OECD has described high performing countries in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). However, only students' abilities in reading, mathematics and science are reported. In the light of this, it is difficult to see the justification for languages and history or geography in the current E-Bac proposal. Arguably, what is more important is pedagogy and subject content if the intention is to improve the rating of education in comparison to other countries.

4.2 It is simplistic to assume that international comparisons of education can be made on attainment alone; this denies the countries' views of education in terms of its purposes, importance, values, content, resourcing and culture, amongst many other aspects.

4.3 In the UK we are one of very few countries which assesses students at age 16 and where the school leaving age has been 16 for such a long time. The introduction of a school leaving examination or Baccalaureate at age 18 which could incorporate a range of pathways and subjects, would make international comparisons much easier and would be comparable with the International Baccalaureate, Abitur (Ger), Baccalaureate (Fr), European Baccalaureate (European Schools) and others.

24 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Chris Dunne, Headteacher, Langdon Park School

I wish to make the following points about the purpose and benefits of the introduction of the 'EBacc' by the Secretary of State:

- *It is not a Baccalaureate* in the true sense of that word. It is a collection of subjects which it has been decided (by the Secretary acting alone presumably, since his curriculum review has only just begun and does not apparently affect the "EBacc") will form the basis of a measure of "matriculation" for students at 16.
- *International comparisons are irrelevant* since where such a baccalaureate exists (eg France, Germany) it is invariably for students aged 16 to 19 and as a direct preparation for higher education.
- *Its introduction as a retrospective measure of performance is deeply resented* by the profession. By the time Mr. Gove had announced its invention the student cohort first measured had already taken the last exam paper of their GCSE programme. They had chosen those subjects some two and a half years before the announcement of the "EBacc".
- That schools will increasingly feel compelled to steer students towards particular subjects, not because they are the right ones for them but so that the school's "EBacc" score in the performance league tables does not suffer, is a given, but professionally abhorrent all the same. Stories are already circulating of schools where students currently already more than halfway through their courses are apparently being "fast-tracked" through additional "EBacc" GCSEs in order to improve the school's score in the 2011 league tables. This is educational madness, students being made to take extra courses so that their schools look better, but entirely predictable given the punitive effect of these tables and the fear that "EBacc" percentages will be introduced, possibly retrospectively, as the next floor targets.

- *It is very likely to have the effect of creating a two-tier approach to GCSE exam subjects*, with some being considered “soft” or “easy” simply by virtue of their not being included in the “EBacc” basket. Those of us who believe in the education of whole, rounded, informed, confident and responsible citizens, who actually work with young people on a daily basis and have seen the dedication, commitment and discipline of students preparing say for their GCSE exams in Art, Music, Drama or Dance, will find that kind of subject apartheid both destructive and objectionable. I attach a picture of two such students rehearsing the dance they themselves have created and choreographed before showing it to their peers, staff, parents and governors at a memorably impressive evening GCSE Dance Showcase. This is not soft and it’s not easy!
- *I personally feel very strongly that all students should be taught a modern foreign language but feel equally strongly that what the Secretary of State is proposing here is retrograde and potentially very damaging*. I want young people to be developing the communication skills which will allow them to lead more satisfying and productive lives in an increasingly global community and marketplace. Mr Gove appears to want them to study a language to “stop their brains rusting”—whatever that means. I attach the comprehensive study of *Foreign Language Teaching in Schools in Europe* funded by the *European Commission* in 2001, which shows very clearly that the relatively small group of countries which teach foreign languages successfully do so by concentrating on speaking and listening skills, as we all do in learning our mother tongue. Many students studying a British GCSE in a foreign language have quite a different experience, which is why historically so many of them abandoned it at the first possible opportunity. This is not something schools can remedy; it requires the Government to grasp the nettle and completely overhaul the way language acquisition is examined. Just making more students take poorly conceived exams in foreign languages is no answer at all; it will create resentment and increased disaffection.

24 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by 1994 Group

1. The 1994 Group welcomes the invitation from the Education Select Committee to submit evidence to its inquiry on the English Baccalaureate.
2. The English Baccalaureate is a new addition to the UK education system and as yet there is uncertainty about the impacts of its introduction on higher education. It does however bring a welcome opportunity to encourage pupils to increase the breadth of their Level 2 (GCSE and equivalent) study. This has the potential to increase opportunities for all students at higher levels of study. The implementation of the Baccalaureate must however be in harmony with the principle that pupils should study a broad range of subjects, appropriate to them, taking into account their aptitude and interest. Currently there is no desire within 1994 Group universities for the English Baccalaureate to be included within university admissions criteria. In terms of Level 2 study it is most important that students gain a broad education which is appropriate to them to maximise their options for further and higher study.
3. We are supportive of measures which encourage all students to have a broad-based secondary education. Universities mainly take Level 3 (A Level and equivalent) qualifications into account when considering admissions. However, Level 2 (GCSE and equivalent) qualifications are taken into consideration as part of broader measures of attainment and to assess an applicant’s suitability. Therefore, there are few direct effects anticipated on university admissions requirements, at least in the short to medium term. There are, however, a number of wider implications which may have an effect upon higher education which we would like to draw to the Committee’s attention.
4. Although the effects of the English Baccalaureate on university study are difficult to predict the inclusion of a foreign language within the English Baccalaureate has been received positively. Demand for degree level languages has been in decline, having a damaging knock-on effect on the abilities of UK graduates to study and work abroad. It is vital that pupils are encouraged to take up language study at GCSE level and earlier in order to counteract this trend. It is hoped that the inclusion of languages in the Baccalaureate will be one way of encouraging take-up of a foreign languages. It should be remembered, however, that GCSE level study may not necessarily translate into degree level study, the languages should also be promoted at Level 3. Nevertheless studying a foreign language at GCSE is a move in the right direction.
5. Widening participation in higher education is a top priority for the sector. There are signs that the English Baccalaureate could make positive contributions to this agenda. If the English Baccalaureate can promote take-up of academic Level 2 qualifications this will increase options for students when looking to further and higher study. One of the problems currently facing widening participation students is they have too often been channelled into vocational qualifications at Level 2 thus leaving them with reduced options later on. It is recognised that pupils who attend schools without a good track record in the Baccalaureate subjects would be disadvantaged by the addition of the English Baccalaureate to university entry requirements, especially given the short lead-in time. This is one reason why 1994 Group universities do not plan to introduce such a requirement. As part of widening participation measures universities take non-traditional and vocational qualifications as well as contextual information into consideration as part of entry requirements.

6. There is a potential risk associated with the introduction of the English Baccalaureate. With the Baccalaureate contributing to the performance measurement of schools the Government is strongly incentivising take-up of the English Baccalaureate. Students should be encouraged to have a broad Level 2 education and it is hoped that the students will not be forced to turn away from art-related subjects and wider humanities subjects such as religious studies, philosophy, economics, law and sociology because of the English Baccalaureate. This would be a most unwelcome side-effect. For higher education this may have knock-on effects on degree level subject choice. At Level 2 pupils should be encouraged to take a broad range of subjects which they have interest and aptitude in. It should be ensured that the introduction of the English Baccalaureate compliments this principle.

7. It is important that there is clarity about the Baccalaureate term, which is potentially confusing for students. Elsewhere in the world a Baccalaureate is used to refer to a school leaving certificate. In the UK the English Baccalaureate is a new form of terminology applied to a particular group of GCSE's as part of a wider GCSE profile. Other Baccalaureate qualifications such as the International Baccalaureate are at Level 3 and therefore considered as part of admissions requirements. The English Baccalaureate being at Level 2 as previously considered will not be treated in the same way.

8. Currently there is no intention to include the English Baccalaureate within HE admissions criteria. The English Baccalaureate has been implemented quickly with schools having extremely limited chance to respond. Universities would not wish to disadvantage students who chose their GCSEs prior to the introduction of the English Baccalaureate nor those from schools with a poor track record in Baccalaureate subjects at Level 2. If the Baccalaureate were to emerge as an area which universities use in admissions criteria it would not be possible to do so until schools and the sector have been able to monitor and respond to the changes.

9. To conclude, as yet there is uncertainty about the impacts of the English Baccalaureate on higher education. It does however bring a welcome opportunity to encourage pupils to increase the breadth of their Level 2 study. This has the potential to increase opportunities for all students at higher levels of study. The implementation of the Baccalaureate must however be in harmony with the principle that pupils should study a broad range of subjects, appropriate to them, taking into account their aptitude and interest. Currently there is no desire within 1994 Group universities for the English Baccalaureate to be included within university admissions criteria. In terms of Level 2 study it is most important that students gain a broad education which is appropriate to them to maximise their options for further and higher study.

APPENDIX 1

The 1994 Group represents 19 of UK's leading student-focused research-intensive universities. It was established in 1994 to promote excellence in University research and teaching.

12 of the top 20 universities in the Guardian University Guide 2011 league tables published on the 8th June 2010 are 1994 Group members. In 17 major subject areas 1994 Group universities are the UK leaders achieving 1st place in their field (THE RAE subject rankings 2008). 57% of the 1994 Group's research is rated 4* "world-leading" or 3* "internationally excellent" (RAE 2008, HEFCE). 10 of the top 200 universities in the 2010-11 THE World University Rankings are 1994 Group members.

The 1994 Group represents: University of Bath, Birkbeck University of London, Durham University, University of East Anglia, University of Essex, University of Exeter, Goldsmiths University of London, Institute of Education University of London, Royal Holloway University of London, Lancaster University, University of Leicester, Loughborough University, Queen Mary University of London, University of Reading, University of St Andrews, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of Surrey, University of Sussex, University of York.

24 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Mr Duncan Spalding, Aylsham High School

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 The E-Bac as it is currently designed is not a qualification but an accountability measure.

1.2 It will narrow the curriculum rather than broadening it.

1.3 Brilliant students will potentially be branded failures unnecessarily for missing one element.

1.4 League table pressures will see students following it inappropriately.

1.5 It will do nothing to address the issue of employability skills as raised by employers.

1.6 It will be potentially harmful to subjects such as the Arts that do not currently figure within the E-Bac framework.

2. ABOUT THE SUBMITTER

My response to the committee is based upon personal experience as the Head Teacher of a genuinely comprehensive rural school in Aylsham, North Norfolk. We do not take soft options, we encourage students to pursue study that will stretch and engage them. The new E-Bac measure has caused confusion and concern. We are a hugely successful school that achieves excellent outcomes for students. 76% of students achieved A*–C in English and Maths in 2010. 73% achieved 5 A*–C including English and Maths. 63% achieved A*–C in English Maths and 2 Sciences. Our EB figure of 16% is disproportionately low compared to our outstanding figures for A*–C including English and Maths. This is simply down to student choice. It is not about students aiming for or being directed towards an easier set of subjects.

3. CURRICULUM DESIGN OR ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURE?

School accountability is absolutely crucial in order to secure improvements and raise standards for young people. Great teaching is at the heart of this. The introduction of new accountability measures under the guise of curriculum reform is not the way to hold schools to account. If the E-Bac must be imposed, radical changes will need to take place if it is not simply going to be another tool to show that students from more affluent areas do better than those from poorer areas. It will not in itself do anything to raise standards.

4. NARROWING THE CURRICULUM

I would like to put it on record that I feel that the EB, in its proposed form, is a deeply flawed measure that will serve only to narrow the curriculum and will do huge damage to the educational chances of an enormous number of students and lasting damage to the system of education in this country. It has proved very unpopular with many parents as they feel that their children are being forced down a narrow channel. With no clear strategy of implementation parents do not know what impact the EB choice will have on college and university entrance. Indeed, the *ad hoc* nature of its implementation has caused a huge amount of anxiety at my school. This was compounded by the retrospective application of the standard on this year's tables which was completely unfair and can only have been designed to make some kind of ideological point. It has not served the interests of parents or students, or for that matter schools. If such measures must be introduced they should only take effect when all parties have had a chance to modify policies, should they want to, so that they may be judged accordingly. The measure became part of the tables at the time when schools were trying to plan their options and staffing for the future. This coupled with the timing of the Wolf report points towards a poor understanding at the DfE of how curriculum design and resourcing takes place in schools. The possible cost impact on schools at a time of already pressing staff adjustments is potentially huge.

5. BACCALAUREATE IS A MISNOMER

It is worth noting that Baccalaureate is a term usually applied to an examination taken aged 18 as an entry requirement for university. It is not simply a collection of subjects but a clear framework with a curriculum philosophy. It also offers students the possibility to specialise as well as to generalise. My perception of the E-Bac is that it is simply a performance measure. There is no philosophical framework for it, or nuance to reflect different aptitudes. The most cynical reading is that it is a way of setting a benchmark by which to claim improvements for the new administration. Performance measures should not drive curriculum design or student choice. The Wolf review described certain courses as providing "perverse incentives" for students to be encouraged to follow certain courses of study. The E-Bac does exactly the same. Students will be encouraged to follow inappropriate combinations in a bid to boost league table position. To say this is simply wrong oversimplifies the pressures placed on schools by league tables.

6. E-BAC LACKS GENUINE BREADTH

It appears to me that the government philosophy that "schools should offer a broad range of academic subjects to age 16" is not at all reflected in its EB measure. Music, fine art, Drama, RE, Physical Education, Business Studies, Design/Technology and ICT are all subjects that contain genuine academic challenge. The definition put forward in the paper "**Statement of Intent 2010—Addendum (The English Baccalaureate)**" is far too narrow and does not include the breadth that the government claims to believe in. It does; however, seem to contain a number of subjects (Biblical Hebrew/Latin/Ancient History) that feature strongly in the curriculum at independent and selective schools. There is no need whatsoever to bias attainment tables still further towards these institutions. What is more, this is clear "prescription" when we were promised "permissiveness" by Michael Gove with regards to the curriculum.

7. A GENUINE RISK OF DISAFFECTION

The real danger of the EB is that schools, students and parents will persist with wholly academic study until the age of 16 when it is totally inappropriate for them. The major problems with disaffection do not begin age 16; they start earlier, often in year 9. What lies at the heart of this disaffection is that young people are forced to pursue courses of study that do not engage them or give them any genuine chance of success. If we devalue what these youngsters do from 14 onwards we risk greater issues with behaviour and underachievement in our schools and an increase in the issues that can blight communities outside schools.

8. SHOULD WE BRAND OUTSTANDING STUDENTS AS FAILURES?

8.1 When looking at a list of students in my school who are not set to reach this measure this year I came across a student who has chosen to study a modern foreign language but not a humanity. She has chosen to study drama and music as well as triple sciences. The EB measure would brand her a failure and deem that she has not followed a sufficiently broad curriculum. This is not a view shared by two prestigious Norfolk independent schools who have both offered her significant scholarships. More importantly she has been able to follow her learning passion, love school and blossom in confidence. Surely this is the aim of education. When designing the scope for an E-Bac type measure, if you must have one, there is the potential to have greater flexibility to recognise excellence in the arts or in sciences at GCSE. None of these should be perceived as soft options. Students should have flexibility rather than the prescription proposed at present. Perhaps triple science (not currently afforded any additional status) could replace the language requirement or a student could specialise in humanities rather than just MFL. By the same token a student could adopt an MFL focus and forgo the Humanities component. It is possible that subjects like music, art or drama could become endangered as group viability becomes a real issue at times of financial pressure.

8.2 It is disingenuous to argue that students who do not have the E-Bac will not be considered to have failed, such as the student I mentioned above. If you establish a measure of success you also establish a measure of failure. It will exist in the minds of students, parents, colleges, universities and employers. It is potentially immensely damaging to do this. Often students miss out on one element at 16. They often make up for this at a later date. Will they be able to receive certification at another time? Could this blight their future chances?

9. INTERNATIONAL COMPARISONS SHOULD NOT BE OVERPLAYED

9.1 I am sure that the PISA study results will be used to try and justify this return to such a traditional curriculum. The most successful nation according to PISA, Finland, achieves what it does because it places trust in its teachers and stops finding ways to weigh, measure and if needs be publicly pillory its schools. In Finland the only externally assessed examination for academic subjects takes place at 18. It does broadly follow the shape of the E-Bac but it is a 16+ exam and it contains far greater choice of humanity type subject. Crucially international comparisons can prove useful but tend to be far too sweeping and ignore the particular contexts affecting schools. When you examine PISA the main issue relates to the differences in achievement for lower ability students and the progress that they make. This has far more to do with the whole educational journey, and issues that may arise during the primary phase, than how students are examined at the age of 16.

9.2 At worst the education system in the UK has stagnated. We have remained resolutely average. The ranking has dropped but the scores have not. That is the only possible outcome in a system that sets its entire store by threshold measures, league tables and Ofsted grades. True revolution does not lie in tinkering with tables and moving goalposts. There's no point digging the same old hole, in the same old place and to coin another popular phrase you don't fatten a pig by constantly weighing it. Schools will not take risks or seek to innovate when they are held to account by a culture of blame rather than one of genuinely supportive accountability. Tables and measures are not the answer. The E-Bac will probably become just another floor target to hit schools with, often unfairly and disproportionately because they serve disadvantaged intakes.

10. IS THIS WHAT YOUNG PEOPLE AND EMPLOYERS REALLY NEED?

10.1 I do not believe that the possession of an MFL, History or Geography GCSE will help to provide employers with what they need. Mr Cameron has declared war on "the enemies of enterprise" while his colleague, the Secretary of State for Education has done his best to strip it from the curriculum. Pursuit of the E-Bac measure will not help students to improve their employability skills. It is a purely academic progression pathway that will not get the best out of everyone. The risk is that it will become an easy to understand label for employers. It will be seen as the sign of a good all rounder but it will actually give only part of the picture.

10.2 We live in an age where employers require creative thinkers and effective communicators who are strongly emotionally intelligent and who understand the huge potential of new technologies to shape our world. Our society and communities need people who are resilient, entrepreneurial and driven by a passion for learning and a desire for mastery. The EB measure will do nothing to improve the overall experience of learning for our young people.

10.3 My fear is that, if implemented as is, it will be used simple shorthand by parents, colleges, universities and employers and that genuine talent will be missed. Learning should not be like cod liver oil. You should not have to do things just because they are perceived to be "good for you" and that "I had to do it and it didn't do me any harm." It should be about passion, realising potential and discovering a life-long love of learning.

11. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

11.1. The fact that schools are currently judged against 5 A*-C including English and Maths including equivalences is absolutely fair and should continue. What this measure does is emphasise the importance of English and Maths whilst allowing youngsters to enjoy success in a range of subjects and assessment types. This includes vocational subjects such as BTECs which are hugely successful in helping non-academic students to receive credit for their hard work and application in school. To change this now and to devalue the work

that young people have already embarked upon is irresponsible in the extreme and clearly illustrates that the current leadership of the Department for Education is motivated purely by ideological concerns and not the needs of young people. We have a richer and more exciting curriculum in schools than ever before. To dismantle this for ideological reasons is simply outrageous. I agree that it is necessary to review certain equivalences in order to ensure a better balance of the impact that they have on overall attainment in schools, but they must not be lost.

11.2. I don't believe that an E-Bac is necessary as it is proposed by the coalition; however, if an E-Bac is to be introduced then it needs to be much broader in its scope to prevent credit only being given for a few subjects. It should be based upon an overarching philosophy of learning, encourage community engagement, enterprise, problem solving and work skills. It should allow flexibility; flexibility for students to specialise as well as generalise. It should not be used as a league table stick to beat schools with or as an ideological tool to separate the perceived academic wheat from the vocational chaff. Therefore the course of action in point 11.1 should be pursued until a diploma can be properly planned.

11.3. Have the courage to adopt an accountability framework without having recourse to nationally published and ranked tables. Remove perverse incentives to improve league table position by having a high trust model and getting rid of tables. Finland doesn't and it hasn't caused standards to plummet. Quite the opposite in fact.

24 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by e-skills UK

This is a response to the call for consultation on the English Baccalaureate, with a particular focus on the omission of IT from the approved subjects list.

MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

e-skills UK shares widespread concerns over the current state of IT-related qualifications in schools, at both Key Stage 4 and 5, in particular the GCSE and A-level specifications. We are also concerned about the issues around vocational qualifications which have been used inappropriately as GCSE-equivalents, with problems occurring in both delivery and assessment.

A primary issue for all IT-related qualifications in schools is the confusion between "digital literacy/IT user skills" (the skills in the day to day use of IT which everyone needs in today's world) and the study of digital technology/IT as a scientific discipline. Almost the entire school curriculum is focused on the former (basic "IT user" skills).

Whilst expressing some concern over the omission of IT from the current approved subjects list of the E-Bacc, our main recommendations are that:

1. Digital literacy/IT user skills should NOT be considered as a GCSE or A-level subject. Rather, it should be taught like reading and writing at the earliest point possible.
2. Digital technology/IT as a scientific discipline should be recognised for its strategic importance and high quality GCSEs and A-levels put in place.

Given that 1 in 20 of the UK's workforce works in IT, a proportion that is continuing to grow, it is important for young people's life opportunity, as well as for the well being of the economy, that students are offered a rigorous, valued technology curriculum in schools.

To create a high quality curriculum in this fast changing area will require the backing of the IT sector and of Higher Education. e-skills UK is working with employers and universities to encourage interest in the development of such curriculum.

Our main recommendation at this time is that a new GCSE, created by the IT sector in partnership with leading universities, should be created. A design point should be that it is recognised as a science and included as such within the e-Bacc.

This GCSE should:

- be highly valued by both higher education and industry,
- provide rigorous academic foundations suitable for higher education study; contribute to successful future careers in IT or other occupations; and
- benefit from the ongoing support of employers across the IT sector in terms of content, delivery support and work experience.

24 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Caroline O'Neill, Curriculum Leader for RE, Cardinal Heenan Catholic High School

As the Curriculum Leader for Religious Education in a large comprehensive school I would like to challenge your intention to leave RE out of the English Baccalaureate. I learnt in February that Parliament, through the Education Committee, has set up a short enquiry into the E-Bac and that written submissions are invited.

Whilst understanding the purpose and benefits of the E-Bac and its value as a measure of pupils and school performance, I would urge the committee to re-examine the choice of subjects included in the E-Bac. My concern is that without RE as one of the core subjects, schools will switch their attention to the traditional subjects that the E-Bac demands, making recent achievements of RE to be unnecessarily thrown away.

460,000 pupils take RE as a GCSE subject. In my own school close to 200 pupils take the subject as a full GCSE course each year and 80% (average) pupils achieve grades A*-C. Pupils enjoy their RE and are proud to achieve high grades in the subject when they get their results.

Many of the units in the specifications are very relevant to the lives of individual students. The subject rigorously challenges and develops thinking skills. It contributes to emotional development and adult well being. It teaches tolerance between peoples and races. The impact of the subject can be observed both inside and outside of school.

Please find attached a short presentation to illustrate my argument further.²¹⁹

Please also observe the good and necessary work that is being carried out throughout the country by dedicated and successful RE departments and then please reconsider including the subject of RE in the E-Bac

24 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Ron Herbert and Emma McMurrrough, Graforth Academy

I am writing to stress why RE should be included as a Humanities Subject within the English Baccalaureate.

RE is as much as an academic subject as Geography and History. Not only that, but RE develops students socially, morally and spiritually. Students are able to consider the views of others, which is vital as citizens within society. They are helped to develop high level written skills and learn to reason logically through debate and discussion. They also progress in their verbal and listening skills. The curriculum allows them to consider controversial topics such as the use of fertility treatments and abortion, which will hopefully prepare them better for their adult life.

As a teacher of "A" level Law, I find that students who have studied RE are more able to critically analyse the sometimes significant gaps between legal and moral issues. They are more able to see issues from both perspectives and I believe that RE study helps a great deal in this ability.

We currently have an average of 50 students per year (in a year band of 300) opting to take GCSE RE. Students thoroughly enjoy the course, with many continuing on to study with us at 6th form. We attain outstanding results (100% A*-C).

If the English Baccalaureate is not changed as a matter of urgency and RE left from the requirement, I fear that students will be forced to opt for Geography or History instead of RE. They will not be able to follow their passion for the subject and attain the high grades that we work so hard with the students for them to attain. I truly hope that this injustice is rectified and that RE is given the accreditation that it deserves.

24 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by SLT of Albany Science College

PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE E-BAC

1. Schools already have a plethora of performance measurements. These measurements have been changed so regularly in the past that meaningful year on year comparisons of performance are becoming impossible. We are already having to contend with Science (one or two?) being added to the 5 A*-C E M measure. It would seem that the CV measure is to be phased out.

2. The E-Bac measure has no purpose other than to force schools into a 1960's grammar school type curriculum. Until now pupils could gain eight or more A* grades at GCSE but still not gain the E-Bac. This does not mean these pupils are less "academic". It does indicate that applied, vocational GCSE's are seen as less valued even though they have a high degree of academic rigour. This is not a good message to be sending out to young people.

²¹⁹ Not printed.

3. The E-Bac limits choice in the KS4 curriculum and so narrows post 16 opportunities. There is a danger that a highly prescriptive dogma driven curriculum which reduces choice will impact on pupil engagement and motivation.

4. To date FE Colleges and Universities have not come out in any great support of the E-Bac as an entry requirement so it has no validity or purpose for those pupils who wish to enter Higher Education.

5. If the purpose of the E-Bac is to show that selective schools with a 1960's curriculum are better than comprehensives in performance tables then no doubt it will work. Similarly if the intention is to show that a new performance measure has shown an improvement from E-Bac outcomes in 2010 to E-Bac outcomes in 2013–14 and so the Government was right then it too will work. Such meaningless tinkering with numbers as a means of showing improvement will however be recognised for being a politically motivated irrelevance.

CHOICE OF SUBJECTS IN THE E-BAC

6. Forcing pupils to do History/Geography and a Foreign Language to attain a meaningless qualification assumes that other subjects are less valuable and have less merit.

7. The subjects themselves would also immediately advantage Specialist Language and Humanities Colleges in performance tables which is unfair. This would also apply if RE was added to History/Geography. Faith schools of all kinds would gain a significant unfair advantage in performance tables.

IMPLICATIONS

8. For pupils the E-Bac will mean less choice of GCSE subjects and the potential for disaffection to grow if the compulsory curriculum grows. Pupils would not have a broad and balanced curriculum and less chance to pursue interest and ambitions they may have.

9. For schools the issues are many and varied. The implications for the KS3 curriculum and the amount of time devoted to E-Bac subjects at the expense of others eg Technology will be considerable. Staff in subjects like Performing Arts and Technology may find their jobs under pressure as less curriculum time will be given to them. Similarly, recruiting staff in Humanities and Languages especially will be extremely difficult. What are the plans to improve the capacity of well qualified staff in these areas?

Schools would be forced into developing a two tier curriculum—E-Bac and non E-Bac at an early stage which is divisive and unequal.

10. For employers it will add more confusion as to what this will mean. Will having GCSE French and History Grade C make young people any more employable? If all pupils are to remain in education/training until they are 18, surely their most recent, higher qualifications will be considered as more relevant. This is particularly the case when the curriculum will be far more content and factually driven as opposed to a focus on skills.

11. Introducing MfL that allows those fortunate enough to be bilingual by birth whether it is in Welsh or Hindi does not introduce academic vigour and does not help Britain fill vacancies in Brussels for a fairer European voice. Neither do the ancient and classical languages.

12. The Science inclusion actually means the E-Bac covers GCSE's and actually seven GCSE's if a pupil is studying the more academically rigorous and incidentally necessary three separate Sciences to lead to successful "A" levels and careers in areas such as medicine and pharmacology!

INTERNATIONAL COMPARATORS

13. The apparent need to compare the UK with Finland, Singapore and some Canadian Provinces is nonsense. Like is not being compared with like across the whole system. Merely working at output figures and placing countries in a league table will not improve performance.

14. There is a major confusion/lack of clarity as to what advice to give to pupils who are looking towards University/are capable of going to University but do not want to follow the E-Bac route.

15. This is particularly so for second languages. In most countries the second language will be English because (American) English is the international language of business, diplomacy and travel. Some of these comparator countries are so small they have no choice but to learn another language if they are to participate with the global network and economy.

Many countries recognised as good at Foreign Language start with rigour in the primary place. What are the DfE's plans for this?

16. It would be more realistic to find out how many Germans of school age learn French? How many Spaniards learn German? To force a second language onto UK pupils because pupils in other countries learn a second language is a bogus argument.

17. In conclusion the imposition of E-Bac has caused confusion, uncertainty and dismay amongst the majority of the teaching profession. No thought or consultation was put in place at the outset. The educational/

philosophical premise on which it is based is extremely weak and irrelevant and the whole thing should be dismissed as an irrelevance.

24 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by British Humanist Association

1. ABOUT US

1.1 The British Humanist Association (BHA) is the national charity working on behalf of non-religious people who seek to live ethical and fulfilling lives on the basis of reason and humanity. We promote Humanism, support and represent the non-religious, and promote a secular state and equal treatment in law and policy of everyone, regardless of religion or belief. Founded in 1896, we have around 30,000 members and supporters, and over 70 local and special interest affiliates.

1.2 We have been involved in the curriculum subject of Religious Education (RE) for over forty years. There are Humanist representatives in some sort of relationship with 88 standing advisory committees for religious education (SACREs) in England and Wales and the BHA itself was involved in work towards the national framework for RE in 2004 and government guidance on RE in 2010.

2. SUMMARY

2.1 We note that one of the aspects of the English Baccalaureate currently being discussed is the place of Religious Studies (RS) within it.

2.2 While we champion the importance of good quality education about religious and non-religious beliefs and values in all schools, we note that, in its present form, RE is unfit for purpose in many schools. Arguments made in support of its inclusion in the EBacc are weakened by its patchy quality across schools, its restrictive nature at GCSE, and the ability of many schools with a religious character to prescribe confessional syllabuses.

2.3 We urge the Committee, if it considers recommending that RS be included in the EBacc, to recommend also that RE become a nationally determined subject rather than a local one, and be reviewed along with other curriculum subjects as part of the Government's review of the whole curriculum.

3. *What are the current arrangements for Religious Education?*

3.1 Under the Education Reform Act 1988, Religious Education (RE) is not part of the National Curriculum²²⁰ but is determined at local authority level for schools under their control. The local syllabuses produced are variable in their scope and quality.

3.2 The governors of religious academies and voluntary aided schools can set their own RE syllabus and may use the time to provide confessional instruction in the particular religion of the school.

3.3 GCSE level syllabuses are set and examined by the relevant examination board in the same way as other subjects. Legally a GCSE syllabus "must reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, while taking account of the teachings and practices of the other principal religious traditions represented in Great Britain." These traditions are assumed to be Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism.

3.4 However, GCSE syllabuses are offered that allow schools to teach predominantly about one religious perspective and for young people to pass the assessment components of the GCSE without fully engaging with the teachings and practices of other religions or with non-religious beliefs.²²¹

4. RE SHOULD HAVE A CLEAR PLACE IN THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM...

4.1 Good quality RE can help young people to understand the views and opinions of people whose beliefs and values differ from their own.

4.2 Good quality RE can assist young people in developing informed personal responses to big philosophical questions and ethical dilemmas.

4.3 The subject can develop skills of critical reasoning and debate, preparing young people to engage with and come to compromise with those whose views do not represent their own.

4.4 Good RE has the potential to support other subjects such as History, English Literature, Art, Music, and Geography.

²²⁰ It is part of the basic curriculum which comprises RE and the National Curriculum

²²¹ For example see OCR, Religious Studies A (World Religions) http://www.ocr.org.uk/download/kd/ocr_9998_kd_gcse_spec.pdf

5. ...BUT THE CURRENT STATUTORY ARRANGEMENTS FOR RE SHOULD BE REVIEWED AND REFORMED BEFORE RS IS INCLUDED IN THE EBACC

5.1 RE provision in community schools is patchy: In 2010 RE was rated as “inadequate” in one in five secondary schools in England and Ofsted found “very significant variability in the quantity and quality of support for RE provided to schools by local authorities.”²²² Ofsted chief inspector Christine Gilbert said, “This report highlights two things—first the need for better support and training for teachers and, secondly, the need for a reconsideration of the local arrangements for the oversight of RE, so schools can have a clear framework to use which helps them secure better student achievement in the subject.”

5.2 “RE” in many “faith” schools does not have to be objective and may comprise confessional instruction: The current provisions allow many state schools with a religious character to meet their statutory requirement to provide religious education by providing confessional instruction in the particular religion of the school. For example the most recent guidance on RE in Catholic schools in England, states that “Religious education given to children and young people in Catholic schools must always... contribute to their education in and to the Catholic faith.”²²³

5.4 This opt-out option for “faith” schools results in many students currently not having access to religious education that explores a wide range of views and opinions, including of people whose beliefs and values differ from their own. This negates one of the key arguments in support of the subject—the promotion of community cohesion.

5.5 Religious education that presents one worldview does not allow young people to develop critical thinking skills to evaluate the views and evidence they are presented with and form their own conclusions. In addition, it is confusing for young people to have conflicting information presented as absolute fact in both religious education and other lessons, such as science.

5.6 Religious education as currently taught in some “faith” schools can be exclusionary and offensive to those of a different belief from the school. For example, Church of England guidance on the teaching of RE in schools states that “there is a divide between those with a religious faith and those for whom religion is meaningless” and that, “the secular assumption that there is no reality beyond the physical world is ultimately sterile.”²²⁴ In 2004 a Department of Education (then DfES) survey found that 65% of 12–19 year olds described themselves as non-religious. Many of these students will attend state schools with a religious character. Religious education that dismisses students’ own beliefs in such a way may lead to students feeling that they have no meaningful perspective to bring to debates on key moral issues or that “values” or “morals” have nothing to do with them. This is ultimately damaging for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of these young people.

6. A WAY FORWARD

6.1 We share the belief of colleagues in the field that the omission of RS from the EBacc may cause schools to shift focus from the subject and have a negative impact on the quality of RE being taught at KS3. However, given the patchy quality of RE currently, putting RS on the EBacc without reviewing its place in the wider curriculum and the statutory provisions underpinning it, would be a missed opportunity.

6.2 The Department for Education (DfE) is currently undertaking a review of the entire National Curriculum and its inclusion could be met as part of this process.

7. CONCLUSION

7.1 Good quality education about religious and non-religious worldviews is an important part of general education in the Humanities.

7.2 Any inclusion of RS on the EBacc should go together with making RE a nationally determined subject and we urge the Committee to recommend that the current DfE review of the National Curriculum address this issue.

24 March 2011

²²² Ofsted, *Transforming Religious Education* (2010)

²²³ The Catholic Education Service Religious Education curriculum directory for Catholic schools (1996)

²²⁴ Church of England and national Society, *Excellence and distinctiveness: Guidance on RE in Church of England schools* (2005)

Written evidence submitted by BT

INTRODUCTION

1. BT welcomes this opportunity to input its thoughts on this important topic to the Committee and would be happy to discuss the issues further if that would be helpful.

BACKGROUND ON BT AND EDUCATIONAL ISSUES

2. BT is a major beneficiary of the UK education system recruiting young people from schools, colleges and universities onto its Apprenticeship and Graduate programmes. In 2010 more than 24,000 young people applied to the BT Apprenticeship scheme and more than 4,600 young people applied for the BT Graduate scheme.

3. BT is a learning provider in its own right, holding a contract with the National Employer Service and Skills Development Scotland for the provision of Apprenticeships across the Group. In the academic year 2009–10 more than 10,000 members of the existing BT workforce undertook Apprenticeship development.

4. BT is also a partner in the UK education system. Working with our Sector Skills Council, e-skills UK, we input into Labour Market Intelligence which underpins curriculum consideration, we design specific programme curriculum (for example the Diploma in IT and the Information Technology Management for Business Degree) and develop and deliver content and projects to support teaching. We also offer work placements to give young people an up to date awareness of technology-based careers and during 2010–11 more than 3,000 young people will undertake a work placement at BT through the “work inspiration” programme.

5. BT also supports the Manchester Communications Academy and a new Academy being developed in Hastings as well as working closely with other colleges and universities to ensure that their offering is in line with the needs of employers in the technology sector.

BT'S ENTRY REQUIREMENT FOR APPRENTICES AND GRADUATES

6. In 2010 BT had more than 24,000 applicants for its Apprenticeship scheme. Applicants must have a minimum of five GCSEs (grade A–C including maths and English) for entry onto level 2 and 3 programmes and two good A-Levels for entry onto level 4 programmes. Despite the fact that all entrants onto the scheme hold a GCSE pass in Maths, 18% of entrants fail key skills testing in Maths, typically tested at a level below the Framework that they are undertaking during initial assessment. We also look for enthusiasm for our industry, dexterity (for those engineering and IT roles that have such a requirement), customer focus, team working etc.

7. For entry onto BT's Graduate scheme we require 3 Bs at A-Level and a 2i Honours Degree. The subjects studied and read are not a significant consideration except for roles in our Research and Development business where we would expect young people to have read for a degree that would have given them a firm understanding of technology and the exploitation of technology but more importantly the disciplines that are required in a R&D environment. We also look for functional capability in graduates applying for finance and legal roles.

THE ENGLISH BACCALAUREATE

8. We believe that the introduction of the English Baccalaureate (E-Bac) could:

- (i) reflect the role of English and Maths as critical underpinning capabilities for young people entering the workforce;
- (ii) reinforce the role that a sound understanding of science and the disciplines that are developed through scientific study have in preparing young people for further study or employment in STEM environments;
- (iii) promote the need for young people who are going to be operating in a global work environment to be able to communicate with colleagues and customers in different languages. For this reason we believe the E-Bac should promote the uptake of modern languages; and
- (iv) reinforce the need for young people to demonstrate rounded characters with a broad range of interests though we believe this could be demonstrated through a wider range of subjects than currently proposed in the acceptable “Humanities” qualifications.

SOME CONCERNS WITH THE E-BAC

9. We have a number of concerns to draw to the Committee's attention:-

- (i) The lack of attention to IT within the E-Bac. The UK is at risk of becoming a country of IT consumers rather than IT generators. For a successful, vibrant economy we require members of the workforce who not only successfully utilise IT in their roles but individuals who understand how to exploit IT to affect change in their organisations and who are able to develop the infrastructure, hardware, software and services on which a knowledge based economy will thrive.
- (ii) We do not believe that the current GCSE or Diploma in IT are the right products to prepare young people for Further or Higher Education in Technology-based subjects. Nor are they suitable

preparation for direct access into work. We would urge that significant review of the schools based IT curriculum is required and that the long term ambition of the E-Bac should be to promote the key role that IT will have as a vital business capability, on a par with English and Maths.

- (iii) The E-Bac does not promote practical or technical experience outside of Maths and Science and as a result young people with more practical leanings may be encouraged to study more academic subjects to their detriment. While we acknowledge the core foundations of maths and science our engineers and IT professionals of the future must be happy working in a practical environment and we believe the promotion of subjects such as Design and Technology and Engineering promote this more practical capability.
- (iv) There is a lack of creative subjects in the subjects proposed for the E-Bac. In a sector where the speed of change of products and services is fast and the expectations of customers are high, recruits to the business must be creative in developing solutions to the most complex issues. BT does not require specific subjects to have been studied for entry onto its Apprenticeship and Graduate schemes and we have many successful recruits that come from an artistic rather than STEM background. We believe it does a disservice to prioritise the current E-Bac subjects over Art, Music and other creative subject and does not give a true reflection of the priorities of employers.
- (v) We are also concerned that schools do not make too great an investment in teaching and resources to support attainment in E-Bac subjects to the detriment of those subjects that are outside of the E-Bac requirements. Many young people will enjoy and be successful in subjects that are not as academically focussed as the E-Bac subjects. They must not feel that their attainment is any less important to the school or that the decision that they make not to pursue the entirety of the E-Bac portfolio will have an adverse impact on the career choices.
- (vi) The introduction on the E-Bac must be supported by a significant awareness raising exercise for employers. The plethora of qualification and courses that young people present at the age of 16 or that are presented as part of a CV ages 18 and 21 are confusing to employers and do not give an easily understood appreciation of an individual's knowledge, capability or achievement. This issue is exacerbated by the ever higher levels of grades that young people present and as a result it is becoming increasingly difficult to differentiate between those who are good and those who are excellent.

24 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Religious Education Council of England and Wales

1. In this submission, we urge the Committee to recommend that Religious Studies (RS) should be included as a humanities subject in the English Baccalaureate.

2. We urge this because RS:

- allows young people to learn about vital aspects of human experience without which study of the humanities is deficient;
- is an academically rigorous humanities subject; and
- will be severely damaged as a result of its exclusion from the Baccalaureate.

3. There has been a very strong support nationally for the inclusion of RE highlighting the strength of feeling about its value. This is evidenced by *inter alia*:

- the acknowledged high level of correspondence received by the DFE;
- the support from the Association of School and College Leaders through its General Secretary, Brian Lightman (see appendix); and
- the very significant press reaction (see appendix).

About Us

4. The Religious Education Council of England and Wales (REC) is the membership forum for over fifty professional associations and faith and belief communities which are promoting and supporting RE nationally in schools, colleges and universities. It is a registered charity and acts on behalf of its member organisations in liaising with government on RE issues.

ABOUT RELIGIOUS STUDIES

5. Under the Education Reform Act 1988, Religious Education (RE) is not part of the National Curriculum²²⁵ but is determined at local authority level for schools under their control. The governors of voluntary aided schools are responsible for their own RE.

6. At GCSE level syllabuses are set and examined by the relevant examination board in the same way as for all other subjects. The examination title for RE is Religious Studies (RS).

²²⁵ It is part of the basic curriculum which comprises RE and the National Curriculum.

7. The legal requirement is that a syllabus “must reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian, while taking account of the teachings and practices of the other principal religious traditions represented in Great Britain.” These traditions are assumed to be Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism. Subsequent guidance recommends that there should be opportunities for pupils to study three other world faiths (the Baha’i faith, Jainism and Zoroastrianism) and non-religious worldviews such as humanism. At GCSE, the philosophy and ethics elements of the subject are particularly popular.

8. Currently many first world countries which have hitherto not included the study of religion in their curriculum are recognising the need to do so in order to equip their young people to understand the world around them. The English model of RE is being seen by many as an exemplar.

Why should RS be included as a humanities option in the English Baccalaureate?

9. RS covers a vital dimension of universal human experience without an understanding of which a student’s education is deficient. It is a humanities subject of long-standing and great significance.

10. Issues of religion and belief frequently top the news agenda and underpin many world affairs; RS can help young people make sense of them.

11. RS can help young people growing up in a diverse society to understand the views and opinions of people whose beliefs and values differ from their own.

12. RS supports other subjects such as History, English Literature, Art, Music, Politics, Economics and Philosophy.

13. RS is a growing examination subject. 170,000 candidates sat the full course GCSE exam in England in 2010, not dissimilar to Geography (175,000) and History (201,000). An additional 255,000 sat the short course GCSE making an overall cohort total of nearly 60% of pupils.

14. RS can contribute to building a more harmonious and integrated society. 80% pupils who studied RS at GCSE level believe it can promote understanding between people with different religions and beliefs. More than 60% said that taking the subject had been a “positive influence” on them.²²⁶

Is RS any less rigorous than other humanities subjects including in the Baccalaureate?

15. There is no research concluding that RS is anything other than a rigorous subject at full course GCSE level. A QCA study in 1999 examined the “easiness of subjects” and reported that demands on pupils over the period 1976–96 at RE O Level, GCE and GCSE levels had increased and exams had become harder. A comparative study based on 2004 and earlier data²²⁷ suggested that, prior to 2005, history was slightly harder than geography, which was slightly harder than RE but that the differences were not particularly significant.

16. There is no Ofsted evidence on the comparative hardness or softness of the humanities subjects although its former Chief Inspector Chris Woodhead said, “With the notable exception of religious studies, few if any GCSE and A-level subjects with the word ‘studies’ in the title have real credibility.”²²⁸

17. Pass rates at GCSE level A*–C are slightly higher for RS (72.7%) than for history (70%) and geography (69.4%). However, 4% more girls take RS than take history or geography and as their pass rate over all subjects is 7% higher than that for boys, one would expect the overall pass rate for RE to be slightly higher. Furthermore, large numbers of pupils in schools with a designated religious character are entered for the full course examination, often with generous staffing and other resources. This might be expected to reflect higher exam results.

18. The recent Russell Group’s advice to schools featured RS as a useful A-level qualification for five subject areas. Trinity College, Cambridge, gave RS an “A list” rating for arts subjects entrance.

What will happen if RS remains excluded from the English Baccalaureate?

19. Essentially two divisions have been created out of the previously unified GCSE league. The Premier Baccalaureate Division is what will matter in the future. The other subjects, including Religious Studies, go into Second Division. Whilst the Government is clear that the Second Division will have its own league table, most head teachers realise they will be judged primarily on their position in the Premier Division.

20. The decision to re-work last year’s GCSE league tables, dropping out all the second division subjects and re-presenting the tables for the Baccalaureate subjects only, has already had a negative impact on RS. Head teachers are very quickly latching on to the implications and switching staffing and resources to the premier subjects. The National Association of Teachers of RE (NATRE) has substantial evidence of RE departments being downsized, vacancies in RE being switched to history or geography and redundancies being made. Evidence of this has already been submitted to the Department for Education.

²²⁶ Dubit survey of 1,000 16–24 year olds, 2010.

²²⁷ Coe R et al, Relative difficulty of examinations in different subjects, University of Durham 2008.

²²⁸ writing in *The Sunday Times* 8 March 2009.

21. The above will also have a negative knock-on effect on A and AS Level RE courses, on short course GCSEs and on the quality of RE being taught at KS3.

22. Schools which continue to enter the majority of their pupils for the full course GCSE (as the government is on record as wishing to encourage) will face an enormous timetable squeeze with disadvantageous knock-on effects on other subjects such as the arts and vocational areas.

23. RE in the school curriculum generally is facing other unintended negative consequences of educational changes. These include:

- (a) Being left out of the review of the National Curriculum on the grounds that RE's syllabuses are determined at local authority level. This omission will result in RE failing to be brought into the overall revision of the curriculum and remaining the odd subject out—and just at a time when local authorities are cutting back on their support for RE.
- (b) RE was inadvertently left out of the primary legislation establishing the academies—the first time since 1870 there has not been a primary legislation requirement for RE.

The risk of a domino effect from an omission from the English Baccalaureate is very real. Government has explicitly stated that RE's statutory position in the curriculum will not be changed. We already know that being statutory does not in itself protect. Daily collective worship remains a statutory requirement for all secondary schools yet 80% of them fail to observe it with impunity. Non-compliance on the part of many schools has unhappily been a common experience for RE over several decades.

24 March 2011

APPENDIX

SAMPLE MEDIA COVERAGE

(articles have been shortened to focus on the RE aspects)

The Observer, Sunday 23 January 2011

Religious leaders and theologians have condemned the decision to leave religious education off the list of GCSEs that go towards the controversial new English baccalaureate.

The chairman of the Church of England's education board, the Bishop of Oxford, the Right Rev John Pritchard, said that failing to take the study of religion seriously was "highly dangerous" at a time when groups such as the English Defence League (EDL) were staging violent protests against British Muslims. "The Church of England is pretty astonished at the omission of RE. I want to fire a warning salvo that there will be huge objection from the church and many other parts of society if it is not part of the core curriculum."

Pointing to claims last week by the Conservative party's co-chairwoman, Baroness Warsi, that Islamophobia had "crossed the threshold of middle-class respectability" and to the rise of the EDL, the bishop said: "RE is a real tool for creating that kind of cohesive community and society that we're looking for... we neglect it at our peril."

The subject, he said, was just as academic and rigorous as history and geography and was also extremely popular, with the number of students studying it to GCSE level climbing from 113,000 to 460,000 over the last 15 years.

Senior Jewish and Muslim figures backed the call for RE to be included on the English bac subject list. Many faith groups have written to the Department for Education expressing concern over its omission. The education secretary, Michael Gove, has indicated that he will look again at the area, without promising any change.

Jon Benjamin, chief executive of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, said he was particularly concerned about the impact of leaving RE off the list on students at Jewish schools, the vast majority of which make the subject compulsory.

"Religious studies has proven itself to be a valuable contribution to the academic curriculum, teaching students to respect themselves and others and, importantly, build identities which contribute favourably to all areas of society," he said.

"The multi-disciplinary nature of the subject, involving textual study, philosophical thinking, ethics, social understanding and the skills of analysis and reasoning, develops critical thinkers," said Benjamin.

Dr Hojjat Ramzy, vice-chairman of the Muslim Council of Britain's education committee, said he was "extremely worried" that RE was not being afforded a higher status, especially given the challenge posed by Islamophobia. "In our ever-growing multi-cultural and multi-faith society, it's very important that people, especially the younger generation, are aware of the religions and cultures of others," he said.

Members of the academic community joined calls for the humanities element of the English bac to be reconsidered, praising RE as a great developer of critical faculties as well as a key link to history, art, culture and politics.

“How can you understand Shakespeare without learning about the Bible, or understand the English civil war without understanding about disputes over how to interpret the Bible, or understand modern politics without understanding the difference between Islam and Christianity?” said Richard Swinburne, Emeritus Nolloth Professor of the Philosophy of the Christian religion at Oxford University. “It’s a mistake.”

Professor Diarmaid MacCulloch, the Oxford church historian who presented the BBC series *A History of Christianity*, said the decision was short-sighted. “Religion matters to most human beings in the world today,” he added. “To leave religion to the religious extremists, outside a good education system, is to distort.”

The Guardian 07.02.11

Many schools have taken dramatic steps in the last month to ensure more pupils obtain the English Bac. Some schools have made languages and a humanity compulsory to GCSE, as maths, English and science are. Others have allotted more time to English Bac subjects.

But this sidelined art, music, design and technology and religious education in many schools, say organisations that represent teachers of these subjects who fear pupils will fail to achieve a rounded education as a result.

The National Association of Teachers of Religious Education polled almost 800 schools and found that nearly one in three secondary schools are planning to cut time spent teaching RE as a result of the English Bac.

The Times Educational Supplement 28.01.11

Schools rush to revamp timetables for EBac

Schools are rushing in “dramatic” changes to their curriculums that will cut the time devoted to subjects not recognised in the English Baccalaureate, The TES has learned.

Subjects such as RE and music have already been hit as schools attempt to move pupils on to courses that will count towards the controversial new league table measure.

Heads are even prepared to break their statutory duties to teach RE as they switch resources to other qualifications, the National Association of Teachers of Religious Education has warned.

The omission of RE from the list of approved humanities and wider arts subjects has prompted an angry response from subject associations, which fear they will be sidelined. Fears have also been raised that teachers of those subjects could face redundancy.

Rosemary Rivett, executive officer at NATRE, said: “We have already heard from teachers that something quite dramatic has happened in their schools. Schools are reacting very quickly to the EBac and are realigning their curriculums.”

The TES has also been contacted by teachers who said students are being asked to alter their subjects in order to make them eligible for the EBac.

Church Times 21.01.11

Brian Lightman (ACSL General Secretary) says: “Religious studies, in particular, is glaringly absent. In the light of the global political situation, surely the objective study of religious issues should be encouraged.”

The Independent 17.02.11

Andy Burnham interview

“There is a huge call for religious education.”

Written evidence submitted by Association of University Lecturers in Religion and Education (AULRE)

1. ABOUT AULRE

1.1 AULRE is the professional association for all those working in the field of religion and education in higher education, whether in Initial Teacher Training, Continuing Professional Development, Education Studies or research. Many members are also involved in teaching Theology and Religious Studies at undergraduate and postgraduate levels. As such we are well placed to make the vital connections between research, subject study at university level, in teacher training and in schools.

1.2 AULRE is a member organisation of the Religious Education Council of England and Wales, and of the European Forum for Teachers of RE.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- (1) AULRE strongly urges the Secretary of State to include GCSE Religious Studies as one of the Humanities subjects in the English Baccalaureate.
- (2) Failure to do this will result in the downgrading of the importance of the subject, the reversal of the success of the past two decades, and imperilling the future of one subject area where England can be said to lead the world.
- (3) Most importantly it will deprive young people of a serious opportunity to engage with religious and cultural diversity and with the most serious philosophical and moral issues which face humanity.

3. RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND THE “ENGLISH BACCALAUREATE”

3.1 We understand from previous correspondence with the Secretary of State that the statutory arrangements for religious education remain the same, that religious education is both compulsory and locally organised, and that this is the reason for its omission from the E-Bac. However, there are some very important distinctions to be made between statutory or core provision of religious education at Key Stage 4 as part of a pupil’s general education, and the option for students to take religious studies as a GCSE full course. We also argue that neglect of RS at GCSE level may well result in schools failing to comply in any meaningful way with the requirement to provide quality compulsory religious education according to the Agreed Syllabus.

3.2 GCSE Religious Studies is recognised by all English and Welsh universities as an academic subject requiring high standards of knowledge, understanding and evaluation of evidence and argument to achieve high grades. In the last decade, numbers entering for both GCSE full and short courses, as well as for A level, have risen impressively, reflecting the fact that students perceive the relevance of a subject which deals with religious and cultural diversity, and philosophical, ethical and social issues. It also reflect the hard work of RE teachers, and the university tutors who have both taught them in undergraduate degrees in Theology and Religious Studies and in initial and continuing teacher training.

<i>Full Course RE</i>	
<i>Year</i>	<i>Entries</i>
2003:	132,304
2010:	188,704
<i>Short course RE</i>	
2001:	167,000
2010:	279,954
<i>A level</i>	
2004:	14,418
2010:	21,233

3.3 It is not often fully appreciated that religious education as practised in England and Wales is one subject of the curriculum where we lead the world. Countries from Africa, through Europe to the Far East look to Britain to provide models of RE that promote deep understanding of the religions and beliefs of traditional heritage alongside those of their neighbours. The *British Journal of Religious Education* is viewed as the leading international academic journal in the field, for example, and English academics are often invited abroad to share our expertise.

3.4 Religious Studies is the main locus within school of two vital components of a young person’s education in today’s world—learning to understand and be sensitive to the religious and cultural diversity which has such an impact on individuals, societies and politics globally, and the critical thinking skills and moral literacy provided by engagement with the philosophical, theological and ethical traditions of humanity.

3.5 If Religious Studies is not included as one of the Humanities subjects within the English Baccalaureate all the recent progress and the status of English religious education internationally will be put in jeopardy. More importantly, pupils may well be deprived of any *serious* opportunity to develop inter-religious and inter-cultural knowledge and skills or to engage with ultimate philosophical and moral issues. It may be argued that this could be achieved in compulsory religious education—however, all the evidence (and common sense) shows that unless pupils are taking an examination in the subject, both they and their school will view religious education as of little importance and fulfil the legal requirements in a token way if at all. And who can blame them, if both pupil and school will be judged by performance in the examination subjects listed in the English Baccalaureate. A dire state of RE was the situation in many schools in the early 1990s, as can be seen from the OFSTED report of 1992 when RE was compulsory but widely neglected—we may be about to turn the clock back 20 years!

3.6 Our RE teacher colleagues in schools have contacted AULRE members with experiences that this downgrading of religious education in schools is already happening, with full or short course GCSE being removed from the GCSE options in order to focus on E-Bac subjects. More rigorous research has been undertaken by NATRE, the National Association for Teachers of RE, which confirms our anecdotal evidence. Their survey of 790 secondary schools showed that as early as January 2011, “30% of respondents indicated that their school had already made substantial changes to the curriculum which significantly disadvantaged RE or removed it from the curriculum”. If teachers are not employed to teach GCSE RS, then they will not be

available to provide high quality RE lower down the school. In today's world, any subject that is not examined will not be taken seriously. If it is argued that the E-Bac does not exhaust the GCSEs available to pupils, and that RS could be taken as an additional option, given that most pupils will want to take more than one science, and both English Language and Literature, RS will have to compete for the one or two remaining places with music, art, technology, IT, a second language or ancient language etc and the numbers will certainly plummet—that is if the school offers the subject at all.

3.7 Many local Agreed Syllabuses recommend or even require that pupils take an examination of some sort—such as GCSE full or short course—to fulfil the statutory requirements of the syllabus. It is difficult to see how schools will be able to fulfil this requirement if RS is not also included in the E-Bac.

3.8 The GCSE full course in RS should be included in the list of Humanities subjects qualifying for the English Baccalaureate. The consequence of NOT including it as an option would be disastrous for many schools and students and for the future expertise required to teach the subject. The decision about the status of religious education in schools must be taken in context with the recent halving of university teacher training places for religious education, and the insecurity faced by Theology and Religious Studies, in universities where it may be one of the smallest Humanities subjects in a situation where funding for Humanities has been cut. We may be about to destroy the hard work of the last 40 years when it comes to the quality of religious education in schools, universities and teacher supply.

3.9 The Secretary of State has reiterated that Religious Education remains compulsory, and I'm sure that the importance of the subject is appreciated. However, what may not be appreciated is that the unintended consequence of omitting Religious Studies from the English Baccalaureate will have disastrous effects on this subject area. To reiterate, the unintended consequence of not including GCSE RS as an option in the English Baccalaureate is that many schools will cease to offer RS at GCSE altogether; this in turn will have a very negative impact on the provision of statutory Agreed Syllabus RE, on the number of students taking RS at A level, and therefore on the applications for theology and religious studies at degree level. This means that there will be a corresponding decline in candidates for teacher training and so on teacher supply for RE, a subject which is already lacking in sufficient *specialist* teachers. We therefore urge that Religious Studies is included in the list of Humanities in the English Baccalaureate at the earliest opportunity.

24 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Chatsmore Catholic High School

THE PURPOSE AND THE BENEFITS OF THE E-BAC AND ITS VALUE AS A MEASURE OF PUPIL AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

1. The English Baccalaureate shows how many students have taken a specific combination of subjects. It says nothing about the range of courses on offer, the suitability of the curriculum for the students in many schools or their overall achievement. It is also an outcome measure that does not show the progress of students. We believe as a comparator for school performance it will identify more schools as failing, which currently provide a high quality and personalized curriculum to meet the needs of the students in the communities they serve. Indeed, it will potentially create a league table that will reflect schools' relative deprivation/affluence rather than the quality of educational provision and progress of students. It sets out to provide/promote a traditional, academic curriculum—this has already been on offer through the core subjects for the significant majority of schools. The E-Bacs stated intention is not to narrow the curriculum too early, however, it overly prescribes a significant percentage of curriculum time that will further limit choice and breadth of experience.

2. There seems to us to be a glaring contradiction in the approach of the Government to education, whereby we are being told that schools know best and should have the freedom to determine what is best for their students and their community, and yet are being told precisely what subjects their students should choose as part of the Key Stage 4 options process, so leaving little further opportunity for choice.

THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE E-BAC

3. We do not believe this gives a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum for the 21st century. There are the significant omissions of the Arts (Music, Art, Drama, Dance), Technology and ICT from the E-Bac—this seems to indicate these subjects have less value. Nor does RE appear as a Humanities subject when it has similar academic rigour, develops similar linguistic and analytical skills to History; it promotes a depth of exploration of history and many cultures and leads to a better understanding of our own traditions and the traditions of other cultures. Interestingly, biblical Hebrew is included as an MFL component, where is the drive or influence for its inclusion and not RE? We believe the subject choice will narrow curriculum choice and narrow opportunities.

4. Is the omission of ICT, technology and some Arts subjects a deliberate strategy to reduce curriculum cost as these are often the more expensive components?

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE E-BAC FOR PUPILS, SCHOOLS AND EMPLOYERS

5. We believe the subject choice provided will narrow curriculum choice and limit opportunities. It will become increasingly difficult to develop an engaging and personalized curriculum for a significant number of students who have benefitted from a more flexible curriculum approach which has recognised their success, progress and intimately involved them in shaping their learning and developing relevant transferable skills and competencies which make them employable and able to adapt to a changing job market. As a pathway to further study in FE and HE, will it limit progress for some students because they may have a weakness in one aspect of the E-Bac in spite of having a very real strength in others?

6. Schools may feel under increasing pressure to direct particular bands of students into a more restricted curriculum pathway in order to improve their league table position rather than making decisions based on the real needs of students.

INTERNATIONAL COMPARATORS FOR THE E-BAC

7. The E-Bac seems more restricted in its nature than the IB which does include study of the arts, PE and Technology, as well as developing wider personal learning skills through a personal project, and is developed in a structured and coherent way to develop critical and reflective thinkers in a 21st century context with a strong emphasis on personal development, not just academic.

24 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Graeme Smith

I am writing in support of music and arts being part of the English Baccalaureate. You will no doubt have received many submissions supporting their inclusion, but possibly not from my angle.

As a parent I was very keen for my four daughters to have a solid academic education, and I have every sympathy with the notion that we should create a qualification like the English Baccalaureate and acknowledge and celebrate those young people who achieve it. I would also agree that someone who plays an instrument well or is a talented artist should not be able to use that skill as part of an academic qualification.

However, there is more to music and art and design than developing skills as a musician or artist. Their deeper value lies in developing the knowledge and understanding of the role of culture in society. This covers both historical knowledge and understanding and human geography knowledge and understanding.

Rather than urging the committee to seek the recognition of GCSE music or art as a subject in the baccalaureate I would urge the committee to seek a definition of the criteria for the humanity element of the English Baccalaureate so that exam boards may create a GCSE which enables young people to meet those criteria through the study of their chosen art form.

24 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Paul Scutt

In particular I would like to make the following concerns:

1. The EBac proposal is a measure of performance which does not acknowledge the fact that students are not required by statute to study these subjects. I would argue that if we accept the right of students to choose courses at KS4 then we have no right to judge schools by the fact that they choose to exercise this right. Indeed we already have numerous schools putting pressure on children to study the required subjects since it is in the interests of the school that they do rather than the interests of the students themselves. This scenario is perverse to say the least.
2. The EBac measure ignores other critical elements of study in the modern age and I would site ICT as a case in point.
3. The EBac measure ignores the Arts and to my thinking this is the primary area through which any civilized society would traditionally want to be judged.
4. The EBac measure is a restricted one whereby the "school performance" will reflect the intake of the school role rather than the quality of the education that it provides. At a time when the Government is threatening to remove measures of "value added", schools in challenging circumstances will be doomed to "failure" with below average ability profiles at intake and consequently falling roles. For the families and children living in these areas with little choice of secondary schooling to do so would be shameful and potentially catastrophic.

Please note the "law of unintended outcomes" and the fact that when the impact is felt in the coming years then invariably the architects of the change are long since gone!

This proposal is disingenuous and potentially very harmful to the interests of young people.

24 March 2011

Letter to Michael Gove MP from Jon Wright, Chair, Lancashire Association of Secondary School Headteachers

I write to you as the Chair of the Lancashire Association of Secondary School Headteachers (LASSH), a body which represents 82 high schools across one of the largest local authorities in the country.

I write to express concern over the recent promotion of curriculum change, which moves the emphasis from “skills-based” or “applied” work towards a “content” or “knowledge-based” curriculum. Particularly in the current economic climate, it is even more essential that we are producing school leavers, who are confident individuals, successful learners and responsible citizens and importantly, students who visualise a personal progression pathway and possess the skills to allow them to achieve economic well-being through future employment. We do not believe that a return to rote learning and simple regurgitation of facts will achieve this. It is the application of knowledge and the skills to apply it and evaluate its worth, which are key.

Government policy regarding education seems to be paradoxical: on the one hand stating a trust in headteachers to make decisions for their students through more autonomy and less bureaucracy (which is welcomed); on the other restricting headteachers’ and students’ choices by prescribing a new curriculum with a new measure for school performance in the implementation of the English Baccalaureate (E-Bac). Furthermore, a commitment to raising participation both post-16 and into Higher Education, with particular focus on students from socially deprived backgrounds, is then undermined by higher tuition fees and a restricted curriculum in Key Stage 4, which will limit the range of course accessibility.

A narrower curriculum with less option choice for students in Key Stage 4 will limit success and subsequently, confidence. If education is preparation for later life, then it is hard to see the relevance of any restriction to academic study and terminal examinations.

We are unhappy that the Government has introduced a measure of school performance retrospectively, which has little relevance to students who have already left and begun further study or training, other than to undermine successful students’ confidence should they not possess this “qualification”. To include this new measure in school “league tables” is meaningless and insulting to many schools, who have made excellent progress with English and maths attainment. This affects morale and undermines confidence in the Department for Education. It is also frustrating that it creates opportunities for parents and the media to make invidious comparisons between schools, damaging the reputations of successful schools.

We are very supportive of the importance afforded to the “five A*–C grades including English and maths” targets, but would see any floor standard related to E-Bac, or indeed any requirement for inspection grading to be very unhelpful to school leaders and potentially very damaging to many schools.

The E-Bac is a measure that schools cannot affect for the next two years as students are already studying chosen courses. Indeed, in order to have an impact on E-Bac scores in 2013, the schools would need to amend the Y9 Options process now, with little time to consider student outcomes and educate parents to the change. Realistically, this measure can only drive any desired change for 2014. Experience tells us that rushed change in time of financial crisis is rarely sustainable or as effective as planned and well resourced change.

There does not appear to be any clear rationale to the choice of subjects grouped to form the E-Bac. The exclusion of certain subjects, for example ICT, which is so important in the modern age and which students will need throughout their working life, does not support a curriculum which is fit for purpose. The decision to omit RE from Humanities appears arbitrary and whilst it is still enshrined in law, an opportunity has been missed to raise its standing and significance in young people’s understanding of each others faiths and cultures to facilitate social cohesion. Whilst we applaud the insistence on rigour, we feel that many subjects are no less rigorous GCSEs than geography or history.

The importance of BTEC qualifications for so many students of all abilities is further undermined by the introduction of the E-Bac. BTECs offer a more practical, work-related and relevant study for specialist sectors in the curriculum, which allow students to apply knowledge as they will need to in employment. BTECs also have direct relevance to many Further and Higher Education courses. Without studying in this style and gaining earlier qualifications 14–16, the success rate later on may be affected adversely. We recognise the need to revisit courses’ equivalence to GCSE, but it is critical to recognise and reward properly vocational qualifications. We hope the Wolf Report will raise the status of vocational and technical education.

Where schools decide to direct students to follow the E-Bac, there is a serious risk of disruption. Currently, there is a valued range of courses on offer and a good deal of choice in schools. This has had a very positive impact on engaging students and reducing disaffection. Where students are forced through a narrow curriculum to follow subjects, in which they see little direct relevance personally and with which they do not wish to continue, standards of behaviour will be placed at risk of decline.

A broad and balanced curriculum has allowed students to follow their individual preferences and maximise their abilities. To “de-personalise” the curriculum at this stage is in our opinion a retrograde step.

For schools to change in keeping with external drivers like the E-Bac, there is a presumption both of availability of teaching staff to meet a different demand and of funding to employ them. Many schools, even where change is desirable, are unable to support larger numbers opting for Languages and Humanities. Having previously “de-commissioned” languages, the number of linguists has declined, as have numbers on language-based teacher training courses. The impact on school budgets to adapt and make change comes at a very unstable and difficult time. Schools have been guided towards business principles, such as affordability and value for money, over recent years. The change needed to deliver the Government’s E-Bac does not make economic sense at this time.

For many headteachers, a change to the innovative and highly productive curricula in operation, deemed “outstanding” by Ofsted, is unthinkable. The E-Bac imposition is not desirable and we do not believe that it will produce the best outcomes for our students in social or academic terms.

In comprehensive schools which are currently catering for all abilities and all futures, a great deal has been done to break down social barriers, which in the opinion of many the perceived new system will restore. We need to facilitate success and instil confidence in all our young people for improved harmony and mutual respect. For us, going back is not an option. We must ensure that students are as literate and numerate as they are able and are skilled in their preferred route of personal development. We must ensure there are valued options in all lines to ensure a balance of all trades is sustained. Many of us will, therefore, continue to advise our students to choose subjects, which they enjoy and in which they have a real chance of achieving success.

Finally, the manner in which the E-Bac has been introduced, without consultation, has affected headteachers’ confidence in government policy. I feel that it is important for you to recognise this element, as it may, in turn, adversely affect other new initiatives and headteachers’ willingness to adopt new practices, which would be most unfortunate.

For the reasons above, we urge you to reconsider the implementation of the English Baccalaureate, at least in its current, most prescriptive form. We would be happy to discuss these views with you in greater detail if you would find that helpful. In the interim, we look forward to hearing your views in response.

24 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Emily North

1. I am writing to convince you that Religious Studies should be considered a humanities subject and is just as justifiable as Geography and History combined.

2. Religious Studies can be thought of in two ways: Philosophy and Ethics. Philosophy is the critical analysis of fundamental assumptions or beliefs “*The philosophy of the school room in-one generation will be the philosophy of government in the next.*” (Abraham Lincoln). How can it be argued that Philosophy is not as fundamental as History or Geography, if anything it is more fundamental as it combines the current, past and future and discusses various topics that are continually addressed in current affairs.

3. The current syllabus includes topics on War & Peace, Medical Ethics, Evil and suffering, Poverty and wealth, Life after death, Nature of God, nature of Belief, Religion and science, Human relationships, Equality and religion and the Media. I believe all these topics address and challenge key religious beliefs and allow you to broaden your thinking as they can be applied to all life situations. They all rely on the governing principle morality, which looks at the ways in which morality is applicable in all these topics.

4. It is often argued that Religious Studies is just reading the Bible and that there is no original thought involved, however that simply isn’t the case it goes way beyond the beliefs of different religions and helps students to see the world as a whole and not just a section of time unlike History. Religious Studies allows you to develop and refine your opinion which is vastly important to create an informed, knowledgeable society. Religious Studies gives students the opportunity to delve into many sub-topics of life which both History and Geography do not allow. Just as Geography discusses infant mortality rates, Religious Studies addresses the ethical issues which can cause and result in such situations.

5. I am going to study Philosophy at university with the intention of becoming a teacher in Religious Studies. Religious Studies isn’t just about learning about the world religions, it’s about learning about things that affect our daily lives. Religious Studies opens up a world of options for us, if one never found out about the ethical implications of your decisions in life, how could you make an informed decision? These decision making tools come from the subject and have helped me tremendously and I hope to be able to pass this knowledge on in the future to show the importance of learning this information. Religious Studies helps you to be better prepared for life and therefore I think it would be detrimental for Religious Studies not to be considered a humanities subject.

24 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Mark Anstiss, Felpham Community College

I am writing in respect of the Commons Education Select Committee inquiry into the English Baccalaureate.

I do not believe that the English Baccalaureate is a positive step forward for our education system.

The English Baccalaureate may show how many students achieved pass grades in six very specific subjects at GCSE, however it does not measure how well our students have achieved in other important areas or demonstrate the quality of their achievement.

The English Baccalaureate does not say anything about the range of courses that students have taken, nor whether they have followed an appropriate curriculum for their specific needs, interests or talents. All it does show is how many students have taken an arbitrary and narrow combination of subjects. This seems to be a retrograde step at a time when we should be trying to personalise educational provision to engage students and maximise their potential. If students are made to follow such a prescriptive curriculum at Key Stage 4, many will become disaffected and will dropout. This in turn will have huge negative consequences for them and society.

Everyone accepts that English and maths are vitally important. But the needs of society for a highly skilled and educated workforce are ever-changing, and the proposed English Baccalaureate is too narrow to prepare our young people adequately for the uncertain times ahead.

Furthermore, it will restrict students' choices at GCSE. Schools will feel under pressure to insist that students take these six subjects, leaving very little space for them to choose courses that are more suitable for their needs and abilities. Schools work hard to determine what is best for our students and our community; they should not be told precisely what subjects students should choose in the key stage 4 options process. For many students, this will be an unwelcome straitjacket that restricts their ability to develop and demonstrate their skills.

The current performance measures (5 A*-C including English and maths) are a suitable and effective reflection of students' abilities and schools' effectiveness. Schools work tirelessly to help their students fulfil their potential. The English Baccalaureate may have the unnecessary and negative impact of frustrating those efforts.

24 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by The Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music

ABRSM believes strongly that Music should be included in the English Baccalaureate. Given an appropriate syllabus, Music is an academic and suitably challenging subject which incorporates creativity. It also has numerous extrinsic benefits, supporting social cohesion and developing children's emotional intelligence.

The UK economy, through its creative industries, benefits significantly from music, with over 130,000 people employed actively in the making, performing, recording and distributing of music contributing nearly £5 billion to the economy annually. Sidelining or reducing the importance of Music within the curriculum will send a message that the government regards music as irrelevant to the development of our children or to the UK's cultural well-being.

Including Music GCSE in the English Baccalaureate will not jeopardise the intent of the Government, whereas its omission will be to the detriment of music education provision, and will lead to an adverse impact on educational standards generally. It will also undermine our currently vibrant creative and cultural economy.

In his independent review of music education published in February, Darren Henley made the key finding that Music "should be included as one of the subjects that go to make up the new English Baccalaureate." In the Government's response it says that music is an "enriching and valuable academic subject".

The decision by the Secretary of State for Education, not to include music in the English Baccalaureate, is of grave concern and we hope that the Education Select Committee will consider this matter and urge the Minister to revise his decision.

24 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by National Grid

We note the call for evidence for your inquiry into the English Baccalaureate. As a major engineering employer gearing up for significant investment in our nation's vital infrastructure, National Grid is interested in the supply of people with STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) skills. We are concerned about how our young people are prepared for careers in engineering. We see it as vital that young people can pursue courses of study that deliver both practical skills, and the underpinning mathematics and science theory that will equip them to understand tomorrow's technology.

We welcome some aspects of the English Baccalaureate concept, in particular the emphasis on mathematics and science, but are concerned about the consequences, albeit unintended, for technical education. We know

that others in the engineering community share these concerns and therefore we have collaborated with the Royal Academy of Engineering on a submission to your inquiry. Their paper summarises our views very well, and we fully support their conclusions and concerns. As a company we are active in supporting schools and are therefore close to current developments and thinking around technical education. This is an issue that could have significant implications for our nation's future capability and prosperity.

If you would like to hear more about the work we are doing in this area please do not hesitate to contact me.

24 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by National Association of Head Teachers

1. There have been a number of justifications offered by the Government for introducing the E-Bac. These appear to centre around three notions.

2. The first is the idea that it is intrinsically beneficial to individuals, the key concepts being "entitlement" and being "well-educated".

3. A second argument relates to the extrinsic benefits of implementing the E-Bac, it serving to enhance the future quality of the workforce, emulating provision in international competitors.

4. The third *raison d'être* is that the current arrangements do not provide a sufficiently robust indicator of school and pupil performance, schools being seen as having encouraged students into choosing "easier", "softer" subjects in order to maximise their position in the performance tables. Underpinning this is the belief that much of the current vocational offer is of poor quality and does little to enhance prospects of employment.

5. The recently published Wolf Review criticises such provision, not only on the basis of intrinsic merit but also because of the lack of coherence in terms of where the courses lead. NAHT believes that there is utility in the proposal that vocational courses should not occupy more than 20% of the timetable.

6. However, looking at this proposition logistically, this would amount to some five hours a week. The E-Bac would account for the majority of the rest of the timetable's content. This would leave no room for a creative subject, PSHE, English Literature and PE. Each of these presents a strong case for inclusion. Moreover, such a crowded, prescribed content contradicts the Government's desire, as evinced in "The Importance of Teaching", to leave sufficient space for schools "to guarantee a truly rounded education for all". It would seem that this and similar intentions (clearly expressed in paragraphs 4.27 to 4.33) are applicable to earlier Key Stages and not Key Stage 4.

7. NAHT has concerns about the E-Bac "crowding out" important provision. An example is PSHE. The Association was heartened by the positive and encouraging references made to it in "The Importance of Teaching" and would also cite the positive response to the survey of sex and relationships education in 2010 supported by NAHT, NGA and NCPTA. It is vital that schools have space also for Information, Advice and Guidance, ever more so at a time when Connexions services are being cut back.

8. To address the point in the second paragraph, NAHT would take issue that a sufficiently robust case has been advanced for equating the particular combination of subjects currently included in the E-Bac with a definition of being "well-educated". This is not to deny that these subjects may be elements within such a definition. However, precluding a creative subject such as Art or Music, the opportunity to continue with the study of English Literature, squeezing out PSHE and/or Citizenship and making it logistically challenging to timetable PE, given that it is one of the definite national curriculum subjects and the extolling of its "character building" qualities in "The Importance of Teaching" weaken any contention that the E-Bac, as currently configured, enables an individual to be considered "well educated" in any reasonable, rounded sense.

9. International comparisons are used to point out that other systems, eg Germany, have an extensive core curriculum that is broader than the E-Bac. However, this is not a valid comparison in the sense that there is no equivalent distinction to that between Key Stages 3 and 4 in England.

10. Arguments based on "entitlement" inevitably carry value judgments. A decision that leads to some young people being offered the opportunity to study a particular grouping of subjects raises questions of equality, both in terms of "who shall know what" and, in a more quantifiable sense, extending the opportunities for greater "returns from learning" to some whilst denying them to others.

11. A variation of the above relates to the content of the subjects within the E-Bac. History serves as an example. The current position is that schools can choose from a wide array of syllabuses, the consequence being that the experience of "doing History" can vary considerably. This becomes a more acute issue in the context of the Government's emphasis on "knowledge".

12. This matter is further complicated by the relationship of E-Bac subjects with the National Curriculum. The current position is that History is not compulsory beyond Key Stage 3. If it is to become compulsory in Key Stage 4 in the wake of the ongoing Curriculum Review the content would, by definition, be prescribed. This position would be consistent with the Government's vision of the subject being defined along "traditionalist" lines.

13. Linking the previous two paragraphs, the rationale underpinning arguing for a traditionalist approach is that this will inculcate a set of shared values, sense of “Britishness”, cultural cohesion, etc. Leaving aside debate about whether the one will inculcate the other, the more tightly “knowledge” is prescribed the more compelling the argument that provision should only be for particular groups.

14. The arguments centred around the extrinsic value and superiority of the E-Bac subjects posit that studying these subjects makes young people better prepared for further study and the workplace. However, the counter-argument is that a curriculum that stresses knowledge does not in itself provide sufficient preparation. To further develop this point it is necessary to explore the notion of “employability”.

15. NAHT’s position is that, at Key Stage 4, the prescribed core should consist of Mathematics and English. The arguments for the greatest number of young people to achieve basic, sustainable levels of numeracy and literacy are both compelling and self-evident. Beyond this point the claims of other subjects are less compelling and self-evident. Mathematics and English are unique in the extent to which knowledge, understanding and application mesh seamlessly, although similar arguments could be advanced for Information Technology’s inclusion.

16. This begs the question of the criteria to be used to determine which other subjects have strong claims to inclusion in a compulsory core. There is an assumption in this that the E-Bac is a compulsory core. This is clearly not the case in any de jure sense. Perhaps this discussion is better held in the context of performance tables and accountability. Schools are not, as yet, held accountable for their E-Bac performance. However, the decision to include this aspect of attainment in the performance tables and the subsequent “impression management” by some in the media have created a process whereby E-Bac outcomes are so regarded.

17. This effect is achieved by journalists using language such as “x per cent passing the E-Bac” and reference to it being an award or qualification. The cumulative impact is to create the de facto impression that it is an accountability measure. This is not in the sense that failure to achieve floor standards will lead to formal intervention. The impact brings to mind Mr Gove’s speech in September 2010 at Westminster Academy in which he spoke of *“the intention to publish all the exam data held by the Government so that parents, schools and third parties can use web-based applications to create many new and bespoke sorts of tables.”*

18. A further example of the way in which the E-Bac is regarded as an accountability measure is seen in a suggestion made to a Headteacher that his position was potentially under threat because his school had not achieved any outcomes of significance against the E-Bac measure. This was in the context of results being comfortably above the floor standard and in the wake of Ofsted judging the school to be “good”.

19. NAHT members provide evidence of this de facto impact. Some have adjusted Key Stage 4 options structures to reflect the E-Bac. Others, resisting this course of action, report parents enquiring why options structures were not designed to allow their children to choose the E-Bac combination.

20. NAHT is deeply concerned about an emerging system in which maintained schools operate alongside academies and free schools. The Association is not opposed to the former given that they contribute to the common good of their local family of schools but retains severe misgivings about the likely impact of free schools. The freedoms that academies enjoy and which free schools aspire to include less pressure to adopt an E-Bac structure. NAHT’s believes that the decision to pursue academy status ought to be the consequence of taking all relevant factors, both “push” and “pull”, in evaluating whether the pathway is the appropriate one for a particular school at a given stage of its development. The spectre of the extent of curricular prescription occupying a disproportionate place in the decision mix is not to be welcomed.

21. Returning to the question of extrinsic value, NAHT commends the observation made in the Wolf Review to the effect that, *“...employers are not always looking for skills that align in a one-to-one—way with a particular qualification: much of the time they use qualifications as signals of general rather than highly specific skills”*. (p.33)

22. In seeking to identify these “general skills” one could turn to employers’ bodies such as the Institute of Directors or CBI. Alongside the irreducible presence of numeracy and literacy, reference is made to other so-called “softer skills” including problem solving and team working. We are all familiar with labour market requirement forecasts that talk of the several career changes that today’s young people will be obliged to make, most likely including occupational fields that have yet to come into existence. Flexibility, adaptability and transferability become the watchwords.

23. Is there anything intrinsically inherent in the E-Bac subjects that qualifies them to provide this foundation? The proponents of a knowledge based curriculum such as E D Hirsch propose that it provides, in his words, mental “Velcro” upon which other learning sticks. This does not, however, necessarily encourage the attributes described in the previous paragraph. NAHT forwards the view that these attributes are a product as much of pedagogy as of specific subjects.

24. Inherent in the above is the potential argument that if this is the case then the pedagogy adopted in teaching the E-Bac could enable the acquisition of this broader skill base. However, this does not address the question of why the E-Bac consists of these particular subjects. What evidence is there, for example, to support the view that History or Geography are inherently more demanding, stretching or challenging than other well

established Humanities such as RE, or, dare one venture, Sociology? Does not the group and team working nature of Music support its inclusion? Similar arguments could be advanced for many other subjects.

25. The impact of this narrow definition of a humanity on post-16 progression (and beyond) defies logic. Fundamentally the 14–16 Bac has to talk to the 16+ experiences of students and not be a straightjacket. The concept of “university” underpinning much of the debate appears rooted in the traditional view. This is not to decry such institutions but there needs to be a recognition that the university sector is very much a “mixed economy” and the newer, less research intensive and more vocationally orientated universities would not be well served by too tightly defined programmes at school.

26. NAHT accepts that there needs to be a core but would argue that this needs to consist of English, Mathematics and Science. The justification for the latter is the ongoing shortage of suitably qualified people in the “stem” subjects. It also has much to offer in terms of encouraging the development of “softer skills”. The Association also believes that the status and role of ICT merits careful consideration. For a number of years there has been debate about whether ICT ought to be a “subject” or a pedagogical tool. NAHT is drawn to the latter position, certainly by Key Stage 4.

27. Turning to the matter of accountability and performance tables, NAHT is unconvinced by the argument that schools guide students into “easier” subjects in order to maximise or enhance performance table showings. The factor that needs to be addressed is the stays and use of the tables. The high stakes nature of the accountability system that flows from the tables has role in this. Were the E-Bac to evolve into a fully-fledged accountability measure we anticipate “teaching to the test” and other responses that would not bring about gains in the quality of outcomes.

28. Having made this point, NAHT accepts the manipulation of the five+ A*–C statistic (eg the four GCSE T. Telford ICT course or equivalent, the four or seven GCSE Diploma, the double (or quadruple BTECs) needs to be addressed and welcomes greater clarity on the need for a broader core curriculum. The rationale for this is the narrow base of using English and Mathematics outcomes as virtually the sole factor in determining FFT “D” and a host of judgements made under the current inspection regime.

29. Having made this point, NAHT firmly believes that the proposed implementation of the E.Bac is flawed and offers the following observations to substantiate this contention.

30. In the south east, there are not oceans of modern linguists wanting to be employed by schools as an “entitlement” to MFL is replaced by a prescription. There exists staffing crisis in MFL that a better phased implementation of the E-Bac could help to resolve: as it stands, there will not be sufficient teachers to enable all students, if all are to be the intended recipients, to benefit from the high-quality teaching required to make the initiative a success.

31. The definition in the E.Bac of “proper Science” being “double or triple” for all does a massive disservice to an array of students for whom their enjoyment of a single Science course and involving investigative Science and its application in their world, will be replaced by courses in the main Sciences whose main purpose is to weed out those who cannot progress in Science to the Sixth Form (and thence university). We refute the view that GCSE Biology, Chemistry and Physics are all fine—if they were we would have much larger cohorts proceeding to AS/A2. The need is to re-write/re-define our traditional (Biology, Chemistry, Physics) courses.

24 March 2011

Written evidence received as a template letter from 345 respondents, as part of a campaign organised by the Incorporated Society of Musicians

Music at GCSE level is a challenging, rigorous academic subject which contributes to a broad, excellent education. The decision by the Secretary of State for Education not to include music in the English Baccalaureate is of grave concern and we hope that the Education Select Committee will consider this matter.

Music is an important and difficult academic subject which incorporates creativity. It also has numerous extrinsic benefits: improving numeracy and literacy, supporting social cohesion and developing children’s emotional intelligence. Its importance is also backed by public polling conducted by the ISM and YouGov, with 97% of those offering an opinion backing the provision of music in schools.²²⁹

In the UK, music education is world class and generates both the audiences of the future as well as the professional musicians who contribute so significantly to our constantly growing creative and cultural economy.

There is no doubt that the English Baccalaureate as it is currently framed will lead to schools deciding not to offer music at GCSE level. The net result will be the loss of the very real benefits of a music education and an adverse impact on educational standards generally. It will also undermine our currently vibrant creative and cultural economy.

Including Music GCSE in the English Baccalaureate will not jeopardise the intent of the Government—pupils will still study a broad-range of subjects which remain challenging, rigorous and academic. Darren

²²⁹ Incorporated Society of Musicians (ISM)/YouGov poll, January 2011

Henley, in his independent review of music education published in February, made the key finding that Music “should be included as one of the subjects that go to make up the new English Baccalaureate.” And the Government responded by saying that music is an “enriching and valuable academic subject”.

I urge the Committee to encourage the Secretary of State to include music within the English Baccalaureate.

March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Howard Goodall CBE

I wonder if I could make the following points with respect to music’s inclusion (or not) in this?

- Britain is one of the few countries in the world—and virtually unique in Europe—where music is taught as an academic subject up to 18 in regular school (ie not in out-of-hours/weekend specialist schools). This is something of which we should be proud and it would be dishonourable legacy of this period of government were it to see this tradition lost.
- I am sure you know that when the Ancient Greeks invented Western Civilisation’s first education programme for young people, of the seven subjects selected as essential to create a balanced, humane individual, music was one.
- When Oxford and Bologna universities invented tertiary education in the 11th century, they also included music as one of the essential seven subjects the university would embed in its curriculum. In both cases (Ancient Greece and Oxford) music was seen as both science and art. What they did not know then (perhaps they suspected it) is that 21st century cognitive scientists would be able to prove that the apprehension of music in the developing child’s brain “wires” up the connections between the many different parts of the brain. From Einstein to Sacks, scientists’ and psychologists have been writing passionately about the importance of music in the educational development of human beings.
- School music departments (something you will not find, for example, in Italy or France), which we take for granted as a whole-heartedly positive aspect to any good school, thrive where there are sufficient staff to support numerous ensembles, choirs and events. Any Head of Department you care to ask will tell you that classroom teaching of music and extra-curricula opportunities in music are inextricably linked. You cannot have a successful music department offering extra-curricula music activities for all students without classroom music teaching.
- The proposed English Bacc should include music as an academic subject. Please use your influence on this committee to ensure England remains a world-leader in school music and not slip into the kind of cop-out that exists in other European countries, where music is something middle class parents pay for their children to do in their spare time.

24 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Adeyfield School

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

We believe that all young people should be entitled to a broad education that will provide them with the knowledge and skills that will enable them to be productive and active citizens of the UK.

We also believe that each young person is unique and has unique learning needs. This means that the curriculum offered in the state sector should cater for a wide breadth of learning needs, abilities and aspirations.

As such, we are of the opinion that a broad curriculum entitlement is fundamental to the success of our students, our school and, ultimately, wider society.

SPECIFIC CONCERNS

Humanities

We are concerned by the narrow range of subjects that will qualify as “Humanities” in the English Baccalaureate.

We of course have no objections to Geography and History being included in this range and we encourage our students to pursue these courses through Key Stage 4.

That said, we also value highly other “Humanities” subjects such as RE and Citizenship.

Religious Education is a fundamental aspect of our curriculum—and must remain so. Building greater understanding between faith groups (and those of no faith) is essential to social cohesion and the future well-being of our society. This needs no further explanation in our opinion.

The Citizenship curriculum, in particular, has provided many of our students with a valuable understanding of, and connection to, the national (and international) political, economic and legal systems, processes and

structures that affect us as citizens. Furthermore, it has enabled them to gain an understanding of the criminal justice system, the work of the police and explore the important question of how our rights interact with our responsibilities.

We have also built a very successful programme of “Active Citizenship” where students have been engaged in projects such as:

- Holding a “Question Time” event prior to the General Election attended by nearly 200 members of the local community.
- Organising and running a day trip to the seaside for local elderly residents.
- Designing and making educational toys for use at a nearby school for children with autism.
- Creating publicity material for a local youth and community centre.

Therefore, we would urge the committee to make recommendations that the range of “Humanities” subjects falling within the English Baccalaureate benchmark be broadened to include subjects that are not only engaging for young people but potentially vital to the well-being of our society.

We would like subjects such as Citizenship, Government & Politics, Religious Education and Philosophy & Ethics to also be included in this range.

Vocational Qualifications

Whilst appreciating the need to review the use of vocational qualifications in schools, we firmly believe that they are of value. Our experience of offering a variety of vocational qualifications (both in-school and through partnership with local colleges) has highlighted valuable outcomes:

- Enabling students to access learning opportunities in vocational areas such as construction skills, electrical engineering, beauty therapy, uniformed services and more.
- Providing a pedagogical approach that enables *all* students to access valuable curriculum areas such as ICT and Business Studies.
- Raising standards and achievement.
- Greater engagement with the wider curriculum due to being “hooked-in” by their vocational learning.

Therefore, we would assert that vocational qualifications should not be disregarded when considering the relative “success” of individual students or schools.

Reporting of English Baccalaureate Figures in League Tables

We believe that the reporting of English Baccalaureate figures for the academic year 2010–11 or for the next academic year 2011–12 is unfair and risks inaccurately labelling schools as “failing” or “poor”.

The students completing their Year 11 studies this academic year made their choices of which subjects to follow at KS4 in 2009 and those currently in Year 10 made theirs in early 2010. This was before the English Baccalaureate was introduced—indeed those students made their choices during a different Parliament.

As a school we have worked extremely hard to raise standards and achievement. Seeing a very low figure of successful English Baccalaureate students published in league tables this year is both demoralising and, in our view, disrespectful to the hard work done by teachers, students and parents over the past years.

Therefore, we request that reporting of these figures be delayed until 2012–13 when the first cohort of students to make their choices in the light of the English Baccalaureate will complete their KS4 studies.

24 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Jane Willis, Headteacher, Notre Dame High School

I have just seen the select committee for this and although my submission is slightly late, I hope that it will be considered.

I have a number of concerns about the Ebacc.

First of all I have no qualms about keeping standards high, and re-looking at some of the dubious qualifications which are offered nowadays.

However, the choice for the Ebacc seems random in its choice of the five subjects and appears to be a throw back to what is seen as “the golden years of education” and the old grammar style options.

Re the Humanities, I think if you want to have a Humanity in the Ebacc RE has to be there as well as one of the options. Government has consistently promoted the fact that we are a Christian country plus the fact that we should promote community cohesion, and this is often done through RE to make sure all our students value each other equally. To say RE does not need to be there as it is compulsory anyway, does not hold true

in the way it is being delivered nationally. Having talked to the University, they are saying that the funding for RE teaching places has been cut and the funding for Geog/History places increased. There is already a shortage of RE teachers, which looks as if it will increase through these measures.

MFL is a difficulty in that it has been made optional at secondary and the compulsory nature is placed at primary level. As a linguist myself, whilst I laud the fact that children are learning a language at a younger age, the whole scheme is a spectacular failure because it was never thought through properly. Secondary schools are met with children who have learnt a diverse range of languages according to what the primary school could get re teaching expertise, and it does not lead naturally to the next level. Again, the choice of languages is based on the premise that some languages are “better” so some community languages are not seen as worth including.

The measure of five GCSEs plus English and Maths is a challenging target for many schools. I believe as long as you look at the whole range of qualifications and ensure that the quality of all qualifications is high, you have good measures as they stand already.

29 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Chris Parkinson, Principal, Bosworth Community College

In response to the invitation to submit views on the proposed introduction of the English Baccalaureate, I would like to submit the following for your consideration.

I support the view that students should study a broad and balanced curriculum that equips them to play an active role in the 21st century. However, I refute that the narrow range of subjects included, constitute a broad and balanced 21st century curriculum.

There is a lack of logic in the proposal that refers to a “body of knowledge”—the knowledge acquired in History is very different to that in Geography. There is similar variation in the knowledge acquired from studying Biblical Hebrew to Modern French. Either students need to “know” History or they don’t. It makes no sense to state that they should “know” about the reformation unless of course they can describe how a rift valley is formed!

There is even greater variation in the skill set that students would gain from one acceptable subject to another. Hence I would state that Modern Foreign Languages only should be included. There is a clear sense of elitism in including classical languages—they have their place in a curriculum for some students, but then so does Sociology, Law, ICT, Design and so on. Similarly I would argue that either all Humanities (including RE and integrated Humanities) should be included, or none should. We must concentrate more in the acquisition of skills than the acquisition of knowledge as those with skills suitable for the rapidly changing environment we live in will be best able to adapt to an employment market that we cannot possibly predict. I think it would be worth the committee using some of the curriculum research produced by Futurelab to inform their thinking.

There should be the inclusion of some form of ICT qualification, as this is a basic 21st Century functional skill. Similarly we should find some way to recognise creative subjects and key skills. It is precisely these skills that will set our labour market as distinct from that in the Far East and give us a competitive advantage in our technological and rapidly evolving environment. Similarly if we are to introduce the E-Bac then there should be some form of Technical Bac which has parity but routes to differing employment, apprenticeship and higher education pathways. This will prevent many students from being labelled as failures, when in reality they have great potential to be successful in the right areas. One size does not fit all!

I would be delighted to discuss any of the issues at a further opportunity.

29 March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Mr P J Wickert, Headteacher, The Holy Trinity Church of England School

I would like to register my views on the new English Baccalaureate. I agree in principle with the concept of the Baccalaureate as a measure of academic achievement and that it should include high grade GCSEs in a number of subjects including a core of English, Mathematics and Science. However I am not convinced that the narrow range of subjects meets the Government goal of offering students a broad and balanced curriculum. As it stands the Baccalaureate represents five curriculum areas and students are effectively committed to studying seven GCSEs with little choice, as English Literature is likely to be taken by most of these students. This leaves time for at most three other subjects to represent a third science, a second language, the arts and technology, other humanity subjects, information technology, physical education and social sciences.

I have some concerns about the ability of all schools to provide well qualified language teachers at such short notice; for some this will be at the expense of Key Stage 3 teaching. I am pleased to see the inclusion of the community languages.

My main concern about the E-Bac is that the Humanities requirement is very narrow. By restricting the choice to history and geography, this narrows down the choices for students and does not reflect the nature of the International Baccalaureate where there is choice over the focus of the overall qualification. The IB allows students to choose what they are good at, what might help them in their chosen profession and what they enjoy doing. Students will always get better results overall where there is an element of choice which allows them to opt for some subjects which reflect their strengths and interests.

I strongly urge you to reconsider the inclusion of Religious Studies in the Humanities. The argument has been put forward that inclusion would unfairly advantage Church Schools. I would argue that by not including it, students at Church schools could be seen to be disadvantaged by restricting their freedom to study a broad range of subjects. In addition, community schools which currently have RS as compulsory could be discouraged from continuing with this. Equally I would argue that the inclusion of classical languages would introduce bias towards independent schools which are most likely to offer these subjects.

In summary, students do need an academic curriculum to prepare them for traditional university courses, but it needs to be broad, balanced and relevant to life in the 21st century.

4 April 2011

Written evidence submitted by Mr A Sharpe, Headteacher, St Mary's Catholic School

1. I am writing to you in order to add my support for the status of Religious Studies as a humanities subject, and therefore an essential part of any further development of the English Baccalaureate.

2. As both a Headteacher and a trained teacher of Religious Studies I am aware of the wider value to society of this subject, and also the academic discipline it requires from its students. The analytical skills and factual recall that it demands bear favourable comparison to History, whilst the discursive elements that require candidates to debate different points of view are a good preparation for the post 16 curriculum that follows.

3. I do hope that these attributes of Religious Studies can be borne in mind as you consider the finer details of the English Baccalaureate. The initial model seems arbitrary and unnecessarily narrow in its focus.

Written evidence submitted by Mr Stephen King, Director of Language College and MFL, Campion School and Language College

Please find below our response to the E-Bac inquiry from Campion Language College.

1. Languages have been in steady decline for the last 10 years at Key Stage 4. Introducing primary languages has had a positive effect, but Languages have suffered by having to compete with subjects that students perceive as being "more important" such as PE or ICT. Many schools have tried to address this decline, but without resources, national support or parental support this has meant that few schools achieve more than 50% of their cohorts doing a language. New vocational qualifications such as the NVQ in Business French and Spanish have improved efforts to make the subject more inclusive. The old GCSE was outdated and needed reform, which the new GCSE has addressed, with opportunities for students to succeed.

2. By introducing the E-Bac, Languages are now finally recognised as an equal core language. In many schools, ours included, only English, Maths and Science are valued by students and parents above all else. As a Language College we have made great progress in getting 95% of our year group to achieve a Language, whether GCSE or NVQ. Now with the E-Bac, parents and students will see that to achieve this new recognition, they will need a Language.

3. I am concerned, that not including the NVQ qualification is quite disadvantageous. To achieve a Level 2 NVQ, students still need to be able to write and speak to a high level to succeed, so to exclude them from achieving the E-Bac seems somewhat discriminatory. NVQs in Languages are not an easy touch, they are merely a different way of achieving recognition in a foreign language.

4. Parents and employers will need educating about what the E-Bac actually means and shows and universities also need to consider whether they include the E-Bac as part of their admission criteria.

5. By including History and Geography, obviously the focus is on the academic subjects. Why are Philosophy and Ethics or RE not included?

6. I welcome the E-Bac as a Language College Director and hope that the Secretary of State will strongly consider recognising the NVQ as a practical and useful alternative to GCSE.

5 April 2011

Written evidence submitted by Jeannie Cohen and Peter Jones, on behalf of Friends of Classics

1. It is our view that the current E-Bac should deal in subject areas, not subjects. Not that we support a free-for-all. Two strict criteria should inform the availability of subjects within any subject area:

- (i) their status as an appropriate subject within the area; and
- (ii) their academic rigour, to be determined by the syllabus and the examination.

2. These conditions will allow for a degree of freedom of choice—an important government principle, to judge from the Prime Minister’s views—while ensuring that academic rigour is maintained.

3. If these two simple criteria are adopted, it will mean that Classical Civilisation—an examination more rigorous than History because (like Ancient History) more source-based—is allowable in the Humanities subject area (freedom of choice), and the WJEC examination in Latin allowable under the Foreign Languages subject area, because it meets all the OfQual accredited GCSE criteria for a language (academic rigour). There is little point in having OfQual accredited GCSE criteria if they are arbitrarily ignored, as they have been in this case.

4. We add here that minister Nicholas Gibb is hostile to the admission of Classical Civilisation because it is not “historical” enough. His evidence appears to be that the OCR syllabus contains an element on the physical remains of Pompeii.

5. As classicists, we point out that these subjects are small and very vulnerable. Government must realise the catastrophic effect that current E-Bac regulations will have upon them, for no academic or educational gain that ministers have yet elucidated. Indeed, given that government has (laudably and properly) elevated Latin to the position of an allowable subject under the “Languages” slot, it makes no sense to pull the carpet from under its feet by insisting that it can be examined by only one board and no other.

5 April 2011

Written evidence submitted by Andrew Johnson, Deputy head and head of Classics, Ashville College

1. I wish to contribute to the consultation about the appropriate subjects to be included in the E-bac, particularly with regard to the classics subjects deemed appropriate, or more particularly inappropriate.

2. I am particularly fortunate to be teaching Classics at a well-resourced independent school, and my influential position of deputy head allows me to make the time to teach small classes. The same situation is not true for many teachers that I have associated with, both in independent schools and particularly maintained schools where any decrease in numbers would lead to the subject being withdrawn, and who often give their own time freely before and after school to enable talented students to study the classics. While I understand the principles on which the baccalaureate proposals are founded I am concerned that the narrowness of the proscribed courses, may have the unintended consequence of diminishing the educational opportunities of many bright students in less fortunate situations than my own.

3. The first area where I would like you to reconsider your guidelines is the admissible Latin qualifications, which currently accepts Latin GCSE but not the equally valid WJEC Level 2 examination. This is a new course, initiated by the Cambridge schools Classics Project to make Latin accessible to the students to whom I have referred above, whose time allocation makes it impossible to study authors such as Vergil and Tacitus in the original, a requirement which goes far beyond the sophistication required for success in other Modern Languages. The Level 2 course has been accepted by no less an authority than an admissions tutor representing the Classics department at Cambridge who is prepared to treat the level 2 award as a perfectly appropriate preparation for further study in Classics leading to university study. The course carries the same grade levels as OCR GCSE and having taught both courses I can assure you that the grammar and vocabulary covered are very similar as are the length and difficulty of the passages studied in the original.

4. I would also wish that you reconsider the inclusion of Classical civilization as a humanity alongside the Ancient History, which already qualifies. Surely in every sense of the word a course which studies ancient literature, ancient society and religion in its historical context, and requires extended writing as part of its assessment, is fulfilling all of the criteria that you require of a humanity.

5. There is a further point that I would wish you to consider. As a school we require all students to study Maths, English, a Modern Foreign Language, and all three sciences; in addition they have three further choices. A talented student would often love to cover a range of subjects developing their aesthetic interests in music, Drama or Art, following their talents in DT, Computing or PE as well as wishing to be multilingual by following a second language. It is therefore very easy for a student to take a broad range of subjects without including a strictly “humanity” subject, yet I would consider a choice of Music, Latin and religious Studies in any way narrow, when combined with the major subjects quoted above. Yet as I understand it this would not qualify for the E-bac on the grounds of Humanities. The principle is a good one, and I share the concern about the proliferation of qualifications, some of which do not bear comparison with traditional GCSE subjects. However I am concerned that the good intentions, do not yet translate into a fair system and the unintentional outcome of the E-bac may be to diminish the educational experience of many, denying them the academic

study which they would most enjoy, while forcing them to take subjects which, while valid certainly, are not where their main interests lie.

6. I hope that you will take these views into consideration and wish you well in this worthwhile, but tricky task of providing a standard with which we would all agree.

5 April 2011

Written evidence submitted by Trevor and Michele Pipe, Co-Principals, Hawley Place School

I write to pass several comments about the recently launched E-Bac. Firstly, the general idea of a broad, balanced and relevant measure of ability at GCSE level is to be praised. We have been offering such a scheme of options at Hawley Place School since our arrival in 1991.

However, I take issue with the subjects included under the Humanities umbrella. I cannot understand why Religious Education cannot be accepted as a relevant GCSE humanities subject. If we are trying to prepare youngsters for the 21st century, surely some knowledge of religion is essential, if only from the point of view of tolerance and the number of world/domestic issues/problems involving religion. A good case could be made for all three subjects (Geography, History and RE) to be compulsory to 16. Indeed, I believe that UK is the only country in Europe (apart from Albania) where History is not compulsory to 16.

I also have a problem with the exclusion of ICT at GCSE level, given the fact that technology permeates all aspects of our lives at all levels. Schools have invested so much money and time in developing ICT, surely it would be easy for all pupils to embrace it at GCSE level and most pupils are naturally very ICT literate.

Our Year 9 Option system includes:

a compulsory core of: English Language and English Literature; Mathematics (with GCSE Statistics for the more able); Science—three choices: Science (one GCSE); Science + Additional Science (two GCSEs); triple Science—physics, chemistry and biology (three GCSEs); ICT;

a compulsory language (French, Spanish, German—we encourage dual linguists and have some triple linguists);

a compulsory Humanities subject (Geography, History or RE—two of these can be taken); and

a range of practical subjects: Art, Music, PE, Drama, Home Economics (Food) & Home Economics (Child Development).

We believe that our system reflects your Ebac idea but is in fact considerably better and we shall continue to use it, with nearly all parents agreeing with our curriculum philosophy!

5 April 2011

Written evidence submitted by James Bovington, KS4 co-ordinator, Horsforth School, Leeds

1. I write to express a personal point of view about the E-Bac. We have not yet discussed this in the languages department but may well do so and might therefore in due course submit a view to the curriculum review.

2. I fully support the E-Bac more or less as it stands. I agree with the range of subjects included although I wonder if the requirement for five grade C's is perhaps a bit of a blunt instrument. It might be better to give a certain number of points to grades and then have the E-Bac at either pass, merit or distinction level. An alternative could be that a grade B in one subject could compensate for a D in a different subject.

3. The range of subjects included is good, although I think that there is a case for adding Religious Education. This could be done by stating that students need to take any two of history, geography and religious education in order to get the E-Bac although this arguably makes the qualification more complex to administer. To be consistent there should now be a big push for as many schools as possible to offer the International Baccalaureate in parallel with traditional "A" levels.

4. I teach French and Spanish. I look forward to the E-Bac becoming an established qualification in its own right and which will be attractive to more academically able students as a useful measure of ability and which could eventually become a requirement for entry to more demanding universities where there is a challenge for places. My personal view is that if a student can achieve a grade C in a foreign language then there is no reason why such students shouldn't be required to do so. Furthermore, I see absolutely no reason why it is inappropriate for schools to be given individual target %s for students achieving the E-Bac as a measure of progress and success, as long as such targets reflects the ability range of the students attending each school. However I would oppose any minimum threshold applied across the board such as 30% of students have to achieve the E-Bac.

5. I welcome the fact that the E-Bac will likely "nudge" suitable able students towards continuing to study a modern foreign language or Latin to GCSE without the need for compulsion or the reintroduction of compulsory foreign languages for all. Languages are to an extent a talent subject and it is just not a sensible use of scarce resources to force either the unwilling or the unable to continue with them to GCSE. If a student

hasn't for example, grasped the intricacies of French verb conjugation by the end of year 9 after three years of study, then two more years of classroom based study are unlikely to assist and will more than likely prove counterproductive.

6. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to contribute to your review.

5 April 2011

Written evidence submitted by Paul Shannon, Deputy Head teacher, St Mary's School, Hereford

I have long been an admirer of the European system of Baccalaureate compared to our system of GCSE and indeed Advanced levels. The Baccalaureate should by its very nature be a qualification which measures a rounded experience of subjects. I can see too that the new coalition government want to focus on academic subjects and reduce the tendency for some schools to offer qualifications which focuses on the schools performance without necessarily looking at what is best for each individual student.

In my view English, Mathematics and Science should be part of a Baccalaureate and I support the need for a language to be part of this qualification. The standard of language acquisition and the languages that we should be teaching is another debate. A humanity subject is important, I would add Religious Education to the subjects that should qualify for the Baccalaureate. Religious Education should be viewed as the same worth as History and Geography.

I wonder why no mention has been made for ICT as an essential component for the award? What about the practical subjects—Drama, Art, Physical Education, Design Technology—whilst they may not be part of the new qualification what is being put in place to enhance their standing as subjects.

I would like to have seen the new coalition government seek the views of the profession first then introduce the change. Once again we seem to have a new initiative introduced without any discussion or without the explanation needed—it smacks a bit “of a bull in china shop” approach and is causing resentment and anguish that could have been avoided.

5 April 2011

Written evidence submitted by Robert Max

I understand that the Education Select Committee will be conducting an inquiry into the English Baccalaureate and would be grateful if these views could be presented.

The Government has decided that a new certificate, the English Baccalaureate, is required to recognise educational achievement at age sixteen. By including maths, English, science, a language and history/geography the Government has indicated that students must demonstrate a certain breadth in their studies.

However the omission of subjects including art, music, drama, design and technology and RS from the humanities component of the new English Baccalaureate strikes me as a grave error of judgement. Students must be encouraged to develop their imagination, focus their creativity and explore and express their emotions if they are to make best use of the various strands of knowledge that the government has said should be at the heart of their studies.

Although a view has been presented that by defining the core subjects greater freedom is given to schools to choose how to provide appropriate supplements, we will see that in too many instances resources will be piled into anything defined by the government as a core subject at the expense of non-core subjects. This will restrict the educational horizons of many of those students who would have benefitted most by having had these subjects included.

I would consider a student who has studied the five areas included in the Baccalaureate but has not studied at least one of the subjects I mention above, or similar, to GCSE level to have received a deficient education.

5 April 2011

Written evidence submitted by Jazz Services

One of the most encouraging developments for music education in recent times has been the Education Secretary's commendably positive response to Darren Henley's review of schools' music education. The review, which was commissioned by Government, came up with conclusions and recommendations that have been warmly welcomed by the majority of music education organisations and interests.

1. We understand that the Education Secretary has now decided against including music in the proposed English Baccalaureate. We find this perplexing given his expressed views on the value of music education, eg “music is an enriching and valuable academic subject (which is) why it is vital that (good) quality music education is available to all young people across the country”.

2. A very probable outcome of that decision will be that the secondary school sector will not make provision for music in the curriculum. So, at a stroke, much of the good work in primary schools, successfully fostered, in large measure, by the Wider Opportunities Programme will have gone to waste. That would be a serious loss for good music education demonstrably benefits young people by providing opportunities for valuable creative expression: increased self-esteem has also been identified as an invariable outcome of good music education and especially when allied to plentiful performance opportunities. Furthermore, some authorities make persuasive claims of wider benefits across the curriculum.

3. It is not for us to characterise England's music education as "world class", whatever that may mean; we would rather emphasise the widely held view among the international music education community that music education in England is of a very high standard. Music's intrinsic worth is, it seems to us, self-evident; less obvious to the uninformed is the substantial contribution made by the music industry to the Nation's economy; for example, in its 2002 report "Counting the Notes" the National Music Council noted that the economic contribution of the music business was of the order of £5 billion.

4. Of course, there are competing claims by various interests for their subject to be included in the English Bac, and not all can be accommodated: we believe music is special for it is one of the Nation's most enriching contributions to the arts internationally and should therefore be included.

5. Do please bring these views to the Committee's attention.

5 April 2011

Written evidence submitted by Matthew Bright

I am writing to urge the Committee to encourage the Secretary of State to include music within the English Baccalaureate.

Darren Henley, in his independent review of music education published in February, made the key finding that Music "should be included as one of the subjects that go to make up the new English Baccalaureate." And the Government responded by saying that music is an "enriching and valuable academic subject".

Music as a discrete subject will not jeopardise the intent of the Government to improve on the current system of GCSEs and will offer students the opportunity to study a broad curriculum. Music is an essential element of our lives, emotionally, intellectually and economically and we should have the opportunity to study it in depth and in the context of other core subjects.

5 April 2011

Written evidence submitted by United Church Schools Trust

In response to your inquiry into the English Baccalaureate, please find below the considered, joint response from the independent senior schools of the United Church Schools Trust, affiliated with the United Learning Trust, under the Chairmanship of the Rt Rev and Rt Hon Lord Carey of Clifton.

1. The purpose of the E-Bac is arguably the central issue, and it would be fair to assert that there appears to be some degree of confusion both in public perception and in educational forums. The Government states in the DfE declaration of December 2010: "The E-Bac is not a new qualification in itself"; however, the naming of the E-Bac as such has immediately led to comparisons with the International Baccalaureate, which *is* a qualification in its own right. This is further confused by the additional DfE statement: "We intend to mark individual students' future achievements through a certificate". The implication would be sustainable that the E-Bac will, therefore, become a qualification in its own right and, logically, may then inform university admissions' requirements. Much response to the E-Bac thus far has taken this assumption as a basis and we, as UCST, would concur that, if the E-Bac were to be a qualification in its own right, it would be inadequate in its current form. In support of this we would make the following points:

- (a) English Literature is a notable omission and should constitute part of any academic GCSE curriculum.
- (b) Not all iGCSE specifications in mathematics are yet included, such as Edexcel for example, which is widely taken in the independent sector.
- (c) Languages should focus only on modern foreign languages and not include classical languages. The dismay of recent years in the dwindling number of language students has not been prompted by a national shortage of classical academics, but by a shortage of young people with the linguistic knowledge and skills to support British involvement with other countries in practical and communicative contexts. Qualifications in modern languages, which are currently spoken, will serve this particular aim more directly than the study of historical languages, which are no longer spoken.
- (d) Defining Humanities poses genuine challenges, since one can argue the respective merits of various humanity subjects in terms of their contribution to human understanding, but not all have the same level of academic rigour. If the E-Bac just intends to include the "hard" humanity subjects, where it

may be perceived that there is more to learn and more to write, it is the wrong solution to a different problem, whereby we all recognise that there are “soft” GCSEs and “hard” GCSEs.

- (e) There is no mention of any creative or expressive subjects, which any balanced GCSE curriculum should ideally include.
- (f) If the E-Bac were to stand as a qualification in its own right, which may shape schools’ curriculum models, we would suggest the following headline definition:
 - (i) English *or* English Language plus English Literature.
 - (ii) Mathematics.
 - (iii) Science (as per current definition).
 - (iv) Modern Foreign Language (at least one).
 - (v) At least one from: Ancient History, Business Studies, Classical Civilisation, Economics, Geography, History, Religious Studies.
 - (vi) At least one from: Art & Design, Design & Technology, Drama, Greek, Home Economics, ICT, Latin, Music, Physical Education.
- (g) There is no doubt that debate would continue as to whether all arguably meritorious subjects had been included, and this is not intended to be an exhaustively researched and comprehensive list, rather an indication of what would be required, were the E-Bac to be a credible qualification in its own right.

2. If we re-consider the original statement: “The E-Bac is not a new qualification in itself”, we may alternatively take the view that the E-Bac list of subjects is not intended to become a curriculum goal in itself, thereby deflecting the popular criticism that the E-Bac reduces curriculum breadth and choice, but is simply a measure of a more academic curriculum offering at any school. In the last set of national Performance Tables, taking the E-Bac at this face value, it did succeed in clarifying which schools were claiming apparently impressive headline GCSE successes on the back of academically undemanding qualifications. We can cite, for example, a school which claimed that its pupils achieved a five A*–C GCSE pass rate of 65%; however, this fell to 3% in the E-Bac column, thus providing prospective parents with valuable comparative information about the quality of the school’s achievements. If this is all the E-Bac is destined to be, and this would not in itself be any bad thing, we believe that it should not be called “E-Bac” and that there should be no separate certificate; instead, the Performance Tables should simply be re-designed to collate:

- (a) Five A*–C including GCSE English, Maths and Science.
- (b) Nine A*–C including GCSE English, Maths, Science and MFL.

3. This would provide the necessary encouragement for more pupils to take GCSE MFL, but would not force all pupils to do so. Parents would not, arguably, look for 100% in the second column, but would hope to see a recognisable majority percentage for any school with apparent academic credentials. Furthermore, schools would retain complete flexibility over their own curriculum, enabling pupils to achieve in their respective strengths and interests.

4. It is our opinion that the E-Bac, in its current form, sits uncomfortably somewhere between two differing objectives, but is unable to achieve either due to insufficient definition of status and purpose. To summarise:

- (a) If the E-Bac is to become a worthwhile qualification in its own right, it must expand and include a greater range of subjects, to enable genuine breadth and choice, while retaining a recognisable quality mark of academic challenge and rigour.
- (b) If the E-Bac is to be a retrospective clarification of existing GCSE results from schools across the country, in order to provide more accurate information for parents, it should not be presented as a qualification, with a certificate and a title, and the criteria for the Performance Tables would benefit from improved definition.

We are grateful for your time in considering our opinion and present it to you with every respect.

5 April 2011

Written evidence submitted by Elizabeth Poulsen (Mrs L Bellow)

I write as an Honorary Member of the Incorporated Society of Musicians, to express my concern to the Education Select Committee about the intention of the Secretary of State not to include Music in the English Baccalaureate.

I worked at the ISM for 22 years until my retirement as Head of Professional Policy, and during that time continually saw evidence of tremendous public support for music as a curriculum subject in primary and secondary schools, and for the additional creative activities and tuition offered by local music services.

The Committee will undoubtedly be well provided with expert, professional evidence of the academic challenges of the study of music, its inter-disciplinary connections, and its extrinsic intellectual and social benefits. These aspects of music education cannot be dismissed lightly, when evaluating the achievements of

past GCSE and A-Level students. However, in order to secure opportunities for pupils to study music for GCSE in future, the subject will need to be underpinned by its being available at baccalaureate level as well.

I ask the Committee to consider, also, that to offer English Baccalaureate students a higher education in music gives them a chance to become conservers and developers of the musical heritage and culture of this nation and of an art form that has a world-wide significance and appreciation, in all its manifestations.

I should be grateful if you would add my voice to those who are urging the Secretary of State to include Music as a subject in the English Baccalaureate.

5 April 2011

Written evidence submitted by Jen Hartley

It is with great concern—but not surprise, unfortunately—that I have discovered that Music is to have no place in the package of subjects that qualify for the English Baccalaureate. As I'm sure you are aware, the IB at KS4 includes a much broader spread than the proposed English Baccalaureate; to quote from their website, "Students are required to study their mother tongue, a second language, humanities, sciences, mathematics, arts, physical education and technology. In the final year of the programme, students also engage in a personal project". It makes the English Baccalaureate seem very pale by comparison.

You will, I have no doubt, have received hundreds of indignant letters about the benefits of studying Music, and other Arts subjects as well. In reality, the pressure to limit their choice of subjects often squeezes the Arts out of many KS4 students' curriculum, and that pressure will increase with the publishing of a set of subjects amounting to an English Baccalaureate qualification, which—whether or not this is your intention—will attach more worth to those subjects. To look at the students' point of view, they are about to be put in an extremely unfair position. It doesn't matter who says what about whether this should or shouldn't affect students' choices; when they come to it, their parents and some schools will be urging them not to do certain subjects in favour of the ones that do count. If they do this, they could be choosing subjects which they enjoy less, and which could therefore give them less good results.

As far back as university studies go, Music has been one of the core subjects. It was one of the Quadrivium (Arithmetic, Geometry, Astronomy and Music) and is available to study as an academic subject at the top universities around the world. Saying that it doesn't count towards this new way of valuing and comparing schools' results is a great pity, and unfortunately appears to be either a rushed or an ignorant decision.

From the point of view of someone who watches people in a musical context every day, the benefits of Music are enormous. We see them develop unlikely friendships, stand to receive applause in public, encourage each other when someone's confidence falters, and learn to be reliable, to organise events, and to concentrate for hours at a time because that is what creative musicians do. What this does for their self-esteem is immeasurable. Whether or not you yourself are a musician, you must know that musicians of all kinds are disciplined people with a good set of values, who understand that it isn't about the money and it is never about the individual. More people like that in Britain would be a good thing.

It sometimes seems that the most valuable thing about my subject is the way it encourages pupils to shed inhibitions and work together, and this counts for every year group (and at some point I have taught them all), from reception to Year 13. You simply cannot replicate that in a subject where they are not required to learn new skills in order to be able to join in an instrumental ensemble or to write a song or to sing in a large group. The feeling of camaraderie within a class after doing that is fantastic, and it can only happen when the subject requires people to step out of their comfort zones and to trust their teachers to lead them in that.

Music at all levels is a subject which pupils should not have to face losing, and the same can be said for all Arts subjects. It is already a shame (I want to say disgrace) that many primary schools cut Music out of the curriculum in Years 5 and 6 because it isn't examined, thereby leaving us with a hard job to do in Year 7. I don't think it will happen in my school for a long time yet, but there will be schools around the country where Music will be phased out, and those who could have shone, who could have developed unlikely friendships, who could have discovered an ability to focus for a long time on a creative project, who could have found a lesson in which they didn't feel intimidated, will never do so. At least give it an equal place in the English Baccalaureate, so that opting to study it doesn't seem like a quirky and irrelevant choice. If you stretch the package to include Arts subjects, you will be allowing more students the freedom to choose something they like without the risk of not counting towards their school's statistics.

At the end of everything, the way a student feels is always the most important thing. What you are doing, by assigning value to certain subjects and not others, is bound to affect that.

Thank you for reading this with the same care as went into writing it.

5 April 2011

Written evidence submitted by Dennis Drumm

I write in connection with the decision recently announced by the Secretary of State for Education not to include music in the English Baccalaureate.

Music at GCSE level is a challenging, rigorous academic demanding subject which contributes to a broad, excellent education.

Music tuition and learning to play a musical instrument are proven in recognised academic studies 2/3 to enhance numeracy and literacy, increase creative skills, improve general cognitive ability, promote social cohesion and contribute to developing emotional intelligence and general well-being.

There are also proven health benefits for individuals; for example, those with certain respiratory conditions can derive therapeutic benefit from playing blown instruments.

The importance of music as a core subject is strongly supported in recent public polling conducted by YouGov, with 97% of those polled offering an opinion backing the provision of music in schools.

In the UK music education is world class and generates both the audiences of the future as well as the professional musicians and other practitioners who contribute so significantly to our constantly growing creative and cultural economy.

There is no doubt that the English Baccalaureate as it is currently framed will lead to schools deciding not to offer music at GCSE level.

The net result will be the loss of the very real benefits of a music education and an adverse impact on educational standards generally.

It will also undermine our currently vibrant creative and cultural economy.

Including Music GCSE in the English Baccalaureate will not jeopardise the intent of the Government—pupils will still study a broad-range of subjects which remain challenging, rigorous and academic.

Darren Henley, in the independent review of music education commissioned by the government and published in February 2011, made the key finding that Music “should be included as one of the subjects that go to make up the new English Baccalaureate”.

The Government’s response, under the signature of the Secretary of State for Education, and Minister for State for Culture and Creative Industries opened with the comment;

“...Music is an enriching and valuable academic subject. Research evidence shows that a quality music education can improve self-confidence, behaviour and social skills, as well as improve academic attainment in areas such as numeracy, literacy and language. This is why it is vital that a quality music education is available to all children and young people across the country...”

The decision announced by the Secretary of State for Education not to include music in the English Baccalaureate will diminish the ability of the English Baccalaureate to produce the stated aim of providing a truly well rounded educational outcome for those pursuing the qualification.

I hope that the Education Select Committee will give this grave matter due consideration, and be able to come to the view that it will be beneficial for the overall educational outcomes of future generations to do all in their power to ensure that the Secretary of State reverses his earlier decision and includes music within the English Baccalaureate.

5 April 2011

Written evidence submitted by Jane Ellison MP

Extracts from emails to Jane Ellison MP from Fr John Dickson of the Salesians of Don Bosco and Mr Ben Thomas, Headmaster of Thomas’s Battersea. Please consider as a submission as evidence in the examination of the introduction of the English Baccalaureate.

I would like to raise with you the question of RE in schools, particularly the strange omission of RE from the new English Baccalaureate. Given the popularity of this subject especially its flourishing as an A-level subject, and its academic rigour recognised by so many universities it is strange that it is not recognised as one of the Humanities which count towards the EBacc.

Given that RE has always been a central part of the curriculum of maintained education and that understanding and being educated in Religion is more and more important in such a diverse community as we live in Battersea. I would kindly ask if you would be willing to support this motion and become one of its signatories.

Having been a section 48 Ofsted inspector for five years I can testify to the quality and excitement that Re can generate among youngsters in our schools and we know that were it to be excluded from the Ebacc it would not recognise its real importance for human education.

Fr John Dickson SDB, MA (Oxon) PhD, NPQH
Salesians of Don Bosco

Briefly, I write to bring to your attention to Early Day Motion 1375, which asks for the inclusion of Religious Education (currently excluded) as part of the English Baccalaureate. I am fully in support of this motion, not only for the academic value of the subject in its own right, but also for the absolute relevance that religious education has for young people in today's world. Tolerance will surely come only through understanding of each other's religions, and understanding through education.

5 April 2011

Written evidence submitted by SCORE

ABOUT SCORE

SCORE is a partnership of organisations, which aims to improve science education in UK schools and colleges by supporting the development and implementation of effective education policy. The partnership is currently chaired by Professor Graham Hutchings FRS and comprises the Association for Science Education, Institute of Physics, Royal Society, Royal Society of Chemistry, Science Council and Society of Biology.

SCORE welcomes the opportunity to provide evidence for the Education Committee's inquiry into the English Baccalaureate.

SCORE partners' response covers:

- The purpose and benefits of the English Baccalaureate; and
- The implications of the English Baccalaureate for pupils and schools.

In summary:

- The English Baccalaureate is trying to serve dual purposes (school accountability and pupils' attainment) and runs the risk of raising the stakes of some examinations, which in the past has led to narrowing of curricula in schools and pupils being entered for inappropriate examinations.
- We would therefore like to see a consultation on developing a school accountability system with aims that benefit all pupils and serve the needs of the country.
- The use of the word "baccalaureate" is misleading given that it normally refers to a passport to HE study including accreditation of project-based work and other skills-related learning.
- One of the aims of the English Baccalaureate is to drive the take up of individual sciences, however the timetabling pressures introduced by the English Baccalaureate may result in fewer pupils having the opportunity to study separate sciences. Schools may also concentrate pupils efforts on the two sciences either for which they have specialist teachers or based on their results in early assessments.

1. The purpose and benefits of the English Baccalaureate and its value as a measure of pupil and school performance

1.1 School accountability

1. One of the stated aims is to provide a "powerful incentive for schools to drive the take-up of individual science subjects, humanities such as history and, especially, foreign languages". We broadly welcome the desire to encourage schools to provide more students with the opportunity to follow an academic curriculum.

2. Undoubtedly, the English Baccalaureate will lead to a greater proportion of students taking this collection of six academic subjects at GCSE (this stood at 15.6% in 2010). However, there are other ways of increasing the take-up of the English Baccalaureate subjects.

3. In 2010, 70% of maintained schools entered students for the three separate sciences; it is unlikely that the English Baccalaureate will incentivise schools to drive the take up of the separate sciences any further. The introduction of the English Baccalaureate as it stands may well reduce the number of pupils taking GCSEs in three separate sciences. Timetabling pressures caused by accommodating the English Baccalaureate subjects may restrict the amount of teaching time available such that some schools are not able to offer the separate sciences alongside Science and Additional Science.

4. The science measure for the English Baccalaureate (for those students taking three separate sciences) will be the top two grades from the three separate sciences. There is a concern that schools might concentrate pupils efforts on the two sciences either for which they have specialist teachers or based on their results in early assessments.

5. It would seem that another aim is to steer schools away from offering tactical curricula to improve their league table position. We welcome this aim. Schools should be rewarded for providing a rich, diverse and appropriate curriculum for their students.

6. However, the English Baccalaureate is a very specific measure that looks at just one aspect of a school's performance. If schools focus on maximising pupils' success in the English Baccalaureate, they are likely to pay less attention to other aspects of performance including—breadth, choice and flexibility.

7. A complementary accountability measure would relate to the provision of specialist teaching in all the core academic subjects; in this way, all pupils will have the opportunity to study the core subjects under the tutelage of a subject specialist. If the pupils enjoy and succeed in those subjects, they are more likely to want to continue in the subject and should have the opportunity to do so.

8. The announcement on the English Baccalaureate early in this administration's period of Government has sent a message that schools that have a larger proportion of academically successful pupils will be more highly regarded than those that offer non-academic routes. The role of the English Baccalaureate should also be considered in the context of Alison Wolf's review of vocational education.

1.2 Measure of pupil performance

9. It is not clear whether the English Baccalaureate is being certificated, and hence also intended as a measure of pupil performance. Nevertheless, it will be picked up by pupils, through their schools and through, for example, university matriculation requirements, as a mark of achievement (or otherwise).

10. The use of the word “baccalaureate” is misleading given that it normally refers to a passport to HE study including accreditation of project-based work and other skills-related learning.

11. As a measure of pupil performance, it is very crude and specific: it will reward broad academic success and is a basic pass/fail certification. It will introduce failure to a large number of pupils.

12. Pupils who are interested in following a technical or vocational route will be particularly poorly served by the English Baccalaureate. Their performance (and that of their schools) will not be measured at all by the proposals. There will also be many able, talented and ambitious pupils whose skills, interest and future plans are not represented in this very specific set of subjects.

1.3 Linking the measurement of school and pupil performance

13. It is the case that schools should be accountable. Recently this accountability has been achieved using metrics based on the performance of students in exams. Hence exams have become “high stakes”: they have taken on the dual role of assessing pupils and holding a school to account—often through league tables.

14. We acknowledge that league tables exist and that it will be hard to put the genie back into the bottle. However, it would be preferable to have a system with more subtle and intelligent metrics than solely student performance in exams.

15. We would like to see a consultation on developing a school accountability system with aims that benefit all pupils and serve the needs of the country. It should encourage schools to give pupils access to a rich, diverse, high quality provision and to match pupils to the best route for them, to maximise their potential and to prepare them for HE or for work. It should be possible to show, logically, that the accountability will lead to achieving those aims.

2. *The implications of the English Baccalaureate for pupils and schools*

2.1 Effect on the curriculum

16. The combination of league tables based on performance in high stakes exams and commercially competitive Awarding Organisations has led to a number of unintended and undesirable effects on the curriculum. For example, there has been a reduction of real choice for some students as there is a pressure on schools to enter pupils for courses that yield as many high GCSE grades (or equivalents) as possible.

17. There has also been deterioration in the quality and demand of assessment items and a consequent reduction in the quality of the learning experience. Consequently, the performance measures have led to the curriculum becoming less, not more, academically challenging.

18. The same logic can be applied to measuring school performance using the English Baccalaureate to show that it will reduce the breadth and quality of the curriculum offering; the available subjects, their combinations and the way they are taught will all be driven by the school's targets.

19. In particular, the opportunities to follow a technical or vocational route may be reduced for 14 year olds. This will have a feedback effect on 11–14 year olds with the likelihood that there will be fewer opportunities to experience technical or artistic subjects in the future, as they will not lead to qualifications that contribute to the English Baccalaureate.

2.2 Pupils

20. It is often difficult for a school to address the needs of pupils and do well in league tables based on exam results. The high stakes in those examinations can drive schools to make curriculum and entry decisions more in the school's interest than that of the pupils.

21. We have heard anecdotally that as a result of the English Baccalaureate some schools are separating science and mathematics students by ability at age 14 to ensure that as many of them as possible attain at least a C grade. Separating by ability may well work for students in terms of their specific learning needs. However, the overall danger reinforced by the English Baccalaureate is that a significant proportion of students will be entered for either undemanding qualifications or qualifications that are unsuitable in terms of further progression.

22. Another consequence of this approach will be that the most able and the less able pupils will, once again, lose out as there will be continued concentration on pupils on the C/D border line.

March 2011

Written evidence submitted by the Royal Geographical Society (with IBG)

1. The Royal Geographical Society (with IBG) is the learned society and professional body for geography and geographers. The Society maintains a strong overview of the discipline, its position and its practice in schools, higher education, and the workplace, including professional accreditation. We advise on and support its advancement, dissemination and practice in these realms and within wider public engagement and policy. We have 15,000 members and Fellows and our work reached more than five million people in 2010. Each year the Society works, on a face-to-face basis with teachers and pupils from over 50% of English secondary schools²³⁰ and our online educational resources receive 400,000 "user sessions" annually.

2. THE PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE ENGLISH BACCALAUREATE (E-BAC) AND ITS VALUE AS A MEASURE OF PUPIL AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

2.1 The Society welcomes the overall framework and choice of subjects for the E-Bac and believes it will provide benefits to schools, universities, employers and most importantly young people. Above all, in our view it represents a quality attainment of learning in the key subject areas for pupils and an appropriate standard for appraising school performance. The Society believes, on the evidence it has of the requirements of Higher Education and employers, the E-Bac also provides the platform necessary for successful further study and careers.

2.2 In our view, the recent expansion of "vocation" courses for 14–16 year olds has reduced the opportunity for many pupils to encounter the rigorous knowledge, understanding and subject disciplinary skills that are provided by the E-Bac subjects. The Society regards the age of 14 as being too early for young people to "leave behind" the benefits that are gained by studying the full range of E-Bac subjects. We support the recommendation of the Wolf Report that vocational subjects should represent no more than 20% of the curriculum for 14–16 year olds.

2.3 Clearly, not every pupil will achieve the E-Bac. However, its introduction should help ensure that all schools provide a broad and balanced curriculum for all pupils, which can broaden horizons, aspirations and life chances rather than narrowing them. The less academically able pupils should, in our view, be encouraged to study some of the E-Bac subjects even if not able to attain full E-Bac levels of qualification. To this end we hope that performance targets will not inadvertently penalize schools that encourage pupils to aspire to the E-Bac, knowing that they may well not reach full E-Bac qualification.

2.4 The reporting of the E-Bac in school performance tables has our full support as it will remove the unhelpful practice of schools including "vocational" qualifications as GCSE equivalents. As the Wolf report identifies, *"In recent years, both academic and vocational education in England have been bedeviled by well-meaning attempts to pretend that everything is worth the same as everything else. Students and families all know this is nonsense."*²³¹

3. THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE E-BAC

3.1 The Society strongly supports the inclusion of English, mathematics, two sciences, a language and the choice of history or geography in the E-Bac. These subjects equip 16 year olds with the essential grounding in a core group of rigorous academic subjects. The subjects have credibility with parents, with employers and within Higher Education. They also provide the necessary knowledge and skills base which is demanded by many employers.

²³⁰ The Society's face-to-face work includes providing CPD training, online resources and networks for teachers; careers and further study workshops, study days and field visits for pupils; presentations from Geography Ambassadors, lectures and other events.

²³¹ Review of Vocational Education: Wolf Report 2011 pg 8

3.2 The Society welcomes the Russell Group’s Informed Choices report which identifies a similar range of E-Bac subjects for study at A Level as “facilitating subjects” which open up, rather than close down options for study at university.²³²

3.3 The Society particularly welcomes the inclusion of geography, alongside history and ancient history, within the Humanities strand of the English Baccalaureate. This support is endorsed by the Society’s Vice-President for Education and its Education Committee.²³³ The Society supports and welcomes the comment by the Secretary of State for Education Michael Gove MP, that “*The decision to include geography and history in the humanities section of the English Baccalaureate will mean that those subjects, which have seen a decline in the number of students pursuing them will at last see an increase.*”²³⁴

3.4 We do not believe that the number of subjects in the humanities strand should be expanded further.

3.5 The case for inclusion of geography in the English Baccalaureate rests on the fact that it is the subject through which students learn about the world—its people, places and environments. Of particular importance are:

- 3.5.1 The content of the subject. Geography is the systematic study of the world’s surface; its characteristic physical and human features and landscapes, and their formation. It is how young people learn about Britain and the wider world they live in, and depend upon, for food, energy, water and other resources. Underpinned by core knowledge and concepts, geography is the subject that also teaches knowledgeably about the environmental, social and economic processes that differentiate places, that bring about changes to places (neighbourhoods, regions and countries) and that connect places together.
- 3.5.2 The nature of the subject. Geography provides an essential role in education that spans (and integrates) the human and natural sciences. This scope enables students to study how humans depend on, utilise and interact with the environment; interactions that lie at the root of many of our environmental challenges, (including climate change) in the world today, and that inform learning about sustainability. At school, geography GCSE is also the root for subsequent specialisation into A level geography, social science and environmental science.
- 3.5.3 Geography as the spatial science. In a world where some 80% of our data is geo-referenced, mapped and subject to spatial analysis, including much of the current free data being made available to communities, people need to know how to access and use this data to understand their neighbourhoods, towns and regions. Geography is the subject through which young people learn how to select, interrogate and interpret soundly such data. Geo-spatial analysis and visualisation is also a significant economic and employment growth area.
- 3.5.4 The rich subject-specific and generic skill mix that is learned through geography and which makes geographers very employable (see section 4.10). Subject specific skills include spatial skills, use of maps, computer-based mapping (GIS), fieldwork analytical skills, integrating complex data and ideas. Generic skills learned through geography include team work, IT skills, critical thinking, research, data analysis, report writing and problem solving.

3.6 Given the depth and range of material necessary to teach geography successfully at GCSE²³⁵ the Society does *not* support any moves to provide a combined or integrated humanities course at GCSE. Ofsted has identified that, at KS3, “broad humanities courses tended to focus on teaching generic learning skills rather than knowledge and understanding that was specific geography.” In almost a third of the schools Ofsted visited changes (such as the integration of subjects) at KS3 were having an impact on the quality of what was provided as well as on the time available, resulting in less geography being covered.²³⁶ The Society does not wish to see this experience repeated within any proposal for combined or integrated courses in geography and history at GCSE.

3.7 The Society notes calls for the inclusion of Religious Education, which is already a statutory requirement to the age of 16, within the humanities strand of the E-Bac. The Society does *not* support its inclusion in the E-Bac with statutory status. If RE wishes to be included in the E-Bac then its statutory status at GCSE should be removed. Our view is based on a significant issue of principle concerning parity of choice across subjects that are statutory or non-statutory. We do not believe pupils would well served by being presented with an invidious “option” in humanities between statutory and non-statutory subjects, a choice which does not occur elsewhere in the E-Bac. If RE was to be included with its statutory requirement, the Society fears that some school leadership teams would choose a “route of least resistance” through which a GCSE in Religious Education becomes pupils’ *de facto* humanities option. For example, a school could require KS4 pupils to study an extra hour of RE, alongside their existing statutory lesson. This would be enough time for a RE GCSE and hence remove the need for pupils to study either geography or history as part of their E-Bac. The E-Bac humanities option has been developed to specifically encourage more pupils to study GCSE geography or

²³² Informed Choices, Russell Group 2011

²³³ The Society’s Education Committee includes headteachers and senior school managers, head of geography departments, geography teachers and geography PGCE tutors.

²³⁴ (Hansard 7 February 2011: Column 10)

²³⁵ We believe many historians would hold similar views about the importance of providing a discrete and coherent GCSE in history.

²³⁶ Ofsted Geography Learning to make a world of difference 2011 pg 31

history. The Society fully supports the Minister of State for Schools Nick Gibb MP comment, “*One of the intentions of the English Baccalaureate is to encourage wider take up of geography and history in addition to, rather than instead of, compulsory RE.*”²³⁷

4. THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE E-BAC FOR PUPILS, SCHOOLS AND EMPLOYERS

4.1 The Society’s considered view is that the E-Bac will ensure more young people have the opportunity to choose geography at GCSE and that it will raise the numbers choosing to study it. Since 2002 the number of English candidates entered for a GCSE in geography has fallen from 215,056 to 174,347 in 2010.²³⁸ The Society welcomes, for example, the heartening news from the Ark Schools that the average take-up in geography GCSE has risen from 15% to 22% in 2010.²³⁹ From anecdotal evidence we understand other schools are already reporting or anticipating an increase in take-up too. We welcome inclusion of information about the E-Bac in KS4 guidance and options materials that schools are providing to pupils and their parents²⁴⁰ In all, it is good news for geography.

4.2 The Society believes the E-Bac will promote to head teachers and school governors the important contribution that geography makes to young peoples’ education. The active support of head teachers is a necessary precondition if geography is to be supported and well taught. For example, a key finding in Ofsted’s latest subject report on geography, identified that “*Where provision (in geography) was improving, it was usually because head teachers acknowledged the value of geography, invested in subject-specific training and monitored the curriculum effectively to ensure coverage of and progression through the programme of study.*”²⁴¹

4.3 The E-Bac has a particularly important role in re-establishing geography as a GCSE course in the relatively small, but increasing, number of schools that currently do not enter any GCSE candidates in this subject. The Society is concerned that currently there are 137 maintained schools and 19 academies that did not enter any pupils for this qualification in 2009.²⁴²

4.4 There is a marked difference in the proportion of pupils who study geography at GCSE across lower and higher income bands. The Society thinks the E-Bac can help address this. For example, pupils in high performing maintained and shire-county schools are more likely to study geography than their peers in lower income or inner-city schools. For example, only 9% of pupils in Knowsley (142 candidates) were entered for a geography GCSE, compared to 20% of pupils in Inner London LEAs (4,681 candidates), 27% of pupils in Outer London LEAs (13,676 candidates)²⁴³ and 31% of pupils (1,238 candidates) in the East Riding of Yorkshire.

4.5 To maximize the successful provision of GCSE geography, through the E-Bac, the recent Ofsted recommendations should be enacted. Namely, that schools should improve the quality of provision in KS3, so preparing pupils well for KS4; provide subject-specific support and professional development to improve teachers’ confidence and expertise; and maximise opportunities for fieldwork to enhance learning and improve motivation. All are essential, but enabling teachers to undertake subject-specific CPD will require a change in approach to CPD in many schools.

4.6 The Society has proven experience of successfully providing the subject specific support and professional development that Ofsted recommends, through our work on the DfE supported Action Plan for Geography.²⁴⁴ This is a subject disciplinary initiative focused on the teaching and learning of geography in English schools and it has involved 1,700+ English secondary schools (50% of the maintained sector) in face-to-face CPD, curriculum development and presentations by Geography Ambassadors. More than 5,000 teachers have attended Action Plan CPD events and in evaluations of this CPD over 90% of teachers rated it as either good or excellent. Geography Ambassadors have provided presentations on key topics and about the relevance of geography to further study and careers to some 107,000 pupils. The Action Plan’s online resources and support, have received more than 1.25 million “user sessions”.²⁴⁵ 95% of teachers who have used this website and provide feedback on it rated it as good or excellent. The Action Plan has had a positive impact on the range

²³⁷ (Hansard 31 Jan 2011: Column 553W)

²³⁸ Joint Council for Qualifications examination results www.jcq.org.uk

²³⁹ Amanda Spielman. Research and development director Ark Schools TES Letters 4.3.2011

²⁴⁰ For example the following was included in material provided to pupils and parents at Graveney School, London. “Key Stage Four Course Choices ENGLISH BACCALAUREATE (EBAC). As you will be aware, the government is planning to introduce an overarching certificate to be known as the English Baccalaureate from 2012. This will be awarded to students who achieve A*-C GCSE passes in English, Maths, two sciences, a modern or classical language, and either history or geography. It will therefore recognise the student’s achievement across a broad range of subject areas. Although some of these subjects are compulsory at Graveney, the school believes it is important that students choose optional subjects which they enjoy and at which they are likely to succeed. However, we strongly recommend that when you are discussing Key Stage 4 optional choices with your son/daughter you include the possibility of achieving the English Baccalaureate as one of your considerations.”

²⁴¹ Geography: Learning to make a world of difference pg6 2011

²⁴² Ofsted: Learning to make a world of difference 2011. The number of schools not entering pupils for geography GCSE has risen from 2007 when 97 maintained schools and six academies to the 2009 figures of 137 maintained and 19 academies.

²⁴³ Department for Education (2010) House of Commons Library Deposited paper DEP 2010–2161

²⁴⁴ The Action Plan for Geography 2006–11 is funded by DfE and jointly and equally run by the Royal Geographical Society (with IBG) and the Geographical Association.

²⁴⁵ A “user session” is a discrete period of time when one individual user has access the website and is browsing its materials.

of support provided to teachers, and their confidence about being able to maintain or improve the quality and status of geography.²⁴⁶

4.7 It should be noted that Ofsted recently commented on the impact of the Action Plan for Geography, stating that, “*the best geography was usually seen in schools which were participating in the professional development programme offered through the Action Plan for Geography, in specialist humanities schools or where the school shared good practice with local partner schools.*”²⁴⁷ Given the investment made by government in supporting geography teaching and learning through the Action Plan, this is heartening; but there remains still work to be done to improve quality among remaining underperforming schools and teachers.

4.8 The maintenance of subject-based professional standards, centred on up to date subject knowledge and pedagogy, is another essential element to high quality teaching in the subject. In our role as the Professional Body for geography, the Society has been offering the professional accreditation for individual Geography Teachers—Chartered Geographer (Teacher)—for the past five years. This accreditation was the first “subject specific” Chartered accreditation to be offered to teachers. It provides a robust and externally assessed and validated mechanism for supporting and recognising geography teachers’ professional standing and ongoing development. In addition to Chartered Geographer (Teacher) other comparable Chartered schemes, all meeting the requirements of the Privy Council for Chartered accreditation, are available for science and mathematics teachers and under development for history and English teachers. They will soon provide a ready-made suite of accreditations across most of the English Baccalaureate subjects.

4.9 There is some, as yet anecdotal, evidence concerning two possible negative implications for schools and pupils of the introduction of the E-Bac in relation to geography. These are largely related to the “down sides of success” however they still present potential challenges. They are:

- (a) reallocation of subject specialist geography teachers into expanded GCSE classes, leaving more non-specialist teaching at KS3. This could exacerbate the weaknesses in geography at KS3 that Ofsted has identified. The same may apply to fieldwork, leaving fewer fieldwork opportunities at KS3.
- (b) A shortage of geography teachers. We have had Head teachers report to us that recruitment of quality specialist teachers to geography posts is often harder than to recognised “shortage subjects” such as maths and the sciences. Combine a greater demand for teachers owing to increased GCSE numbers, plus the continued reduction in the number of initial teacher education places provided for geography, and real problems in specialist teacher numbers in geography could emerge quickly. The Society welcomes Government plans to increase the numbers of teachers trained through Teach First, and we would be pleased to offer our support to that training and professional development to ensure a good supply of quality geography teachers.

4.10 The implications for employers and potential employees of the E-Bac containing geography would appear to be entirely positive. Young people will be trained with the knowledge and skills required by employers. Recent studies of graduates have demonstrated the employability of geographers.

- 4.10.1 A survey by Esri UK, the leading Geographical Information Systems business, (published November 2010) of 200 business leaders across the UK public and private sectors showed that the graduate skills/knowledge they are looking for in future employees are critical thinking (78% of businesses leaders), advanced analytical skills (76%), understanding and interpreting complex data (71%), advanced technology skills (57%) and understanding socio-economic environments (54%)—all of which are gained through a geography degree.
- 4.10.2 The NERC/ Environmental Research Funders report (2010) on professional skills needs in the environment sector, which draws on the perspectives of more than 140 employers, highlights 15 critical skills gaps. A training in geography contributes significantly to the development of at least seven of those skills areas.
- 4.10.3 The most recent Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) survey of university graduates (2010)²⁴⁸ showed the unemployment rates for geographers to be among the lowest recorded, second only to law.
- 4.10.4 Independent analysis of a randomly selected sample from the UK Quarterly Labour Force Survey (First Quarter 2010) further substantiates employability. This survey is of a sample of more than 100,000 residents in the UK of all ages. Geography graduates show a relatively high employment rate: 85% are working either in full time or part time jobs, compared with an overall average for graduates of 82%. Using graduates of sociology, media studies, history, and chemistry/physics as a varied group of four comparators within the analysis 67% of geography graduates in employment work in professional and managerial jobs, within the comparator group geography is second highest to chemistry/physics (78%) and significantly higher than media studies (54%) and

²⁴⁶ The Action Plan final evaluation (March 2011) has identified that 76% of respondents feel there is more support provided by the subject bodies for geography, when compared with four years ago. 96% of respondents feel either very or quite confident about being able to maintain or improve the quality and status of geography in their school. 46% of respondents reported increased numbers for GCSE, 20% similar numbers, 34% a decline (note: this survey was completed before E-Bac effect has been seen). 75% of respondents reported increased numbers at A Level, 7% similar numbers, 18% a decline (ditto). 246 teachers completed the evaluation from a cohort of 2,000 a response of 12%.

²⁴⁷ Geography: Learning to make a world of difference Ofsted February 2011

²⁴⁸ This survey collects employment data 6 months after graduation.

sociology (56%). 74% of geography graduates earn more than £20,000 per year, above the overall average of 70%.²⁴⁹

5. INTERNATIONAL COMPARATORS FOR THE E-BAC

5.1 The Society notes and welcomes the fact that the Wolf Review identified “retention of a large common (ie academic) core is consistent with recent developments and current practice among our European and other OECD partner nations.”²⁵⁰

5.2 The Society also welcomes the attention the Department for Education is giving to learning from high performing international educational systems. We welcome Dr Tim Oates’ comments that “in all high-performing (international) systems, the fundamentals of the subjects are strongly emphasized, have substantial time allocation, and are the focus of considerable attention in learning programmes”.²⁵¹

March 2011

Letter to Michael Gove MP from Specialist Schools and Academies Trust, London region

I am writing on behalf of the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust (SSAT) London Headteachers Steering Group, which represents over 400 London Secondary Headteachers, all of whom are members of the SSAT London Heads Forum. As Chair, I represent the London Regional Steering Group on the SSAT National Headteacher Steering Group.

At our steering group meeting on 18 January, we spent considerable time discussing the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) as proposed in the White Paper “The Importance of Teaching”.

I am aware that the chair of the SSAT National Headteacher Steering Group, John Townsley, wrote to you on 10 December about the EBacc and that John has received a response from the Minister of State for Schools inviting dialogue with officials on the content of the EBacc measure. As London school leaders, we will aim to make a constructive contribution to that dialogue. However, I would also like to make you directly aware of the following strongly-held views of London school leaders, some but not all of which were represented in the earlier communication.

Whilst perhaps understanding a desire to look at a pluralist model of attainment measures, we feel that as proposed, the EBacc is far too narrow a measure, (a measure not a baccalaureate), serving the needs of a minority of children.

Firstly, we are concerned that Applied Science and Applied Languages are not included. These are well established practical courses in the context of strong academic rigour. Likewise, the lack of acceptance of any equally well established BTEC courses, (such as Science) which are in no way “soft options”, but rather are about appropriate styles of learning and assessment. Different children of similar ability often learn in different ways and only via recognition of this, in science for example, will we produce the sonographers, engineers and technicians for our future. The inclusion within performance tables of the EBacc in its present form clearly pre-empts the Wolf review and runs counter to education being about developing appropriate pathways for young people with clear progression routes into further learning.

Secondly, the pillars of the EBacc are far too narrow and somewhat atavistic. Whilst some community languages are now recognised, performance tables already reflect language GCSE, and indeed science, and to Venn them as a collective measure will lead to inappropriate compulsion and a perverse incentive that cements disparity.

Thirdly, we believe that the view of humanities remains restrictive and arbitrary. Clearly a humanities pillar must include History and Geography, but should also include RE and a number of other options.

Finally it is shocking that creative subjects are precluded from this measure. To label them as “complementary” is demeaning in the extreme. Music, art and drama are demanding academic subjects in schools in 2011, one of our country’s great success stories, and huge contributors to the UK’s economy.

You have expressed concern about so called “false equivalences” We would argue that raising the status of Biblical Hebrew and Ancient Greek above that of Music, RE, Art or Drama creates a false equivalence and undermines the credibility of the EBacc measure.

We would be happy to discuss our shared concerns with you. A copy of this letter goes to John Townsley, Chair of the SSAT National Headteacher Steering Group, and Elizabeth Reid, Chief Executive of SSAT, with whom it has been discussed.

February 2011

²⁴⁹ This analysis was carried out in January 2011 by staff at Birkbeck College, London University

²⁵⁰ Review of Vocational Education—Wolf Report pg 11 2011

²⁵¹ Could Do Better: Using international comparisons to refine the national curriculum in England 2010 Cambridge Assessment.

Written evidence submitted by OCR

INTRODUCTION

1. As the second largest UK awarding body, OCR designs, produces and assesses qualifications, particularly GCSEs, A Levels, but also a wide range of vocational and basic skills qualifications. We meet the needs of learners of all ages, working with 13,000 schools, colleges and other institutions. These close links with curriculum and learning have made us very aware of the impact that the introduction of the E-Bac has already had upon the curriculum choices being offered to young people in the critical 14–16 phase of their development.

2. In our recent submission to the Wolf review we expressed the following views based upon our work and experience as an awarding body:

- “We have no wish to see the current approach to school performance tables continue. We have long argued against a process which tries to use one measure (individual candidate performance) to stand proxy for another (overall performance of a school).”
- “Accountability measures, based upon qualification achievement always risk imposing perverse incentives in which schools may be tempted to act in their own interests against the interests of their pupils.”

3. Whilst the introduction of the English Baccalaureate in December 2010 marks a significant change from earlier measures of attainment, these comments remain pertinent in considering the broader impact its introduction may have on the curriculum from 2011–12 onwards.

4. Our submission is based upon evidence that we have gained from:

- An independent telephone survey we undertook with a cross section of just over three hundred 14–19 providers of all kinds—from which 49 detailed responses have been elicited.
- Recording enquiries/concerns from our school and colleges since the publication of the list of qualifications eligible for inclusion within the E-Bac.

RESULTS OF OCR SURVEY

5. OCR has undertaken a telephone survey with a cross section of schools taken from the DfE Secondary Schools KS4 Performance Tables 2010 to find out their response to the introduction of the E-Bac. We approached a full range of types of schools and included both schools whose performance:

- had been significantly affected in a negative manner by the E-Bac measure;
- or had remained the same, or improved.

We sought to find out their views of the E-Bac, what they saw as its strengths and weaknesses, what impact if any it would have upon the curriculum they offered and when they might undertake any changes to their current offer.

6. The **key findings** that emerged were:

(a) *Curriculum offer*

Two thirds of the schools in the survey already offered all the subjects within the E-Bac. There was recognition that the major impact would be in respect of options offered to students—schools generally confirmed these would be more prescribed and focused around the subjects listed in the E-Bac.

(b) *Impact of measurement*

Two thirds of the schools expressed concerns about the use of the E-Bac to measure school performance. Two themes emerged—the retrospective measurement of 2010–11 performance, which was seen as unfair, and the limitations imposed by the range of subjects counted within the E-Bac.

There was a recurring view that the E-Bac focuses attention on the academic and does not offer the basis for a balanced curriculum for the whole of the cohort—other measures of performance are needed.

(c) *Strengths of E-Bac measure*

There was recognition that the measure strengthens the position of the academic curriculum within schools and an acknowledgement that this was the policy intention. The inclusion of a language within the measure was widely welcomed and it was felt that language teaching, particularly the delivery of a modern foreign language, would benefit from a reversal in the recent downward trend in uptake. There was some concern, however, that there would be a corresponding increase in the number of people studying languages at key stage 4 who were disaffected with the subject and failed to achieve the GCSE.

(d) Concerns of impact

Three themes emerged—the limited range of subjects that are recognised within the measure; the absence of any applied or vocational learning and the belief that this will result in a narrower more limited offer to students.

Concerns expressed in terms of range of subjects focussed around the impact of:

- the absence of any creative arts subjects; and
- the limited range of humanities subjects that are included with particular concerns about the exclusion of Religious Studies.

The absence of *applied or vocational learning* was regularly commented upon leading to a view that the E-Bac would lead to a narrowing of choice which would not suit all learners. The concern expressed is that if this remains the *dominant* measure, schools will limit their curriculum leading to a downturn in achievement and an increase in disengagement.

(e) Speed of changes

A quarter of the schools surveyed were not going to have to change their offer in the light of the introduction of the E-Bac. Of those remaining, two thirds are either planning changes or are already implementing changes to ensure their curriculum offers students the opportunity to achieve the E-Bac. All of these indicated that these changes would be in place for the 2011–12 academic year.

CONCERNS EXPRESSED BY SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

7. OCR provides support to schools and colleges using our qualifications by answering queries and receiving feedback through our Customer Contact Centre. Below is a summary of the main concerns raised with us since the introduction of the E-Bac.

IMPACT UPON LANGUAGE TEACHING

8. Asset Languages, introduced in 2004, as part of the National Languages Strategy, is a broad portfolio of language qualifications, that at Preliminary and Intermediate stages has been included in the Key Stage 4 language indicators/measures. All qualifications are based 100% on terminal assessment.

9. Take up has been strong within a broad range of secondary schools (78,591 registrations in 2009–10). Teachers report that the greater emphasis on practical language skills is preferable to the more traditional approach of the GCSE. Schools have indicated that if the E-Bac remains the key measure of school performance they will reluctantly return to the GCSE despite concerns about suitability and appropriateness for learners.

10. There has also been an increase in the take up of our NVQ Language units and qualifications. This indicates that rather than language teaching being removed from the curriculum, schools have successfully moved to delivering a skills-based approach in recent years.

IMPACT ON APPLIED SCIENCE

11. We have already seen examples of schools switching large numbers of students away from applied science courses, including examples where students are six months into these programmes. It would appear that decisions are being made to meet E-Bac requirements and not the needs of students.

12. The GCSE Additional Applied Science is a popular alternative to GCSE Additional Science (which is included within the E-Bac). This applied science specification is designed for students who respond well to a concrete rather than abstract learning style—the course is shown to engage and motivate such students; it has a high proportion of internal assessment and is demanding in terms of both content and assessment. It is not designed for lower-attaining candidates—candidates who do well may progress to GCE A/AS Applied Science.

13. Similarly, OCR Nationals in Science at Level 2 are used by schools to provide a science curriculum to support students for whom “academic” GCSEs are judged to be unsuitable. Students taking these courses respond well to an applied approach to science where concepts are related to everyday life and work and may achieve good results. Again, it is not designed for lower-attaining candidates and candidates who do well may progress to GCE A/AS Applied Science.

14. The fact that these two qualifications are not within the E-Bac will mean that, where candidates have the potential to achieve a Grade C or better at GCSE, they will be steered away from them, although the applied nature of the content and the methods of assessment may be more appropriate for their individual learning styles and interests. Clearly, there is a policy intention to prefer academic, traditional approaches to more practical ones, but care must be taken. It is important that *all* young people leave school with some form of scientific literacy. Ofsted’s recently published report “Successful Science”²⁵² found that the quality of science education has improved over the past three years. The authors identified that the best science education has scientific enquiry and other aspects of “how science works” at its heart. The report’s findings are based on an

²⁵² “Successful Science: An Evaluation of Science Education in England 2007–10”. Ofsted January 2011

evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of science in 94 primary schools, 94 secondary schools, two special schools and 31 colleges visited between 2007 and 2010.

IMPACT UPON RELIGIOUS STUDIES

15. Whilst the delivery of Religious Studies remains mandatory, we have received numerous expressions of concern from schools, that in response to the introduction of the E-Bac, less curriculum time will be allocated to study and fewer candidates will be entered for examination.

16. There is a very strong feeling that this is an outcome that the government would not have intended and a desire for OCR to represent the views of numerous schools who use our qualifications in this curriculum area to highlight this concern.

OCR'S VIEW

17. The introduction of the English Baccalaureate is a welcome and wholly appropriate means of rewarding young people who have succeeded across a number of strong academic subjects.

18. However, there remains strong evidence that its use as a major performance indicator may result in the removal of breadth from students' learning experience and the driving out of well established applied learning routes that have been proved to aid progression. This will be to the detriment of all learners—even those seen to be highly academic. Getting the list of subjects for inclusion right is one issue—but recognising and valuing achievement *outside* the scope of the E-Bac is of primary importance. Every learner needs to have access to a programme that provides breadth well over and above the five GCSEs proposed within the measure. This will ensure that both engagement and progression are addressed in the resulting curriculum offer.

19. If we are to persist with school performance measures, other measures will be required to encourage the use of the full range of approaches to teaching and learning. Both the survey we conducted and the customer concerns we have recorded underline the fear that the benefits of applied learning, in particular, may be lost to the detriment of all learners. This view is also expressed in Professor Wolf's recently published Review of Vocational Education²⁵³ in which she cites Goodhart's Law:

*"If a single measure is dominant, it invites gaming or worse: Goodhart's law states that, if a single measure is used for control, it will become corrupted. As the Royal Statistical Society concluded in its report on performance indicators, good practice therefore requires the use of **several measures** to indicate performance on an underlying construct—in this case, successful teaching and learning by a school's pupils."*

March 2011

Written evidence submitted by Mrs S Bamforth

I am a retired schoolmistress who witnessed, over a number of years, the sorry reduction of opportunities to enjoy, learn and appreciate music in schools.

To drop music from the GCSE syllabus would be to deprive pupils of an intellectual, healthy and social skill which lasts a lifetime.

If music to GCSE standard were not available in state schools, only those children from affluent or middle-class backgrounds, where parents can afford to pay tuition fees will benefit. Music would quickly become elitist.

How many periods of science are timetabled in the school week? How many pupils follow science when they leave? How many people of all ages enjoy singing, going to concerts and gigs? More, I believe.

5 April 2011

Written evidence submitted by Hampshire Music Service

Music at GCSE level is a challenging, rigorous academic subject which contributes to a broad, excellent education. The decision by the Secretary of State for Education not to include music in the English Baccalaureate is of grave concern and I hope that the Education Select Committee will consider this matter.

The government's proposal for an "EBacc" certificate raises two broad questions:

- (a) is it justifiable in principle: will the focus on a specific group of subjects at KS4 lead to higher and broader attainment for all young people; and if so, what subjects should be specified?
- (b) what will the practical consequences of the proposal be: will young people choose different subjects at KS4; and if so, what impact will this have on wider educational provision?

²⁵³ "Review of Vocational Education"—The Wolf Report—March 2011, page 136

This response specifically reviews these two questions from a musical perspective: is it justifiable to exclude music from the EBacc, and what will the practical consequences be for music provision across the secondary phase if it is excluded?

Is the idea justifiable in principle?

No philosophical or research rationale has been provided for the choice of subjects in the proposed EBacc for 16 year-olds. There has been talk of academic rigour, and of providing access to “academic pathways for all”, but the rationale for the specific selection of subjects has not been publicly declared.

If there were to be such a declaration, it would presumably focus around logical and critical thinking. These are important attributes for all young people to develop, but a student with an EBacc would only be showing these attributes: they would not be demonstrating their capacity with regard to:

- Creativity and culture;
- Moral, philosophical or faith issues;
- The importance of physical well-being; and
- Technology and / or design for a specific purpose

As such, the EBacc would only demonstrate those aspects of “intelligence” that are part of what international research on multiple intelligences would call “logico-mathematical” or “linguistic” capability. The other five major areas of intelligence (all identified as possessing unique brain functions) would not be recognised. As much as anything, therefore, the present selection of subjects recognises what the student cannot do as much as what they can do.

Seen from this perspective, the specific omission of music from the “permissible subjects” is questionable. It has a long history of academic rigour, recognised by the foremost universities, and recent neuroscience has confirmed the initial findings of Howard Gardiner that music is a unique function of humanity. It requires logic, problem solving and critical thinking. Significantly, however, it also develops other attributes which are essential for modern life: creativity, team work, empathy—key attributes for success in business and society. A student choosing four of the proposed EBacc subjects and music would therefore be demonstrating far greater skills and long-term academic and personal potential than a student choosing simply five subjects from the proposed areas.

The current list of subjects for the EBacc will not therefore lead to higher and broader attainment for all young people—it would actually restrict it. By including music as part of the EBacc, some at least of the broader attainments that business and society need would be recognised.

What will the consequence of the proposed five subject areas be?

At pupil level, this will result in pupils choosing subjects at which they show less potential than in other subjects. For instance, a student may be choosing their last subject and deciding between music (predicted grade: A/B) and history (predicted grade: B/C). If, by selecting history, they would complete the EBacc, they will come under enormous pressure to select history—by both schools (wishing to improve their league table status) and parents (wishing to allegedly maximise their offspring’s chances of entering university).

At school level, this could be catastrophic for small subject departments—such as music. If fewer pupils opt for the subject because it is not part of the EBacc, more schools will decide that it is not viable to run the course because of low numbers. There is increasing evidence that the growing pressure on school budgets is leading to decisions that minimum numbers of 10 or more are required for a subject to run at KS4. With vocational courses (such as BTEC and NCFE courses) also now being given questionable status, there will be even less chance for subjects such as music to survive at KS4. As the Henley Review noted: “I believe that Music should be included as one of the subjects that go to make up the new English Baccalaureate. Otherwise, there is a risk that the subject may be devalued.”

If music teachers are no longer required at KS4; and schools have already changed to a two-year KS3 (meaning that no music teaching is required in Year 9); and a school has become an academy which is not required to teach the national curriculum: why would it feel obliged to retain music as a curriculum subject at all? It might argue that it could save costs by making all curriculum music teachers redundant, and simply offer instrumental / vocal tuition to those who want (and can afford) it. A few opportunities for extended-curriculum ensembles and choirs would satisfy the few artistically-inclined parents, and would be much cheaper to run with non-qualified musicians.

The ultimate consequence, therefore, is that a combination of the current proposal for the EBacc and other pressures on schools would result in music simply disappearing from a number of secondary schools. It is impossible to square this with the government’s avowed intent to provide effective music education for all students, and to improve what it regards as the current “patchy” provision.

THE SOLUTION

There are three possible ways of resolving this situation:

- (a) drop the idea of the EBacc completely. It is of questionable value, has no coherent rationale and will narrow the curriculum to a significant extent at KS4;
- (b) change the fifth “subject area” to be “Humanities and the Arts”; and
- (c) change the EBacc so that it is awarded for six or more GCSE subjects: the five proposed areas plus one more of the student’s choosing. Although the statistics have not been verified, it would seem very likely that most students with the capacity to “pass” five GCSE subjects already also “pass” six subjects. This proposal would therefore not penalise many students, but would enable all students to show not only their traditional academic prowess, but also their wider academic, intelligence and personal prowess.

If it does go ahead I urge the Committee to encourage the Secretary of State to include music within the English Baccalaureate.

26 April 2011

Written evidence submitted by Anna Blakemore

I am writing in support of the campaign to include Music in the English Baccalaureate.

When I was 17 I attended a meeting with my form tutor to discuss my plans for university. Between us lay my school reports: As and A*s across the board at GCSE and straight As at AS-level. I was asked what I was planning to apply for and when I declared my interest for Music the teacher dismissed the idea on the grounds that I should apply for something more academic given my continuous record of outstanding academic achievement.

Fortunately I did not listen to this teacher and, six years later, I have graduated from Oxford University with a BA in music and have started a PGCE course in music specialism. I have gone into teaching with the goal to share my passion and interest for the highly intensive and incredibly rich subject, and to encourage students to continue to pursue the study of this subject as I truly believe that it is not only a pursuit that is highly rewarding and enjoyable, but one that is extremely challenging along the way. However, amidst my life on “the other side of the desk”, I have the strange sensation that I am 17 again and am being forced to justify the subject that has been at the centre of education since the times of antiquity.

Now I am teaching I am only too aware of the challenges that GCSE music presents. Students are required to navigate their way through the set or suggested works of the syllabus, calling upon in-depth knowledge of music theory, extensive understanding of the development of music, and highly secure analytical skills. Composition and performance relies on the above as well as excellent musicianship, emotionally mature creativity, and the essential ICT skills which are now needed. Music is a subject which overlaps with Mathematics, English, Languages and History—are these not subjects in the EBac?—as well as being a subject in its own right. It is a subject which requires students to make cross-discipline connections and which relies on tremendous amounts of dedication and self-motivation.

Over the years I have seen students virtually live in the music room, practise for hours of their own volition and freely return to school for rehearsals and concerts. Over the past year I have taught students to translate black dots into meaningful arguments enriched with historical, religious and cultural references, and to transform a blank computer screen into a display of personal expression and extensive knowledge of music theory and conventions. And, recently, I have begun to wonder how quickly students will lose faith in music when they see that it is not valued as it should be. The ramifications of this should not be taken lightly; students will lose the opportunity to be stretched academically, schools will miss out of the chance to foster active music departments full of dedicated and motivated young people, and the country will skip a generation of musically talented and culturally knowledgeable people.

The study of music is a way to take part in a rich cultural heritage, to develop highly specific abilities, and to cultivate knowledge and skills relevant to a broad range of subjects. Don’t children deserve the opportunity to be encouraged to choose a subject that will only be beneficial for their academic, creative and personal development?

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter.

26 April 2011

Written evidence submitted by Elisabeth Wigley, Deputy Director (Music Service), Merton Music Foundation

Music at GCSE level is a challenging, rigorous academic subject which contributes to a broad, excellent education. The decision by the Secretary of State for Education not to include music in the English Baccalaureate is of grave concern and we hope that the Education Select Committee will consider this matter.

As a former Head of Expressive Arts in a London Boys Comprehensive School I know from firsthand experience the benefits to pupils of studying an arts subject at GCSE. The school had a policy of encouraging pupils to take one arts subject as we believed that the different types of learning gained from studying music in particular had a positive effect on all other areas of their academic performance as well as being an enjoyable and fulfilling subject in its own right.

Music is an important and difficult academic subject which incorporates creativity. It also has numerous extrinsic benefits: improving numeracy and literacy, supporting social cohesion and developing children's emotional intelligence. In my experience it has proved transformative for some groups of pupils, particularly those who find engaging with more "formal" aspects of the curriculum very challenging. In a few cases it has enabled students at the risk of exclusion being able to remain at school, whilst supporting the more able to pursue a high level of excellence (with students at the level of achievement necessary to join the National Youth Orchestra) working together in the same classroom.

In the UK, music education is world class and generates both the audiences of the future as well as the professional musicians who contribute so significantly to our constantly growing creative and cultural economy.

There is no doubt that the English Baccalaureate as it is currently framed will lead to schools deciding not to offer music at GCSE level. The net result will be the loss of the very real benefits of a music education and an adverse impact on educational standards generally. It will diminish access and equality of opportunity for those talented in this area of the curriculum and impoverish the cultural life of the school. In my current role of Deputy Director of the Music Service I work closely with all the High schools and know that the decision as it currently stands will do untold harm to the provision of a varied and wide-ranging curriculum on offer to pupils in our London Borough.

Including Music GCSE in the English Baccalaureate will not jeopardise the intent of the Government—pupils will still study a broad-range of subjects which remain challenging, rigorous and academic. Darren Henley, in his independent review of music education published in February, made the key finding that Music "should be included as one of the subjects that go to make up the new English Baccalaureate." And the Government responded by saying that music is an "enriching and valuable academic subject".

I urge the Committee to encourage the Secretary of State to include music within the English Baccalaureate.

9 April 2011

Written evidence submitted by the Fischer Family Trust

BACKGROUND

Fischer Family Trust provides a wide range of analyses to support self-evaluation and target setting. The analyses are available mainly through an FFT Live and are available to all maintained schools and local authorities in England and Wales.

Over 96% of secondary schools make regular use of FFT Live. Since the introduction of English Baccalaureate (EBacc) FFT have:

- Introduced reports which provide a summary of attainment and entry in EBacc (covering a number of years (2003–04 to 2009–10).
- Piloted reports which provide estimates for both entry and attainment in EBacc.
- Undertaken analysis to examine variations in entry, attainment and progress for specific groups of pupils—those entitled to Free School Meals (FSM) and those with English as an Additional Language (EAL).

The analyses in this report cover the period from 2003–04 to 2009–10. The English Baccalaureate was not introduced and defined until 2009–10, so calculations for years prior to this are based upon applying the 2009–10 definitions to historical data.

This paper has been produced in response to a request to provide evidence to the House of Commons Education Committee.

Dr. Michael Treadaway
Director of Research
Fischer Family Trust

EVIDENCE

Looking at data for all maintained schools in England, the following table summarises outcomes for a range of indicators:

EXAM_YEAR	Year of Examination						
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
PUPILS	591,301	588,699	598,911	601,135	597,390	577,621	577,073
ENTRY—Overall							
ENTRY_GCSE	8.03	7.86	7.72	7.67	7.57	7.50	7.36
ENTRY_GCSE_VOC	9.16	9.24	9.25	9.01	8.45	8.24	8.00
ENTRY_S96							
	9.41	9.48	9.64	9.88	10.08	10.56	11.09
ENTRY_GCSE_P							
ENTRY_GCSE_VOC_P	83.2%	81.3%	78.7%	76.9%	74.5%	71.0%	66.9%
	94.0%	94.2%	92.8%	89.3%	83.0%	78.0%	72.7%
ENTRY—EBacc							
P_EB_ENT	39.8%	32.7%	27.5%	24.5%	21.9%	22.2%	21.9%
P_EB_ATT	17.9%	17.1%	15.7%	14.7%	14.3%	15.0%	15.2%
P_EB_ENT_EN	93.4%	93.7%	94.0%	94.9%	95.0%	95.4%	96.1%
P_EB_ENT_MA	94.5%	94.8%	95.1%	95.9%	96.2%	96.5%	97.5%
P_EB_ENT_SC	81.8%	77.5%	75.6%	74.4%	64.5%	64.2%	63.4%
P_EB_ENT_HU	53.9%	51.9%	50.7%	49.4%	48.3%	48.1%	47.9%
P_EB_ENT_LA	67.0%	57.0%	47.8%	43.2%	41.3%	41.0%	40.1%
ATTAINMENT—EBACC							
P_EB_ATT_EN	54.3%	55.7%	56.7%	58.1%	59.8%	61.8%	66.0%
P_EB_ATT_MA	47.4%	49.8%	51.5%	53.8%	56.2%	58.8%	62.5%
P_EB_ATT_SC	44.8%	44.4%	43.9%	44.1%	43.5%	44.1%	45.7%
P_EB_ATT_HU	32.0%	31.9%	31.6%	31.3%	31.3%	31.5%	31.9%
P_EB_ATT_LA	32.8%	32.0%	29.0%	27.2%	26.9%	27.8%	27.7%

It is clear from this data that:

- The overall number of pupils entering all five EBacc elements has dropped during the period from 2004 to 2010.
- Much of this arises from the drop in entries for Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) which followed a removal of the requirement for all pupils to study an MFL subject at Key Stage 4.
- There have also been reductions in the level of entry for Science and for Humanities. The changes in entry for science reflect an increasing proportion of pupils studying Applied Science and vocational science courses such as BTEC courses.
- Overall entry for English and Mathematics GCSE has increased during the same period.

If we look at a subset of this data and calculate the % of pupils who attained EBacc as a proportion of those entered, we find:

<i>Year</i>	<i>Entry</i>	<i>Attained</i>	<i>Attained / Entry</i>
2004	39.75%	17.88%	45%
2005	32.72%	17.12%	52%
2006	27.45%	15.74%	57%
2007	24.46%	14.73%	60%
2008	21.92%	14.27%	65%
2009	22.20%	14.96%	67%
2010	21.90%	15.18%	69%

The increase—in Attained / Entry—reflects two factors:

- Improvements in the % of pupils getting C+ grades.
- The fact that the drop in overall EB entry has been more for lower prior-attaining students, hence the overall “ability profile” of those entered for English Baccalaureate has shifted to “more able” students.

Looking at the same data for FSM pupils (around 78,000 pupils in each year) we find:

<i>Year</i>	<i>Entry</i>	<i>Attained</i>	<i>Attained / Entry</i>
2004	25.5%	4.9%	19.0%
2005	20.4%	4.5%	22.2%
2006	15.1%	4.4%	28.8%
2007	11.7%	3.9%	33.7%
2008	10.2%	4.0%	38.6%
2009	8.5%	3.7%	43.7%
2010	8.4%	3.8%	45.3%

This shows that, for FSM pupils, overall “entry” rate for EBacc is lower than for other pupils and that, looking only at pupils entered for all five elements, the % of FSM pupils who attain C or above is lower than for other pupils.

If we compare data for pupils with similar prior-attainment by looking only at pupils with KS2 attainment in the top quartile of all pupils we find that substantial differences between FSM and non-FSM pupils remain.

Pupils in the top 25% of attainers at KS2

All FSM pupils

<i>Year</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Entry</i>	<i>Attained</i>	<i>Attained / Entry</i>
2002	6,640	47.5%	25.4%	53.6%
2003	6,981	42.6%	24.3%	56.9%
2004	7,023	35.5%	22.9%	64.6%
2005	6,986	31.7%	21.2%	66.8%
2006	6,745	30.1%	21.5%	71.6%
2007	6,515	27.6%	20.0%	72.6%
2008	6,550	28.0%	20.4%	72.9%
2009	6,921	28.3%	21.2%	74.9%

All non-FSM pupils

<i>Year</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Entry</i>	<i>Attained</i>	<i>Attained / Entry</i>
2002	125,357	67.7%	50.9%	75.2%
2003	130,138	65.2%	50.3%	77.1%
2004	129,030	58.7%	48.0%	81.8%
2005	131,297	53.5%	44.8%	83.7%

<i>All non-FSM pupils</i>				
<i>Year</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Entry</i>	<i>Attained</i>	<i>Attained / Entry</i>
2006	132,530	49.8%	42.2%	84.8%
2007	132,202	47.9%	41.2%	86.0%
2008	127,596	49.3%	42.8%	86.8%
2009	127,694	48.8%	42.7%	87.5%

Following this initial analysis, FFT have investigated a range of areas in relation to English Baccalaureate—with a view to using the outcomes to (a) inform schools and others and (b) where appropriate, help to develop new reports and analyses which schools and others might use.

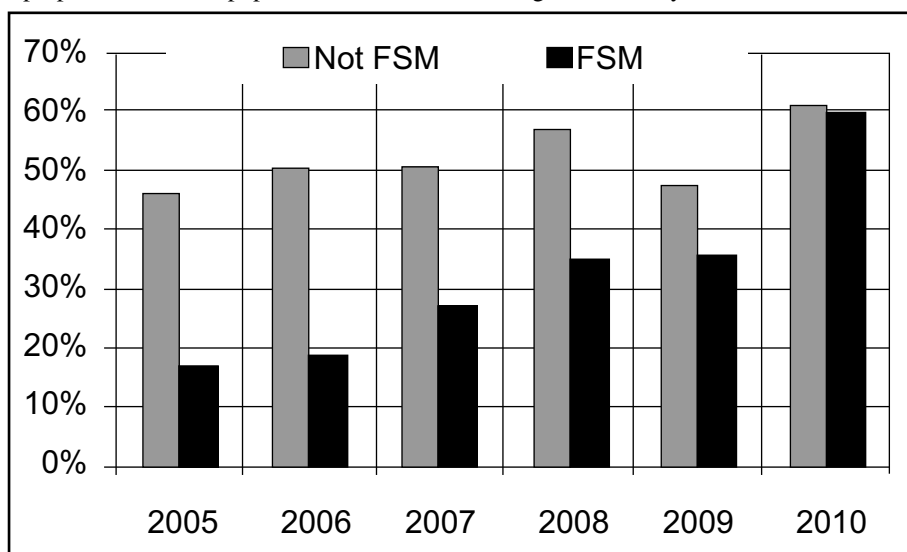
Interim conclusions from this work include:

- Vocational Science GCSE (ie Applied Science—not BTEC Science) is, in terms of “subject difficulty” similar to GCSE sciences ie the attainment of pupils in Applied Science is very similar to their average attainment in all other GCSEs which they take:
 - Including Applied Science makes a very small difference to national outcomes but makes a large difference to a small number of schools.
- Including Religious Studies GCSE makes a significant difference nationally and a large difference for many schools.
- Entry for English Baccalaureate (EB) is much higher for non-FSM pupils. There are also interesting variations between different ethnicity groups and for students from different socio-economic backgrounds (using ACORN data which provides better gradation than FSM entitlement).
- Even when students with the same prior-attainment are compared (eg those in the top 20% of attainers at the end of Key Stage 3) FSM pupils are around 10–15% less likely to study a History or Geography GCSE when compared to non-FSM students with the same prior attainment.
- Students with English as an Additional Language (EAL) are much more likely to study an EBacc language than non-EAL pupils with the same prior-attainment:
 - For EAL students in the top 30% of the prior-attainment range, fewer than 15% are taking only their own first language.
 - For EAL students in the lowest 30% of the prior-attainment range, over 75% are taking only their own first language.

Our investigations have also started to examine variations between schools.

There are around 1,200 secondary schools with 50 or more FSM pupils.

- In 2003, 108 of these schools entered 50% or more of their FSM students for EBacc, 51 schools entered 60% or more.
- In 2010, only nine of these schools entered 50% or more of FSM pupils for EBacc and only 1 school entered over 60%.
- The one school with over 60% of FSM pupils entered for EBacc in 2010 is particularly interesting—they have had around 20% of FSM pupils every year for the last six years and the proportion of those pupils entered for EBacc has grown steadily from 2005 to 2010.



The analyses are ongoing and it is our intention to publish a summary of findings by September 2011. One of the areas which we intend to investigate is whether entry patterns for FSM pupils are a consequence of decisions by individuals or a consequence of decisions by schools with high proportions of such pupils.

Our provisional conclusions, at this stage, are:

- Within an overall pattern of declining entry for EBacc there are significant variations between schools and between pupils with different characteristics.
- Even when prior-attainment is taken into account, pupils entitled to Free School Meals are less likely to take EBacc Humanities or Language subjects.
- Whilst pupils with English as an Additional Language are, for the same prior-attainment, more likely to be entered for EBacc Languages those with lower prior-attainment tend to be entered for only their own first language.

15 May 2011

Written evidence submitted by Cornwall's SACRE

THE PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE E-BAC AND ITS VALUE AS A MEASURE OF PUPIL AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

1.1 Cornwall SACRE recognises the importance of having sound educational measures which clearly indicate the attainment of pupils and their schools. In terms of pupils such measures should give to them, institutes of further and higher education and employers a clear picture of attainment by a certain age. In terms of schools such measures should give parents, governors, local authorities, Ofsted and the government a clear indicator of how well a school is doing for its pupils in relation to other schools both locally and nationally. Cornwall SACRE publishes local results in the context of national indicators for GCSE and A Level every year in Religious Studies as part of its Annual Report and in a technical report as a sign of its commitment to raising standards in religious studies and to public accountability.

1.2 There is a strong belief in government that transparency will help parents to make a choice about the school that is best for their child. The presumption that there is choice appears to be linked to the belief that there is a market place in which parents can exercise such a choice. Whilst this would be true in our only city and some of our larger towns it would not be true for families living in largely rural areas or in a town with only one secondary school. The idea that league tables are universally useful does not resonate with the experience of people in Cornwall. Even where parents can make a choice the number of measures available appears bewildering. In its most recent publication of school performance data the Department for Education sets out twelve measures of attainment per school, see http://www.education.gov.uk/performance/tables/schools_10.shtml. How does a parent work out the relative value of each measure that is available to them from the information presented? Cornwall SACRE concurs with the findings of the research funded last year by the Economic and Social Research Council (See: *Britain in 2011* page 25, ESRC) published by Bristol University (www.bristol.ac.uk/cmpo/publications/other/leaguetables.pdf) which clearly shows that performance tables are misleading for parents, especially in terms of how a school performs in the future.

1.3 School league tables clearly have an impact on schools and it is well known that schools themselves respond creatively to the lenses through which they will be observed. This is clear from the research which compares schools in England and Wales after the league tables in Wales were abolished; see: www.bristol.ac.uk/cmpo/publications/other/competition.pdf. The government needs to be clear on what it wants league tables to achieve.

1.4 The intention of the E-Bac as set out in the White Paper, *The Importance of Teaching*, is to be able to measure the academic performance of schools and their pupils. SACRE noted that as an Authority Cornwall was 5% lower in terms of E-Bac than the national average (10.1% compared to 15.1%) but why this is the case is not immediately clear from the data produced by the Department. What is also not clear is why the Department chose certain subjects to be regarded as academic and others not, indeed the choice appears to be based more on the idiosyncrasies of ministers than on evidence. Surely, what makes a subject academically rigorous is how it is taught and examined. Why Music or Religious Studies are not considered academic when English, History and Geography are is not at all clear. If the E-Bac is there to ensure breadth of academic attainment, which is not unreasonable in itself, what matters is less the choice of subjects and more the academic rigour with which they are approached.

1.5 Cornwall SACRE noted sometime ago that there were issues regarding the grades given by different boards and formally asked the QCA to look into this matter. At a recent consultation with secondary schools, where two thirds of Cornwall's maintained secondary schools were represented—including one state sponsored new academy, a discussion took place about the academic credibility of Religious Studies GCSE and A Level relative to different boards and how departments were being encouraged to look for examination boards where they were more likely to get higher grades. If the intention of the E-Bac is to ensure an academically rigorous and broad curriculum for those capable then the Department needs to give serious consideration to the academic nature of GCSE courses and their examinations. It should even consider having a single awarding body so that standards are transparent across all subjects.

THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE E-BAC

2.1 As noted in 1.4 above it is not clear why some subjects were to be included in the E-Bac and others not. In terms of breadth it would seem reasonable that the E-Bac includes English, Mathematics and Sciences. It is also reasonable to include a modern foreign or classical language. Similarly, the White Paper (Paragraph 4.21) makes a case for the inclusion of a Humanities subject “such as history or geography”, although this does not appear to be based on any evidence in *The Case for Change* document (DfE 2010) published to support the White Paper. The positive act of choosing only History and Geography as humanities in the published league tables, though, seems a step beyond the White Paper itself and has had an impact on schools in ways unintended.

2.2 Traditionally, within schools, RE has been situated within the Humanities and SACRE sees no reason why this should not continue to be the case, indeed Cornwall SACRE wrote to the Secretary of State about this issue in December but, as yet, has received no reply to its suggestion. It is also not clear why Art or Music are not included in the Humanities “family” given their importance to cultural education and the development pupils as educationally rounded. As stated in paragraph 2.1 the White Paper gives examples of History and Geography as Humanities but uses only them in its measure of school performance in the E-Bac published by the Department. It would appear that the Department has already pre-judged the situation without adequate consultation or thought.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE E-BAC FOR PUPILS, SCHOOLS AND EMPLOYERS

3.1 At one school in Cornwall pupils are already being selected on the basis of E-Bac and their GCSE options are being shaped by that measure. Whilst the White Paper in paragraph 4.24 states that the E-Bac will be only one measure of a school's performance it is clear that it will increasingly shape the offer that schools make to pupils that they identify as capable of attaining good grades in this “basket” of subjects. To imagine that schools will see this as simply one measure is naïve on the part of the Department. In the school mentioned as a result of the school wanting to improve its E-Bac performance it plans to have no religious education in Year 10 for any pupil, despite this being a requirement of the locally agreed syllabus.

3.2 In the consultation with schools noted in paragraph 1.5, above, all but one school noted the impact that the E-Bac measure was having on religious education and that the value of religious education as a subject area and Religious Studies as a GCSE was being undermined. Last year 4,705 candidates sat a GCSE Religious Studies examination in Cornwall's maintained secondary schools. Heads of RE were not confident that this situation could be maintained as the pressure to respond to the E-Bac measure was thought to be greater than meeting the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. No doubt this is one of the unintended consequences of the Department's actions but it is no less profound for that. Hence, the government's drive to have a broader curriculum measure may have the consequence of narrowing a pupil's entitlement not ensuring its actual breadth at all.

INTERNATIONAL COMPARATORS FOR THE E-BAC

4.1 The difficulty of international comparisons is that they are often not comparing like with like. The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) first done in 2000 has exemplified some of the problems. The PISA 2009 Assessment Framework only covers Reading, Mathematics and Science and only in the latter does it attempt to cover knowledge, as opposed to key competencies. Such an assessment is small in terms of scope when compared with the E-Bac. For a broader comparison government would need to look beyond assessment frameworks produced by the OECD and compare curricular outcomes against similar systems, such as the *Teastas Sóisearach* in Ireland or the Standard Grade in Scotland.

4.2 A similar exercise as part of the Bologna Process in relation to higher education has shown that even trying to arrive at a common understanding of standards at tertiary level has been particularly difficult (<http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/>) so why would anyone think that it was going to be any easier in terms of secondary education?

4.3 What all international comparisons find difficult is to factor in culture into their measures and what the cultural factors are that make some systems appear to out perform others. This has been the case since the 19th century when comparisons become more and more regularly made across Europe and between continents (see: *Comparative and International Education: An introduction to theory, method and practice* by David Phillips and Michele Schweisfurth—Continuum).

4.4 In the end government needs to ask itself what it would consider to be a good education for young people living in England. If the E-Bac enables pupils to gain access to Higher Education and reduces the gap between the poorest and the most privileged young people in our society, enabling them to have access to study and employment both nationally and internationally, it will have done its job. Trying to see how the E-Bac compares with other systems internationally will be a difficult task because any research model would need to take into account its impact on English education in relation to the impact of specific matriculation modes on other systems. Where we are not comparing like with like we need to be very careful about our conclusions. What Phillips and Schwiesfurth have pointed out is that simply trying to introduce a good idea or model from one system into another does not insure its success in a new context and the danger with crass comparisons is that they have a simplistic view of the relationship between cause and effect.

CONCLUSION

5.1 Cornwall SACRE is not against the idea of the E-Bac per se. It has, though, concerns about its impact on pupils' entitlement to a broad and balanced education and its impact on religious education. SACRE can see no reason why the E-Bac does not allow pupils and schools to count GCSE Religious Studies as part of that measure and believes that it will help RE departments in schools to continue the excellent work they are doing. The alternative is that RE is allowed to wither on the vine as it will have no clear place within the accreditation system and it will become increasingly devalued by schools, especially for their most able pupils.

5.2 SACRE, as noted in paragraph 2.2, has written to the Secretary of State to ask that Religious Studies GCSE be included in the E-Bac measurement for schools. SACRE is awaiting the response of the Secretary of State with interest.

June 2011

Written evidence submitted by Pearson

ABOUT PEARSON

1. Pearson is the world's leading education company. From pre-school to high school, early learning to professional certification, our curriculum materials, multimedia learning tools and testing programmes help to educate more than 100 million people worldwide, through names including Edexcel, Longman and Heinemann.

CONTEXT

2. Pearson believes the government is right to be considering what mix of subjects pupils across the country are studying. This is important because all young people should have the opportunity to access a balanced education, and because we should review regularly the blend of knowledge, skills and understanding developed through our school system to ensure that the workforce of tomorrow has the right skills to progress in their lives. The introduction of the current EBacc is proof that the government values the idea of breadth in the curriculum studied by young people and Pearson shares this view.

3. The question that faces policy makers and government is whether a single focus in performance tables on this particular selection of subjects, and on the GCSE assessment methodology, constitutes sufficient breadth against which schools should be judged. Our concern is that the qualifications incentivised for study in schools through the EBacc may not adequately capture and nurture the ambitions and talents of all students. Schools should be rewarded for offering an appropriate programme of study to each individual pupil, provided it helps them to progress.

4. Pearson agrees that a firm grip of English, Maths and Science is a crucial building block in every young person's education. Other traditional subjects such as History and Geography are also worthwhile for many students.

5. Yet international comparisons suggest that focusing on the narrow selection offered by the EBacc, to the possible detriment of modern subjects like ICT or vocational routes, is an approach not shared across leading nations. Indeed, recognising the pace of change in the knowledge economy, many of the top performing countries in PISA are considering how to ensure their curriculum develops competency in learning and skills of application, as well as equipping with core knowledge. Pearson is in the process of commissioning a large study into international policy responses to PISA to help us to understand this trend better.

RESPONSES TO THE EBACC FROM SCHOOLS, PARENTS, EMPLOYERS AND HIGHER EDUCATION

6. Pearson supports the idea of the EBacc as one indicator of pupil and school performance. However, indications from our partners across the education sector and in business are that it may be insufficiently flexible as a measure. There is a risk that the EBacc—if it is not balanced by other, clear measures which recognise broader definitions of achievement, or increased in its flexibility—may lead to choices on the part of schools and learners which do not enable maximum progress for all pupils.

7. To gather a greater body of evidence directly from those with an interest in the outcomes of our education system, and to explore possible solutions, Pearson recently convened a meeting of leading employers, business leaders, higher education and teacher representatives. The consultation and market research, are captured below.

8. **Schools:** We work with schools across the country, supporting them to develop their curricula and assessment alongside. Many have expressed concerns to us about the way the new EBacc indicator has been introduced. One representative example reads as follows:

9. "We have grave concerns about the effect of the EBacc on the KS4 curriculum. It may well mean students do courses that are not appropriate for them, or achieve lower grades than they might have done on other courses where they have greater natural talent."

Assistant Head Teacher

10. We share these concerns that this new indicator could make schools feel under pressure to direct their students to subjects that may not be the most suitable for their chosen educational or career path. For example, a student interested in engineering may find an applied engineering qualification much more useful than say History, and be more successful in it.

11. A recent survey conducted by Pearson suggested over a third of schools felt this new emphasis in the league tables on the EBacc would risk students being less able to progress if schools attempted to follow too closely what they perceived to be the guidance from central government. Schools continue to lack clarity on the emerging shape of the school accountability system, and the government needs to set clearer expectations. In the absence of clear guidance on other measures of their performance, many schools felt that they would move towards a curriculum mix which played to the EBacc, despite being unconvinced of its merits to individual pupils.

12. **Parents:** We are also aware that, as a result of the political and media attention invested in the EBacc, some parents are interpreting the EBacc as a new qualification that their child will need in order to get into university. However, universities have told us that it is a lot less important than having picked the right mix of subjects for the course they wish to study. They do not anticipate using it as a mechanism to differentiate or select students.

13. Additionally, there are emerging examples of schools—under pressure from parents and local authorities—changing the curriculum for current year 11 students. Those students missing one of the component qualifications are being withdrawn from other lessons, and being given additional out-of-hours tuition, in a bid to try to achieve a grade C in three months in a subject they last studied in year 9. This risks reducing their grade profile and actually damaging their chances of HE progression.

14. **HE:** We have been carrying out a wide-ranging series of interviews on matters relating to qualifications across the range of HE institutions. For the majority, GCSE grades are the main indicator they use at the first stage of selection. They have all told us, from the most academically selecting of the Russell Group to those with widening participation priorities, that it is the GCSE *grades* that most matter. Most require Maths and English, and welcome a breadth of study, but the choice of subjects is much less important, and they certainly wouldn't be basing any decisions on or giving priority to those with an EBacc profile.

15. The overwhelming consensus is that the EBacc will give no advantage to pupils over another mix of subjects. This makes even more worrying the intention of some schools to move students onto EBacc subjects from other subjects or qualification types in which they stand to achieve better grades.

16. **Employers:** As with the higher education sector, employer representatives we spoke to said that they were unlikely to use the EBacc as a proxy to determine the quality of candidates. Rather, their interest is in performance in specialised subjects relating to job roles and in a narrower core of English, maths and sciences. It was also observed that the EBacc doesn't get to the heart of—indeed, it could even further sideline—employer concerns about the skillset and knowledge of school leavers, which relate less to specific subjects than to “employability”. Literacy, numeracy and computer literacy are seen as a dimension of this, as well as initiative, independent study, team working, problem solving and so on.

17. Related to this, there are some peculiarities about the types of knowledge prioritised through the EBacc which have not been adequately explained. For example, ancient languages currently count toward the EBacc, while applied modern languages do not. The same is true for other important applied subjects like music and ICT. With respect to the possible implications of these exclusions, it is worth highlighting that the exports of services by the creative industries in 2008 totalled £17.3 billion, equalling 4.1% of all goods and services exported by the UK. In 2010, creative industries represented 8.7% of all registered companies in the UK. Whilst we believe it is not the intention of the government to stem the flow of appropriately qualified workers to these important industries, it may well be a consequence of the introduction of the EBacc if left unchecked.

IMPROVING ON THE EBACC

18. We have convened a working group of educationalists, HE representatives and employers to explore how the EBacc could be revised, or an alternative offered. We would be pleased to brief the Committee further on this work as it develops. We give brief details of initial discussions and direction of travel in the next section.

19. If the EBacc is to be used as an accountability mechanism, the consensus is that it will drive school behaviour. This being the case, we see a number of options through which the existing EBacc could be modified or supplemented to capture better the preferences of higher education and employers, and reduce the potential for it to disadvantage some learners by skewing schools' offer towards only a portion of their student body. The relative merits of these options are discussed below.

20. Pearson also believe that there is an opportunity to develop an alternative Baccalaureate which would represent greater value to the individual, and have scope to be used as an additional accountability measure. On balance, we consider this option to be in the best short and long term interests of learners.

SOME OPTIONS

21. The core EBacc list of qualifications could be reduced to just English, maths and science. This would allow greater flexibility for students and schools to choose courses they felt most appropriate for them, whilst supporting an explicit focus on literacy and on STEM subjects.

22. The preferred model we are now beginning to explore with our partners is predicated on this reduced core, with the additional requirement to achieve another accredited dimension covering employability and scholastic aptitude. Under our current thinking, the rest of students' study would be a free choice—in terms of subject and qualification type—with the Bacc graded according to the number of additional qualifications achieved. We think that this option stands to capture better the shared needs of HE and employers, as well as give more flexibility to learners to explore a wide range of ambitions.

23. Alternatively, we could consider broadening the current EBacc to include a more balanced set of skills. This may include some type of vocational or applied course. This option would however increase the prescriptive nature of the EBacc and narrow learner choice by apparently prescribing how even more of their curriculum time is spent.

24. The government could also consider making the EBacc a more inclusive measure of achievement by allowing additional subjects and similar applied subjects to count towards it. For example, an applied foreign language could be included as well as ancient languages. The case is also being made strongly for the inclusion of arts subjects such as Music and Art, and other Humanities such as RE.

25. Finally, the government could publish a greater number of measures alongside the current EBacc. These measures could act as additional, useful measures through which parents could judge the success of a school, supporting the goals of transparency and parental choice.

26. This could include, for example, Lord Baker, former Education Secretary and current Chair of the Edge Foundation, has proposed a Technical Baccalaureate. In addition, a Vocational Baccalaureate, including a wider range of learning geared towards specific sectors could be reported. We would also see the Bacc model we are working on with HE and employers as being an appropriate additional performance measure.

27. It would be important in this case for the Government to be clear on the equity of the various measures, since as described above the level of political investment and media interest in the EBacc has exacerbated its impact on school behaviour.

March 2011

Written evidence submitted by the Anglo European School

PREAMBLE

1. The Anglo European School (AES), a comprehensive school at Ingatestone in Essex, became the first state school to offer the International Baccalaureate Diploma (IBD) in 1977 and the first state school to offer the International Baccalaureate Career-related Certificate (IBCC) on 2010. With regard to the latter the AES is one of only 12 schools worldwide offering this course. Headteacher, David Barrs, is a Trustee of the IB Schools and Colleges Association of the UK, a membership organisation working in association with the International Baccalaureate Organisation (IBO).

2. The IB philosophy of breadth, balance, internationalism, transferable skills and making the world a better place is central to the school's unique philosophy. Whilst a significant number of students follow the IBD and a growing number the IBCC, the largest number of students follow an A-level programme or, indeed, a mix of A-levels and subjects from the IB suite. A-level students are encouraged to follow four AS courses and to continue with them in to the Upper Sixth as A2s. Whichever route the students follow they are required to follow a course in Creativity, Action, and Service (CAS) and to study a language. CAS is an IB course which involves community service and other challenging activities.

3. All students in the school's "outstanding" Sixth Form are therefore part of a broad course of study.

4. This commitment to the IB and its philosophy permeates the entire school. Its Key Stage 3 and 4 curriculum is designed using the same principles. All students must follow a course in Mathematics, English Language, two other languages, a humanity, a technical subject and an arts subject at all stages in their school career. In addition they are required to study Citizenship and to engage in active citizenship which is accredited by our own Diplôme du Citoyen.

5. I believe the curriculum at the Anglo European School (rated as "outstanding" in a recent OfSTED inspection February 2011) is a model of what the Government is trying to achieve. *If members of the Select Committee would like to visit the school, please consider this an open invitation.*

1. THE PURPOSE AND BENEFITS OF THE E-BACC AND ITS VALUE AS A MEASURE OF PUPIL AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

1.6 A “baccalaureate” style education has come to mean breadth, balance and rigour. However, importantly, it has also come to mean a coherent programme of study that adds together to provide an educational experience that is more than the sum of its parts. Although the IB Diploma is a certificate in its own right provided all aspects of the course are successfully completed, it is also possible to obtain individual subject certificates. These certificates have value in terms of UCAS points but have more educational value as part of a coherent whole.

1.7 This coherence is provided by the core activities—the “beating heart” as the core is described by IB advocates. This core involves a study of the Theory of Knowledge, an Extended Essay of 4,000 words (essentially a piece of research) and, as mentioned above, CAS.

1.8 So, although the E-Bacc is a very welcome recognition of the value of a broad curriculum which closes fewer doors on the futures of young people and prepares them well for the demands of the 21st century, it has no beating heart. The term “English Baccalaureate” is, in my view, a misnomer. It should, more properly, be called a Certificate or Diploma.

1.9 A significant danger is that it will become associated with highly traditional, potentially elitist schools. It is no coincidence that in the retrospective publication of E-Bacc results for 2010, it was grammar schools and single sex schools which performed most successfully, usually at a level 90%+. As it stands, therefore, the E-Bacc will be of little interest to many schools and employers.

1.10 By making it a performance measure there is a danger that schools will make decisions based on their Performance Table accountability rather than on local needs or the interests of their students. It should be an award or certification in its own right. Pupils and their families will then vote with their feet and expect a school to provide for it. There is no need to make it a performance measure. In any case, as it stands, it is simply an outcome measure rather than a progress measure.

2. THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS INCLUDED IN THE E-BACC

2.11 The E-Bacc is currently defined in very narrow GCSE terms. There is no recognition of GCSE equivalent examinations. Neither is there recognition of the Arts or, indeed, a wider recognition of subjects with a humanities base.

2.12 Although it is a welcome recognition of the value of breadth in the curriculum, it devalues the concept but defining it too narrowly. The Arts are a vital aspect of the curriculum and help engage a wider range of students. By not including it there is an inconsistency in relation to, for instance, the importance the Coalition Government attaches to music as part of the wider experience for young people.

2.13 The definition of the humanities “block” also demonstrates an unnecessarily narrow view. In terms of building a society which is cohesive, I would argue that a study of RE is key. Approached properly it serves to integrate a society rather than atomise it.

2.14 Citizenship as a subject is also an inconsistent omission. Not only does it connect a child to their community by introducing them to the contract between state and citizen (a contract based on protection and rights afforded by the state in return for responsible action), it also underpins the big society by obliging young people to engage in active citizenship. Such action involves young people working in their communities, involving themselves in intergenerational work and understanding the nature and importance of volunteering. The inconsistency is compounded when one considers the importance being attached by the Coalition to the National Service Programme. Citizenship could provide the bedrock upon which this programme can be built.

2.15 In 1. above, I make reference to the “beating heart” of a baccalaureate. The E-Bacc does not have this—it is defined merely as a collection of subjects and not a very coherent set of subjects at that. The inclusion of Citizenship and its active citizenship strand would immediately give it that beating heart and enable the E-Bacc to claim it is, indeed, more than the sum of its parts.

3. THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE E-BACC FOR PUPILS, SCHOOLS AND EMPLOYERS

3.16 The recognition of breadth in the curriculum is long overdue and headteachers will welcome it. They will be less happy with the sudden, indeed retrospective, imposition of the measure. In particular their ability to deliver such breadth in the face of serious teacher supply problems, particularly in languages, will be compromised. Given its status as a performance measure many perhaps less confident schools are already reacting by redesigning their curriculum.

3.17 The recently published Wolf Report on vocational qualifications reinforces the view that all students should follow a broad curriculum. The E-Bacc would have more value if it maintained the breadth of curriculum but diversified the range of qualifications available under each “block”. For example the Languages “block” should recognise Asset languages which have a justifiable GCSE equivalence but which are designed to challenge a wider range of aptitudes than the traditional GCSE. They also fit with the Common European Framework for Languages.

3.18 A broader, less traditional definition of the E-Bacc would provide young people with a better preparation for the rigours of modern society, enable them to maintain the necessary flexibility they will need in the labour market and give employers the reassurance they need that prospective employees have been well-educated. It will provide a platform from which employers, colleges and universities can develop the specific skills needed in their particular field.

4. INTERNATIONAL COMPARATORS FOR THE E-BACC

4.19 I think it is fair to use the International Baccalaureate Diploma as the leading baccalaureate programme in the world. There are others—the Welsh Baccalaureate, the French Baccalaureate, the German Abitur and the emerging Sixth Form Baccalaureate. Even the AQA Baccalaureate embodies a “beating heart”.

4.20 In view of the concern shared in section 1 with regard to nomenclature, I believe the E-Bacc will not stand comparison with these other more established “baccalaureate” programmes. It should not be called a “baccalaureate” unless it is defined more broadly and has some characteristics which give the entire programme coherence.

21. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Add Religious Studies, Citizenship and an Arts option to the definition of the E-Bacc.
2. Encourage the provision of alternative pathways in each “block” in order to make the E-Bacc more relevant to a wider range of young people.
3. Consider other means of providing a *beating heart* (eg research project, community service).
4. If the content cannot be redefined then the programme should be called a Certificate or Diploma but not a baccalaureate.
5. Remove the requirement to make it a performance measure.
6. Recognise a wider range of qualifications such as IGCSE or Asset Languages.

8 March 2011

Email campaign received from 4 respondents

I believe strongly that GCSE RE should be regarded as a humanities subject in the EBacc, alongside geography and history:

1. GCSE RE is a most important subject that promotes religious and cultural knowledge.
2. GCSE RE promotes understanding, tolerance and cohesion.
3. GCSE RE is a humanities subject as important and challenging as geography and history; failure to include it sends the wrong message to young people and reduces choice.
4. GCSE RE is compulsory in Catholic voluntary aided schools; it is possible that the omission of RE from the EBacc may lead to a subsequent reduction in subject choices in these schools.
5. A failure to recognise the importance of religion in the development of this country’s values, traditions and laws does not sit well with a determination to reflect these same points through the study of geography and history.
6. Other highly valuable subjects such as art, music, drama, and other talent and enterprise-based subjects may suffer through the restriction of options.

June 2011

Email campaign submission received from 17 respondents

I would like to argue strongly for the inclusion of GCSE RE into the suite of qualifications for the EBacc. The reasons for this are:

1. GCSE RE is an important subject promoting religious and cultural knowledge and understanding.
2. RE is a powerful tool in promoting tolerance and cohesion through education.
3. GCSE RE is compulsory in Catholic VA schools. Children in these schools will have a significant reduction in their subject choices due to the omission of RE.
4. Subjects such as GCSE art, music, drama and other talent and enterprise based subjects will be squeezed out in VA schools due to the expectation that students follow a narrowly defined EBacc that does not include GCSE RE.
5. GCSE RE is as challenging as Geography or History. Its omission does not serve the children well.
6. A failure to recognise the importance of religion in the development of this country’s values, traditions

and laws, seems at odds with a determination to reflect these same points through the study of Geography and History.

June 2011

Written evidence submitted by Stephen Pettitt, Director of Music, Benslow Music Trust

The views I express below are personal and do not necessarily reflect the views of the institution for which I work, which is chiefly involved in the field of adult recreational music education.

You will know that the recent independent review of music education undertaken by Darren Henley strongly recommended that Music “should be included as one of the subjects that go to make up the new English Baccalaureate”.

Contrary, perhaps, to its reputation as a soft, even non-academic subject, Music, when taught properly, embraces a formidable array of skills and disciplines. Apart from the practical skills and patience required to learn how to play an instrument and how to read and “hear” a score in the head, other aspects of the subject involve a) mathematical and analytical processes b) the acquisition of a knowledge of historical, political and sociological contexts (since music is always a product of and has a function in society) c) a fascination with spoken and written languages other than English (every culture in the world has its song) d) a high degree of literacy (in describing an intrinsically abstract form) and e) the forging of dramatic sensibilities (even abstract music is a drama).

Quite apart from these intrinsically improving qualities, a musical education enriches the lives of those who undergo it and fuels a vibrant industry by providing both playing musicians and the audiences of the future.

After reading the Secretary of State's encouraging words in the Henley Report, I am astonished at the possibility of Music being excluded from the English Baccalaureate, and so I ask the Education Select Committee to ensure that it takes its rightful place at the high table of Baccalaureate subjects.

10 May 2011

Email campaign submission received from 14 respondents

1. I am writing to convince you that Religious Studies should be considered a humanities subject and is just as justifiable as Geography and History combined.

2. Religious Studies can be thought of in two ways: Philosophy and Ethics. Philosophy is the critical analysis of fundamental assumptions or beliefs “*The philosophy of the school room in one generation will be the philosophy of government in the next*”. (Abraham Lincoln). How can it be argued that Philosophy is not as fundamental as History or Geography, if anything it is more fundamental as it combines the current, past and future and discusses various topics that are continually addressed in current affairs.

3. The current syllabus includes topics on War & Peace, Medical Ethics, Evil and suffering, Poverty and wealth, Life after death, Nature of God, nature of Belief, Religion and science, Human relationships, Equality and religion and the Media. I believe all these topics address and challenge key religious beliefs and allow you to broaden your thinking as they can be applied to all life situations. They all rely on the governing principle morality, which looks at the ways in which morality is applicable in all these topics.

4. It is often argued that Religious Studies is just reading the Bible and that there is no original thought involved, however that simply isn't the case it goes way beyond the beliefs of different religions and helps students to see the world as a whole and not just a section of time unlike History. Religious Studies allows you to develop and refine your opinion which is vastly important to create an informed, knowledgeable society. Religious Studies gives students the opportunity to delve into many sub-topics of life which both History and geography do not allow. Just as Geography discusses infant mortality rates, Religious Studies addresses the ethical issues which can cause and result in such situations.

5. In my opinion, Religious Studies was extremely helpful as it helped me to see the bigger picture and to broaden my knowledge and most importantly develop my opinions. I think Religious Studies is helpful as a basis to any career as it helps you to use all the skills that you attain during school and apply them to the world, it helps you to be better prepared for life and therefore I think it would be detrimental for Religious Studies not to be considered a humanities subject. Having taken History, Geography and RS at GCSE (all at full course) each subjected demanded an equal amount of time. Going into a healthcare profession I have found RS to have been of extreme importance in my understanding of the career and would urge you to include it as a humanity with equal status to Geography and History.

April 2011

Written evidence submitted by Dennis Wickens

As a former grammar school music master, cathedral lay clerk, composer and county music adviser for two local education authorities, I fully endorse the case submitted by the Incorporated Society of Musicians for the inclusion of Music in the English Baccalaureate. I know from long experience that their case is by no means overstated, having so often seen what might well have been unfulfilled lives transformed through engagement with Music. It has unlocked youngsters' motivation and potential for wider attainments which otherwise would have gone unrealised. The requirement for team collaboration imposes a discipline of greater significance than what they may perceive as the uninspiring pursuit of a particular academic study for which they may have little or no aptitude.

As one who (long ago) failed the standard, narrow 11+ examination and had to leave school at the age of fourteen, it took a long, hard struggle and meagre personal resources to acquire the qualifications and skills needed to enter the profession I desired, a motivation for which was not only to develop my education for its own sake, but to enable me to extend the horizons of others, both children and adults. It would immensely sad to see the withering of the tremendous advances made in music education over the past half century because of the restrictive requirements of a narrow range of subjects for the English Baccalaureate, which experience shows will reinforce a feeling of failure in many whose potential abilities and interest within this range may need to be awakened by other talents and enthusiasms.

The impressive facilities and resources specifically allocated for Music in the private sector are testimony both to the importance of the subject as an academic study at school level and to its enormous social and economic benefits to the whole society.

April 2011
