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The effects of the English Baccalaureate

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The views expressed in this report are the authors' and do not necessarily reflect those of the Department for Education.

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Executive summary

Ipsos MORI was commissioned by the Department for Education (DfE) to carry out research on the effects of the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) on schools, parents/carers and pupils. The EBacc was introduced as a measure in the 2010 school performance tables. The EBacc is not a qualification in itself, but it is the term applied to the achievement of GCSEs at grades 'A*'-'C' across a core of academic subjects; English, maths, history or geography, the sciences and a language.

The research included both a survey and qualitative research. We surveyed 618 teachers with some involvement in Year 9 GCSE subject choices, drawn from a representative sample of English secondary schools. The survey largely repeated a survey of teachers conducted in 2011 and, where possible, comparisons are made across the two survey years. The qualitative case study research involved 11 schools. In nine schools we carried out face-to-face visits to interview up to two members of staff involved in GCSE choices, and held three discussion groups with pupils (including pupils who were and were not working towards the EBacc). In two schools telephone interviews were conducted with the Headteacher. Participating schools sent letters to parents/carers of Year 9 pupils which encouraged parents/carers to contact Ipsos MORI to take part in a telephone interview. In total, 22 parents/carers took part in interviews.

Key findings from the research

Take-up of the English Baccalaureate

- **There is no significant change since last year in either the estimated proportion of Year 9 pupils who have chosen to take either the combination of subjects that make them eligible to achieve the EBacc, or in the uptake of individual EBacc subjects.**
    - In 2012 49% of Year 9 pupils have selected a combination of GCSE subjects that could lead to them achieving the EBacc in 2014. This compares with 46% of Year 9 pupils selecting these options in 2011: the change over time is not statistically significant.[1]
    - The take-up of each of the optional EBacc subjects in 2012 – triple science, double science, history, geography and languages – has not increased significantly since 2011[2].
    - There is a slight upward trend in the uptake of each of the individual EBacc subjects and the EBacc combination of subjects since last year, but these changes are not statistically significant.

[1] Tested at the 95%, 90% and 80% levels.
[2] The uptake of all subjects, and the EBacc combination, has increased slightly but not statistically significantly since last year. Taken together, the findings may be indicative of a slight increase in uptake, but the survey findings are not conclusive on this point.

- The average proportion of pupils selecting each of the EBacc subjects, and the EBacc combination of subjects, is higher in selective than non-selective schools, and higher than average in schools with relatively low numbers of pupils eligible for Free School Meals (FSM)[3]. The gap in the uptake of EBacc subjects is particularly pronounced for triple science and languages.

    - In selective schools, an average of 84% of pupils are studying towards the EBacc compared with 48% in comprehensive and 33% in secondary modern schools.

    - In schools with a relatively high proportion of FSM-eligible pupils an average of 41% of pupils will be studying towards an EBacc from next year, compared with an average of 60% of pupils in schools with relatively low numbers of FSM-eligible pupils.

- **The qualitative research revealed that languages are a *'sticking point'* for pupils in some schools, often those where teachers indicated their pupils have low aspirations**: these pupils are less likely to see the value of studying a language, and often find languages more difficult and less engaging than other subjects. Teachers at these schools noted that even the more academic pupils in their school were often reluctant to study towards a language. Teachers at several case study schools explained they were implementing measures to improve language teaching and resourcing, to motivate more pupils to opt for languages.

- The exclusion of RE from the EBacc subjects was queried by many of the teachers involved in the case study research, and seems to directly impact on take-up in some cases: a few case study schools said they would not divert pupils who opted for RE into an EBacc-eligible humanity. In these cases, teachers explained that RE is an academically rigorous subject which they know will serve pupils well in the future, whereas they are uncertain that an EBacc will be meaningful to their pupils (some schools see the EBacc as essentially a school performance measure).

- **The great majority of schools give at least some of their pupils the chance to study the EBacc:** 99% offer a language and history; 98% offer geography; 95% offer double science; and 93% offer triple science. Ninety eight percent of schools offer a choice of GCSE subjects that enable their pupils to study for the EBacc – i.e. English; maths; either double or triple science; either history or geography; and a language. Just under nine in ten teachers (89%) say their option blocks allow all pupils who want to study towards the EBacc to do so. Of all the optional EBacc subjects, science is most likely to be compulsory for at least some pupils. Either double or triple science is compulsory for at least some pupils in 80% of schools. The figures for double science show a statistically significant change from 2011: the proportion of schools saying it is compulsory for *all*

[3] Schools were classified into tertiles based on the proportion of FSM-eligible pupils on roll and classified as having a relatively 'high' (16%+), 'medium' or 'low' (less than or equal to 6%) proportion of FSM-eligible pupils.

pupils has fallen and instead more schools are likely to have made it compulsory for just *some* of their pupils.

- **Where schools do not offer some pupils the opportunity to study towards the EBacc, this is typically because pupils with lower attainment are not offered the EBacc subjects**; 63% of schools which do not allow all pupils to study towards the EBacc give this as a reason. This finding is consistent with the qualitative research: some schools explained that they targeted their most academically able pupils and encouraged them to study towards the EBacc, while less academic pupils were offered other pathways.

- Languages are compulsory for at least some pupils in 40% of schools, while history and geography are much less likely to be compulsory (compulsory at 13% and 14% of schools, respectively).

Effects of the introduction of the English Baccalaureate on schools

Whilst the EBacc affected the curriculum offer and option blocks in almost half of schools in the 2011/12 academic year, teachers participating in the survey anticipate it having less of an effect next year. The findings suggest many schools feel they have now made the changes needed to respond to the EBacc.

- In the 2011 survey 52% anticipated that the EBacc would have an impact on their curriculum in the 2011/12 academic year. This year, 47% said that had been the case and 48% reported changes to their option blocks. However, the proportion anticipating further changes to the curriculum or option blocks is significantly lower; 15% and 13% respectively said the EBacc will mean changes in these areas in 2012/13.

Just over a quarter (27%) say that some courses have been withdrawn or failed to recruit enough pupils for the 2012/13 academic year due to the EBacc. The proportion of schools saying this has fallen significantly since 2011.

- The most commonly withdrawn subjects are drama and performing arts, which had been dropped in nearly a quarter of schools where a subject had been withdrawn (23%), followed by art (17%) and design technology (14%). BTECs have also seen a decline (dropped in 20% schools where subjects have been withdrawn).

Three in ten (30%) teachers indicated the EBacc has led to staffing changes at their school, and two in ten (20%) expect to make staffing changes next year. This is in line with the qualitative case study work which suggested some teachers were redeployed to teaching to their secondary (EBacc) subject, and a general trend towards increasing provision in EBacc subjects while other subjects had seen a corresponding decrease.

The proportion of schools offering early entry to GCSE for their current Year 9 pupils has dropped from 81% in 2011 to 70%. Six percent of teachers indicated their schools expect to make further changes to their early entry policy due to the EBacc.

Analysis of the survey work along with the qualitative case studies provides further insight into the effect of the EBacc on school practice. The case study work suggests that schools can broadly be characterised as falling into three groups, based on the impact of the EBacc (note that the first group is distinct, but there are some overlaps between the second and third groups):

(a) Schools that were already taking a similar approach

Just over half the schools surveyed say the EBacc had no influence on the curriculum (53%) or option blocks (52%) offered to their Year 9 pupils this year. Likewise, around half of the case study schools said the EBacc reflects pre-existing school practice, and that the only changes they have made is in the advice and information they provide to pupils and parents/carers. These schools already offered all of the EBacc subjects, and pupils were either compelled or strongly expected to take a science, humanity and language.

Teachers in several of these schools noted that, despite them not actively encouraging pupils to take the EBacc combination, they had seen greater rates of take-up of EBacc subjects at the expense of non EBacc subjects (e.g. a decline in technology in favour of history or geography). Discussions with pupils and parents/carers revealed that they placed more importance on the EBacc than teachers in some cases, or were more concerned about the possible implications of *not* having the EBacc on their future progression.

(b) Schools that feel they are merely facilitating the EBacc

In the survey, the most commonly mentioned change among those schools who said they had adjusted their curriculum offer related to restructuring option blocks (23%). Where schools had made changes to option blocks, the most frequently mentioned way in which they had done this was to re-structure them in a way that facilitated gaining an EBacc/ making sure as many pupils as possible can access the EBacc (21%). Other commonly mentioned responses were changing option blocks to facilitate the take-up of specific EBacc subjects (17% humanities and 12% languages). These findings reflect the qualitative research, in which several schools said the main change they had made in response to the EBacc was merely to shift option blocks to give pupils more opportunities to select the EBacc subjects.

(c) Targeting pupils and introducing compulsion for EBacc subjects

The survey findings suggest that the approach of targeting certain pupils is fairly widespread; among those schools that had changed their curriculum offer this year, 16% said the EBacc is directed at higher attaining pupils, 6% that they have created a two-tier pathway, and 7% that the EBacc is compulsory for at least some pupils. Other responses indicated that some subjects, or classes of subjects, were now compulsory for the first time, including

geography/history/humanities (9% of schools which had made changes this year), and languages (6%).

Several schools taking part in the qualitative case studies explained that they carefully targeted the EBacc offer to their most academic pupils. Schools that fell into this group in the qualitative case studies tended to report having pupils with lower aspirations than pupils in the most academic schools. Most of these schools had made no other changes to their offer beyond the information and advice they offered to pupils and parents/carers. A few of these schools said that they had previously struggled with pupils whose aspirations fell short of their academic potential; these teachers seemed to welcome the EBacc as a means of encouraging pupils to select subjects that could demonstrate their abilities. A few other schools explicitly referenced their conscious decision not to affect their performance in other GCSE performance metrics (5 'A'*-'C') by making the EBacc mandatory: pupils may achieve 5 good GCSEs but they may not be capable of achieving them in the EBacc subjects.

Awareness and understanding of the EBacc

- **The great majority of schools had provided information or advice to both pupils (93%) and parents/carers (94%) about the EBacc**. The case study research confirmed that pupils and their parents/carers are given lots of information through their schools to inform their GCSE choices, including options evenings, options booklets, one-to-one chats with teachers, and careers guidance.

- Schools with lower levels of uptake of the EBacc were more likely than schools with high uptake to be providing information about the EBacc to pupils and parents/carers. Conversely, schools with relatively high levels of uptake were more likely to have told pupils that the EBacc subjects were optional. This ties in with the distinctions noted above in schools' responses to the EBacc. Teachers in schools where the EBacc reflects existing practice tended to downplay the EBacc, as most of their pupils naturally selected academic subjects without needing the encouragement of the EBacc; in contrast, those where the EBacc represents a bigger change are more likely to be encouraging pupils – or at least their most able pupils – to opt for the EBacc subjects.

- The qualitative research revealed considerable confusion about the value of the EBacc and its potential future importance for pupils; as a result, schools gave a variety of messages about its value. Some schools told pupils it would be an essential requirement for elite universities, others said it would not matter to universities, and other schools acknowledged they did not know. Some schools were sceptical about how long the EBacc would be in place, and continued to prioritise other school performance metrics. This uncertainty is reflected in the survey responses, which also indicate that schools are giving mixed messages about the EBacc to pupils. Teachers had different views, and were sometimes uncertain, as to whether the EBacc was purely a school-level performance measure or may

be used as an indicator of pupil performance in the future. This uncertainty led in some cases to pupils taking the EBacc 'just in case' it proved important in the future, or in the belief that it would 'be something else for the CV' or give them 'an extra qualification'. In other cases, pupils did not select EBacc subjects because they were unconvinced that it would give them anything extra.

- The overriding considerations when pupils are selecting their GCSE options are to select subjects that they enjoy and are good at and, where pupils have a career path in mind that will help towards their preferred career. These factors were more important than the EBacc in guiding GCSE choices in all the case studies, and teachers, parents/carers and pupils all held firmly to this principle. While most recognised that the EBacc subjects were in general the most useful subjects for some pupils – they are seen as inherently valuable and lend themselves to any career path a pupil might choose in future – pupils and parents/carers firmly believed that choices had to be down to the individual's preferences and abilities. As such, the EBacc in itself often did not play a central role in pupils' decision-making.

- Many of the pupils who were studying towards the EBacc had selected these subjects naturally; teachers and parents/carers explained that more academic pupils gravitated towards this selection without needing the added inducement of the EBacc. In some cases, the EBacc had helped to refine subject selections – for example, where pupils were deciding between two subjects they found equally appealing, only one of which was part of the EBacc, they often opted for the EBacc-eligible subject.

- The most obvious impact of the EBacc on pupils' GCSE choices was around languages: in some case study schools languages were not a natural choice for most pupils, who were unconvinced of their value or simply did not enjoy the subject. The EBacc had motivated pupils to study languages, and teachers in a few schools noted that languages uptake has increased directly because of the EBacc. Parents/carers tended not to input directly into pupils' decision-making, but where they did intervene it was usually to encourage or instruct their child to study a language.

- Most parents/carers felt that they already had enough information about school performance without needing the EBacc; several stressed that they judge school performance on many factors – such as the school ethos and atmosphere – rather than purely on measures of academic success. Some parents/carers were concerned about the narrow academic focus of the EBacc, and the detrimental impact it might have on the uptake of non-EBacc subjects. Ultimately, however, parents/carers felt that pupils have to make individual choices that are right for them and were sceptical of the value of the EBacc in encouraging children down routes that might not be appropriate for them. In contrast to this general view, a few parents/carers felt the EBacc was a useful performance measure and helped to steer schools and pupils away from prioritising 'softer' subjects.

Chapter One: Introduction

Background

Ipsos MORI was commissioned by the Department for Education (DfE) to carry out research on the effects of the English Baccalaureate (EBacc). The EBacc was introduced as a measure in the 2010 school performance tables. The EBacc is not a qualification in itself, but it is the term applied to the achievement of GCSEs at grades 'A*'-'C' across a core of academic subjects; English, maths, history or geography, the sciences and a language.

The current research included a quantitative mixed mode (telephone and online) survey of teachers with some involvement in Year 9 GCSE choices, qualitative case study work with teachers and Year 9 pupils, and qualitative telephone interviews with parents/carers. The quantitative survey of teachers largely repeated a survey of teachers conducted in 2011 and, where possible, comparisons are made across the two survey years.

Aims and objectives

The aim of the research was to explore whether the introduction of the EBacc has had effects on schools, pupils and parent/carers and whether it is anticipated to do so in the future.

The research objectives were to:

- Establish levels of EBacc take-up amongst pupils in Year 9 in 2011/2012;
- Assess what effects the EBacc's introduction has had on schools, pupils and parents/carers;
- Gather school, parent/carer and pupil perceptions of the EBacc; and,
- Gather evidence on the emerging impacts of the EBacc in pupil GCSE subject choice and post-16 destinations.

Methodology

The research included a quantitative mixed mode (telephone and online) survey of teachers with some involvement in Year 9 GCSE choices, qualitative case study work with teachers and Year 9 pupils, and qualitative telephone interviews with parents/carers. This section describes in detail the approach to the survey followed by the qualitative case study work.

Quantitative survey of teachers

Sample

The quantitative sample was drawn from a representative random sample of secondary schools in England. In total 618 schools took part in the survey in June and July 2012, 552 by telephone and 66 online. There were no significant

differences between the responses received by telephone and online. The table below shows the profile of the achieved sample.

Profile of achieved sample and population					
	Achieved sample (N)	**Achieved sample %[4]**	**Population (N)**	**Population %**	**Difference between achieved sample and population %**
School type					
Academy converters	190	31	765	27	+4%
Academy free school	1	*	4	*	-
Academy sponsor led	42	7	286	10	-3%
Academy	233	38	1,055	37	+1%
Community school	189	31	929	33	-2%
Foundation school	95	15	412	15	-
Voluntary aided school	86	14	365	13	+1%
Voluntary controlled school	15	2	52	2	-
Religious character					
Religious character	126	20	525	19	+1%
No religious character	215	35	870	31	+4%
Does not apply	277	45	1418	50	-5%
Gender of school pupils					
Boys	30	5	153	5	-
Girls	46	7	198	7	-
Co-educational	541	88	2459	88	-
Admissions policy					
Comprehensive	548	89	2535	90	-1%
Modern	29	5	127	5	-
Selective	41	7	151	5	+2%
Number of year 9 pupils (bands)					
Small	208	34	n/a	n/a	n/a
Medium	201	33	n/a	n/a	n/a
Large	204	33	n/a	n/a	n/a
Information not available	5	1			

[4] Where percentages do not equal 100% this is due to rounding

Profile of achieved sample and population (Table continued)					
	Achieved sample (N)	**Achieved sample %[5]**	**Population (N)**	**Population %**	**Difference between achieved sample and population %**
Proportion of FSM-eligible pupils (bands)					
Low	195	32	769	29	+3%
Medium	214	35	976	35	-
High	209	34	1009	36	-2%
Government Office Region					
East Midlands	59	10	247	9	+1%
East of England	68	11	290	10	+1%
London	71	12	387	14	-2%
North East	31	5	131	5	-
North West	100	16	416	15	+1%
South East	93	15	444	16	-1%
South West	62	10	282	10	-
West Midlands	70	11	340	12	-1%
Yorkshire and the Humber	64	10	276	10	-

This work builds on a similar survey of 692 teachers conducted in summer 2011, although additional questions were added to the survey in 2012. There were some minor changes to question wording, which we have noted throughout the report. A copy of the questionnaire used in the survey as well as topline results for each question can be found in Appendix 5.

A note on the quantitative findings

Throughout the report we discuss differences between 2011 and 2012 findings and also any differences by sub-group characteristics within the 2012 sample. It should be noted that only statistically significant differences at the 95% confidence level are highlighted in the report; where comparisons between 2011 and 2012 or between sub-groups are discussed this is because they are statistically significant (more detail about statistical significance can be found in Appendix 7).

In keeping with the approach taken in 2011, 'don't know' and 'not applicable' responses have been removed from the base at each question, and percentages calculated using a 'valid base' (i.e. all those who have given an answer to the question).

[5] Where percentages do not equal 100% this is due to rounding

Qualitative case study work

The grid below provides an overview of the approach taken to meet the research objectives across the different participant types.

Audience type	Methodology
Teachers	Qualitative, face to face, in-depth interviews with two teachers from nine schools and in-depth telephone interviews with teachers from two schools (20 teachers interviewed in total)
Pupils	Qualitative, face to face focus groups with three groups of pupils in each of the nine case study schools. Schools selected groups of pupils who were and were not studying EBacc subjects (27 groups in total of around 3-4 pupils per group)
Parents/carers	Qualitative, in-depth telephone interviews with parents/carers from across seven schools (22 telephone interviews in total)

Qualitative case study sample

We aimed to cover a range of types of school in the qualitative research, as indicated in the table below. In particular, we aimed to speak to schools where relatively high/low proportions of pupils were entered for the EBacc, to understand why these differences existed; schools with a relatively deprived/non-deprived pupil intake[6] to understand whether the EBacc's effects were different in different school types; and a few schools where the gap between the proportion of pupils entered for the EBacc and the proportion achieving the EBacc in previous years had been large. We assumed that these latter schools may have used different strategies/policies in relation to the EBacc than other schools where the gap was smaller. Finally, we aimed to interview a spread of schools across the English regions.

Schools that had been selected to take part in the quantitative survey were excluded from the qualitative work, to avoid over-burdening teachers in these schools. Face-to-face case studies were conducted at nine schools; in each school we aimed to conduct interviews with two members of staff (usually the Headteacher or a member of the Senior Leadership Team, and a teacher involved in Year 9 options such as the Head of Year 9 or Head of GCSE choices), and three focus groups with pupils. Telephone interviews were conducted with members of the senior management team at a further two schools, where face-to-face visits could not be scheduled but where the teachers were keen to be involved in the research. Throughout the report the schools have been anonymised and labelled with numbers; the table below shows details of the types of schools included in the qualitative research.

[6] For the purposes of the qualitative research, the sample was divided into two equal-sized groups: those with an above-average proportion of FSM-eligible pupils, and those with an average or below average proportion.

Profile of schools participating in the case study research				
School	**Region**	**FSM-eligibility**	**EBacc take-up and achievement**	**Case study or telephone interview**
1	South West	Low proportion FSM-eligible pupils	Low proportion entered for/achieved EBacc	Case study
2	Midlands	Low proportion FSM-eligible pupils	High proportion entered for EBacc, relatively large gap in proportion entered/achieving EBacc	Case study
3	London/ South East	Low proportion FSM-eligible pupils	Low proportion entered for/achieved EBacc	Case study
4	South West	Low proportion FSM-eligible pupils	High proportion entered for EBacc, relatively large gap in proportion entered/achieving EBacc	Case study
5	Midlands	High proportion FSM-eligible pupils	Low proportion entered for/achieved EBacc	Case study
6	Midlands	Low proportion FSM-eligible pupils	Low proportion entered for/achieved EBacc	Case study
7	London/ South East	High proportion FSM-eligible pupils	High proportion entered for/achieved EBacc	Case study
8	North	Low proportion FSM-eligible pupils	High proportion entered for/achieved EBacc	Case study
9	North	High proportion FSM-eligible pupils	Low proportion entered for/achieved EBacc	Case study
10	North	High proportion FSM-eligible pupils	Low proportion entered for/achieved EBacc	Telephone interview
11	London/ South East	High proportion FSM-eligible pupils	High proportion entered for/achieved EBacc	Telephone interview

Within each case study school we spoke to two groups of pupils taking the EBacc and a group of pupils not taking the Ebacc.

As well as talking to teachers and pupils we also wanted to explore the influence of parents/carers in the decision making process for GCSE subject choices and understand their view on the EBacc. Participating schools were asked to circulate letters to parents/carers of Year 9 pupils; these letters invited the parents/carers to contact Ipsos MORI to take part in a short telephone interview. The table below shows the spread of these parents/carers against the different schools (note that parents/carers from seven schools opted to take part in the telephone interviews).

School Name	Number of parents/carers recruited
School 1	2
School 2	5
School 4	5
School 6	5
School 7	1
School 8	3
School 9	1

This method of recruitment meant that the parent/carer sample was self-selecting. We found that parents/carers who chose to participate in the research usually took a very active interest in their children's education choices and most were highly aware of the EBacc. Readers should bear in mind, therefore, that the parent/carer sample is likely to represent the views of parents/carers who are relatively engaged and knowledgeable about the EBacc.

A note on qualitative research

Unlike the quantitative research presented in this report, qualitative research is not by its nature designed to be statistically representative. It is intended to be illustrative and to provide in-depth understanding around a research topic. Therefore, claims cannot be made about the extent to which the conclusions may be generalised to the population. Instead, we present the broad range of views given by participants, and where appropriate make reference to overall balance of opinion or general consensus.

Verbatim quotations are used throughout the report to illustrate particular bodies of opinion, but these should not be taken to define the opinions of all teachers in secondary schools, all Year 9 pupils and parents/carers of Year 9 pupils. In some cases, sample sizes are small.

Acknowledgements

Ipsos MORI would like to thank the many teachers, pupils and parents/carers who gave up their time to take part in the research.

Chapter Two: Take-up of the EBacc

Key findings

There has been no significant change in the proportion of Year 9 pupils who have chosen either the full combination of EBacc subjects or the individual EBacc subjects since last year. In 2012, 49% of Year 9 pupils have taken subject combinations that could lead to them achieving the EBacc, which is statistically in line with the uptake of 46% in 2011. Although the change over time is not statistically significant, there is a slight upward trend in the uptake of each of the individual EBacc subjects and the EBacc combination of subjects in 2012.

A smaller proportion of pupils attending schools with a relatively high proportion of FSM-eligible pupils have selected GCSE options that could lead to them achieving the EBacc. In particular, pupils attending these schools are less likely than those attending schools with a more affluent intake to be studying GCSEs in languages and triple science.

The qualitative case studies highlighted several factors affecting EBacc take-up. Ultimately, the subjects that pupils perform well in and enjoy take precedence in GCSE selection. Whilst in some cases these are EBacc subjects, for some pupils this is not the case.

Teachers in some schools say languages are a 'sticking point' in pupils' selection of EBacc subjects, as pupils often perceive the languages to be difficult, not relevant or not enjoyable.

Most schools (89%) say that their option blocks allow pupils who want to study towards the EBacc to do so. However, both the quantitative survey and qualitative research found that schools do not encourage EBacc up-take for every pupil. Pupil attainment is largely the determining factor in this decision. Schools tend to feel that pupils should focus on subjects where they will earn higher grades and for lower attaining pupils this may not be EBacc subjects. In some instances this is because schools do not want to jeopardise other performance measures by encouraging pupils to take EBacc subjects if they will find them challenging.

Schools were asked how many of their Year 9 pupils opted to take GCSEs in each of the optional EBacc subjects and how many chose subject combinations that could lead to them achieving the EBacc. The compulsory EBacc subjects, English and mathematics, were not asked about. Using data from the Annual Schools Census on the total number of Year 9 pupils in participating schools, Ipsos MORI calculated the *proportion* of Year 9 pupils taking EBacc subjects.[7]

[7] In some cases respondents' estimates of the number of pupils taking a subject was higher than the total number of pupils in Year 9 recorded in the Annual Schools Census. In these cases the number of pupils taking the subject/Ebacc was calculated as being equal to the total number of pupils in Year 9. Proportions were calculated as the number of pupils across all participating

Uptake of the EBacc combination

The proportion of Year 9 pupils in 2012 selecting a combination of subjects that could lead to them achieving the EBacc is statistically unchanged from 2011. Just under half (49%) of Year 9 pupils have taken GCSE subject combinations that could lead to them achieving the EBacc this year, compared with 46% in 2011[8]. Although the change over time is not statistically significant, there is an upward trend in the uptake of each of the individual EBacc subjects and the EBacc combination of subjects.

A smaller proportion of pupils attending schools with a relatively high proportion of FSM-eligible pupils have selected GCSE options that could result in them achieving the EBacc (see Table 3).

Table 1

Uptake of the EBacc in 2011 and 2012
Figures show proportion of schools with each level of pupil uptake of the EBacc

Base: All schools with valid data (2012 = 584, 2011 = 629)

	2012 %	2011 %
Pupil uptake (% Year 9 pupils choosing to take EBacc combination at GCSE)		
10% or less	4	7
Over 10% up to 25%	12	15
Over 25% up to 50%	37	35
Over 50% up to 75%	32	28
Over 75% up to 100%	15	15
% Year 9 pupils taking EBacc subjects	**49**	**46**

Source: Ipsos MORI

Uptake of individual EBacc subjects

The proportion of pupils taking individual EBacc subjects has not shown a statistically significant movement compared to 2011, although the data are indicative of a slight increase across all subjects in 2012.[9] (See Table 2.)

Double science, chosen by 59% of Year 9 pupils, is the most commonly studied EBacc subject. Just over a third (34%) of Year 9 pupils have opted to study triple science. More than half (54%) of Year 9 pupils are studying a language, just over two fifths (41%) history and over a third (36%) geography.

schools taking the EBacc/EBacc subjects divided by the total number of Year 9 pupils in participating schools.

[8] The findings reported in 2011 used an 'average of averages' approach which showed the average proportion of schools' pupils taking an EBacc combination of subjects. A slightly different approach to the calculation has been followed this year, in order to derive the proportion of all Year 9 pupils taking an EBacc combination of subjects. To enable comparison, the data for 2011 have been recalculated using the same method (the data reported for 2011 originally showed 47% taking the EBacc combination).

[9] The change is not statistically significant at either the 95% or 90% levels.

Table 2

Uptake of individual EBacc subjects
Figures show proportion of schools with each level of pupil uptake for each subject

	% Schools with each level of uptake for each subject				
Pupil uptake (% Year 9 pupils choosing to take subject at GCSE)	Triple science %	Double science %	History %	Geography %	Language %
10% or less	11	8	2	4	4
Over 10% up to 25%	33	6	16	23	10
Over 25% up to 50%	41	26	55	57	35
Over 50% up to 75%	8	35	25	15	28
Over 75% up to 100%	7	25	3	2	23
% Year 9 pupils choosing subject (2012)	**34**	**59**	**41**	**36**	**54**
% Year 9 pupils choosing subject (2011)	**31**	**57**	**39**	**33**	**51**
Base: All schools with valid data	*599*	*595*	*596*	*597*	*603*

Source: Ipsos MORI

There are some differences in the proportion of Year 9 pupils studying for the EBacc and studying the individual EBacc subjects by type of school (see Table 3 below):

- The proportion of pupils studying each of the EBacc subjects (including double science) is higher in schools with a low proportion of FSM-eligible pupils than other schools. The differences are most pronounced for triple science and languages. For example, 45% of Year 9 pupils at schools with a relatively small proportion of FSM-eligible pupils have selected triple science GCSEs, compared with 26% at schools with a high proportion of FSM-eligible pupils.

- The proportion of pupils studying each of the EBacc subjects is higher at selective schools than non-selective schools, except double science, which is more popular at non-selective schools. The differences are particularly stark for triple science and languages. Eighty three percent of pupils in selective schools will study for a GCSE in triple science compared with 31% in comprehensives and 22% in secondary moderns[10]. Nearly all (95%) Year 9 pupils at selective schools will study a language GCSE, compared with 52% of Year 9 pupils attending comprehensives and 40% attending secondary moderns.

- The proportion of pupils studying triple science and languages is higher at Academies than some other types of school. This is driven by a higher

[10] It should be noted that, instead, larger proportions of pupils attending secondary moderns and comprehensive schools than selective schools study *double* science (65% and 59%, compared with 42% at selective schools).

proportion of pupils taking these subjects in Academy converter schools specifically; 42% of Year 9 pupils studying at Academy converters are taking triple science and 63% are taking languages.

Table 3

Proportion of Year 9 pupils in each type of school studying the EBacc combination and subjects

	EBacc	Triple science	Double science	History	Geography	Language
Admissions policy						
Comprehensive	48%	31%	59%	40%	35%	52%
Modern	33%	22%	65%	35%	31%	40%
Selective	84%	83%	42%	58%	52%	95%
FSM-eligibility						
Low	60%	45%	58%	48%	43%	66%
Medium	45%	31%	60%	39%	35%	51%
High	41%	26%	60%	35%	29%	44%
Establishment type						
Academy converter	57%	42%	57%	45%	41%	63%
Academy free schools[11]	[100%]	[100%]	[100%]	[100%]	[100%]	[100%]
Academy Sponsor led	36%	24%	50%	33%	23%	41%
Community	46%	30%	59%	37%	34%	49%
Foundation	39%	29%	59%	37%	30%	44%
Voluntary aided/controlled	52%	32%	68%	44%	38%	57%

Source: Ipsos MORI

The qualitative research revealed a number of issues which are important in explaining the levels of take-up of the EBacc. We cover these issues in more depth later in this report (see chapter 4, Awareness and understanding of the EBacc) but we briefly outline some of the key issues affecting take-up below.

What pupils are good at and enjoy takes precedence over the EBacc

All teachers, parents/carers, and pupils involved in the qualitative work shared the view that pupils should primarily be guided by their interests and talents when selecting GCSE subjects and, where pupils had specific careers in mind, their career aspirations. For some pupils this will mean selecting EBacc subjects at GCSE, but in many cases pupils' interests and abilities will lie in other subject choices. This point links with an uncertainty among many teachers interviewed in the qualitative research about whether the EBacc in itself has any inherent value

[11] Only one Academy free school participated.

for pupils rather than being purely a school performance measure: unless teachers are convinced on this point, there is no incentive to give greater priority to the EBacc subjects.

Languages is a 'sticking point' in some schools

Views towards languages are intrinsically linked to EBacc take-up. In the case study work, schools which were relatively academic, and/or had lower proportions of FSM-eligible pupils, often described high levels of languages uptake amongst their pupils; generally in these schools there was either a 'strong expectation' that pupils would study languages or it was compulsory. In contrast, teachers from less academic schools and/or schools with higher numbers of FSM-eligible pupils tended to describe lower uptake of languages. Teachers in these schools say languages are a *'sticking point'* for the EBacc, as pupils perceive languages to be more difficult or of less use to them than other subjects, or simply do not like the language subjects. This was the case even among academically able pupils. Furthermore, a few schools filter pupils into the EBacc pathway or an alternative pathway, depending on their abilities in languages (see Case study: Filtering pupils into the EBacc pathway, later in this chapter).

The benefits of achieving the EBacc are not always clear

There is a considerable degree of confusion about what the EBacc actually is and what value it holds for pupils. Some schools see the EBacc purely as a measure of school performance which does not confer any benefits on pupils. As a result, these schools do not seek to promote the EBacc combination of subjects amongst their pupils.

Religious Education (RE) not being included as an EBacc subject

Almost all case study schools questioned the exclusion of RE as an EBacc subject. This is directly relevant to the take-up of the EBacc: while many teachers are uncertain about the future impact of the EBacc, they regard RE as an academically rigorous subject that is useful in its own right. In some of the case study schools, teachers explained they would not steer pupils away from RE into an EBacc-eligible humanity if that is where their interests lay. RE was a popular subject among many schools and pupils, and a few schools noted that their EBacc figures would rise if RE were eligible.

> *"If RE was a [EBacc-eligible] humanity we would probably have 100% of pupils doing a humanity."*
> *(Teacher, School 5)*

> *"The non-inclusion [of RE] seems strange to us, because philosophically given that [the EBacc] includes history or geography, not both, no one is saying you must have the experience of history or geography because you could do without either of them - is there something common to them that's not there in RE?"*
> *(Teacher, School 4)*

Do schools enable all pupils to study the EBacc?

Almost nine in ten (89%) teachers say their option blocks allow all pupils who want to study towards the EBacc to do so, whereas just over one in ten (11%) say that they do not.

Teachers from schools with low or medium proportions of FSM-eligible pupils are significantly more likely than those from schools with a high proportion to say that their option blocks allow all pupils who want to study towards the EBacc to do so (93%, 91% and 84% respectively). In contrast, those from schools with a relatively high proportion of FSM-eligible pupils are more likely than average to say that their option blocks do not permit this (16% compared with 11%).

Teachers from community schools are more likely than average to say that their option blocks do not allow all pupils who want to study towards the EBacc to do so (15% compared with 11%).

Where schools' option blocks do not allow all pupils who want to study towards the EBacc to do so, just over three fifths (63%) of teachers say that this is because the EBacc is not available to low-attaining pupils, and six percent say some pupils are encouraged to take alternative pathways. A fifth (21%) say that it is because the EBacc combination is not available in all option blocks. A small minority of schools (4%) say that they do not have option blocks.

The qualitative case studies help to explain the finding that low attaining pupils are not always being offered the EBacc. This can largely be explained by reference to the commonly held view that was apparent throughout the case studies that pupils should choose subjects that they enjoy, are good at, and which will help them in their future career. For low-attaining pupils, this is often not seen to lead naturally to the EBacc combination.

A second factor is some schools' perception that the EBacc is a less important performance measure than the proportion of pupils achieving five 'A*' to 'C' grades at GCSE, a perception that is strengthened by a feeling amongst some teachers that the EBacc is liable to change with any new government. A few schools mentioned that they are unwilling to jeopardise what they see as the more important performance measure by encouraging pupils to take EBacc subjects that they may not perform well in. Several case study schools (as well as schools in the survey) made it clear that they targeted the EBacc at their most academically able pupils.

Case study: Filtering pupils into the EBacc pathway (School 1)

This school is a secondary modern which has worked hard to increase its performance on standard metrics, notably the 5 'A*'-'C' performance measure. In previous years a low proportion of pupils had achieved the EBacc and its introduction was viewed with concern.

> *"I've got to pay attention to it but I would not jeopardise the other headline figures."*
> *(Deputy Headteacher)*

As a result the school says that whilst pupils who will gain a 'C' or above will be guided towards the EBacc, they will not take chances with pupils who are on the 'C/D' grade border as they may benefit from taking other subjects instead. In practice, French (the only language offered by the school) is used to filter pupils: those who are deemed capable of attaining a 'C' in GCSE French are encouraged down the EBacc pathway, while the EBacc is not discussed with those who are unlikely to gain a 'C'.

> *"Why should I convince a kid to take French when they're not going to get a 'C' in it 'cause it's one of the hardest subjects but then if they do art or BTEC PE they're going to come out with a bag full of 'C's?"*
> *(Deputy Headteacher)*

The school therefore prioritised the pupils getting better grades in subjects that are appropriate to them and the impact this has on the school's performance figures over the proportion taking the EBacc.

> *"My first priority is the children, that they are doing the subjects that they are going to get a C or above in and what leads them on to their future choice in career or further education. My second priority is the headline figures [i.e. 5 'A*'-'C' including English and maths] and the school's reputation and my third priority is EBacc."*
> *(Deputy Headteacher)*

EBacc subjects offered by schools

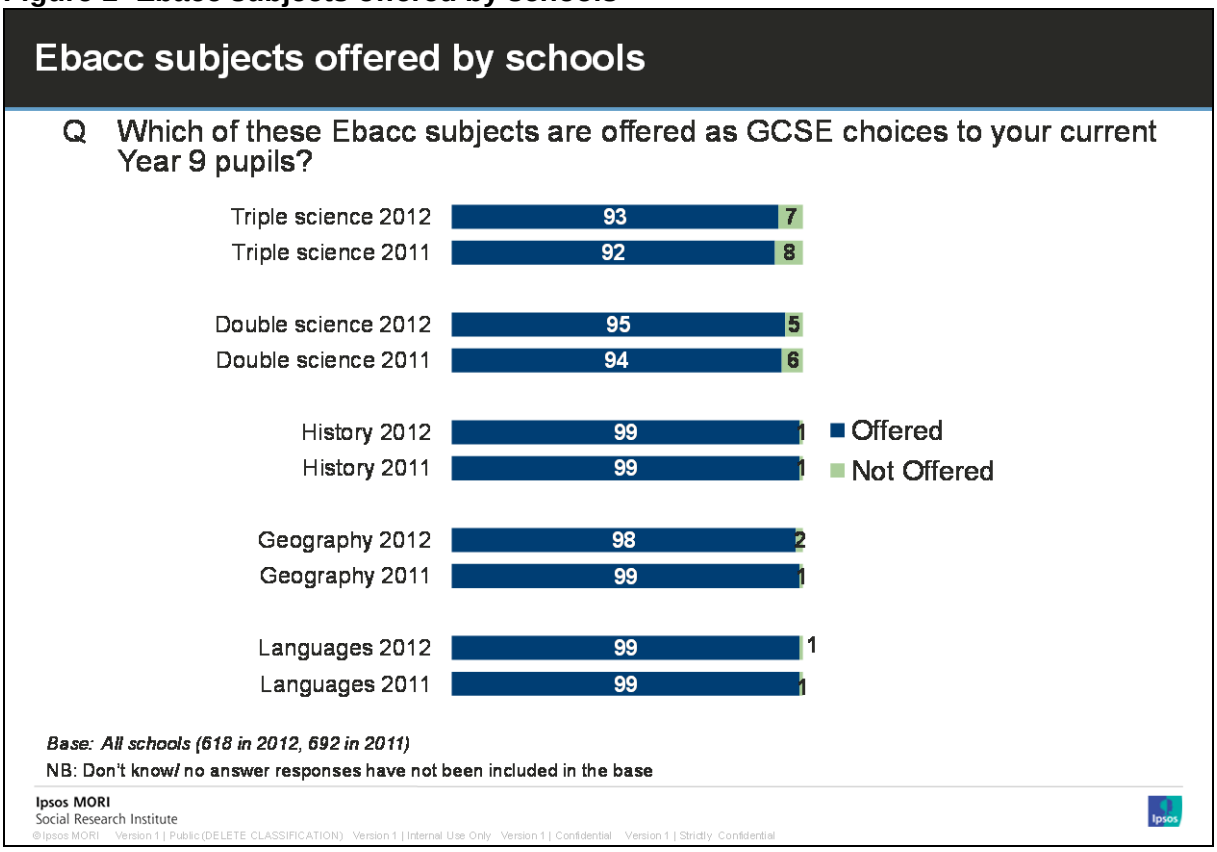
Ninety eight percent of schools offer a choice of subjects that enable their pupils to study towards the EBacc – triple and/or double science, history and/or geography, and a language.

Virtually all schools offer all EBacc subjects[12]: 99% offer a language and history; 98% offer geography; 95% offer double science; and 93% offer triple science. Ninety nine percent of schools offer either double or triple science GCSEs.

[12] Of the 618 schools interviewed, 12 did not offer a range of subjects that would enable their pupils to gain the EBacc. Seven schools did not offer GCSE science (either double or triple). Seven schools offered none of history, geography, or languages (with three schools offering none of the EBacc subjects at GCSE). Because of the small number of schools involved and the range of these schools, it is not possible to profile any particular type of school that is not offering the EBacc.

There have been no statistically significant changes in the proportion of schools offering EBacc subjects since 2011.

Figure 1- Ebacc subjects offered by schools



Schools with large numbers of Year 9 pupils are more likely than schools with smaller Year 9 groups to offer all the EBacc subjects.[13] Large schools are more likely than small schools to offer triple science (96% compared with 90%), double science (98% compared with 93%), history (100% compared with 98%), geography (100% compared with 96%) and a language (100% compared with 97%).

Whether EBacc subjects are offered to all or some pupils

Where a subject was offered, teachers were asked if the subject was offered to all or some of their Year 9 pupils. The great majority of schools say they offer all the EBacc subjects to at least some of their pupils. However, a small minority of schools do not offer some of the EBacc subjects, particularly sciences.

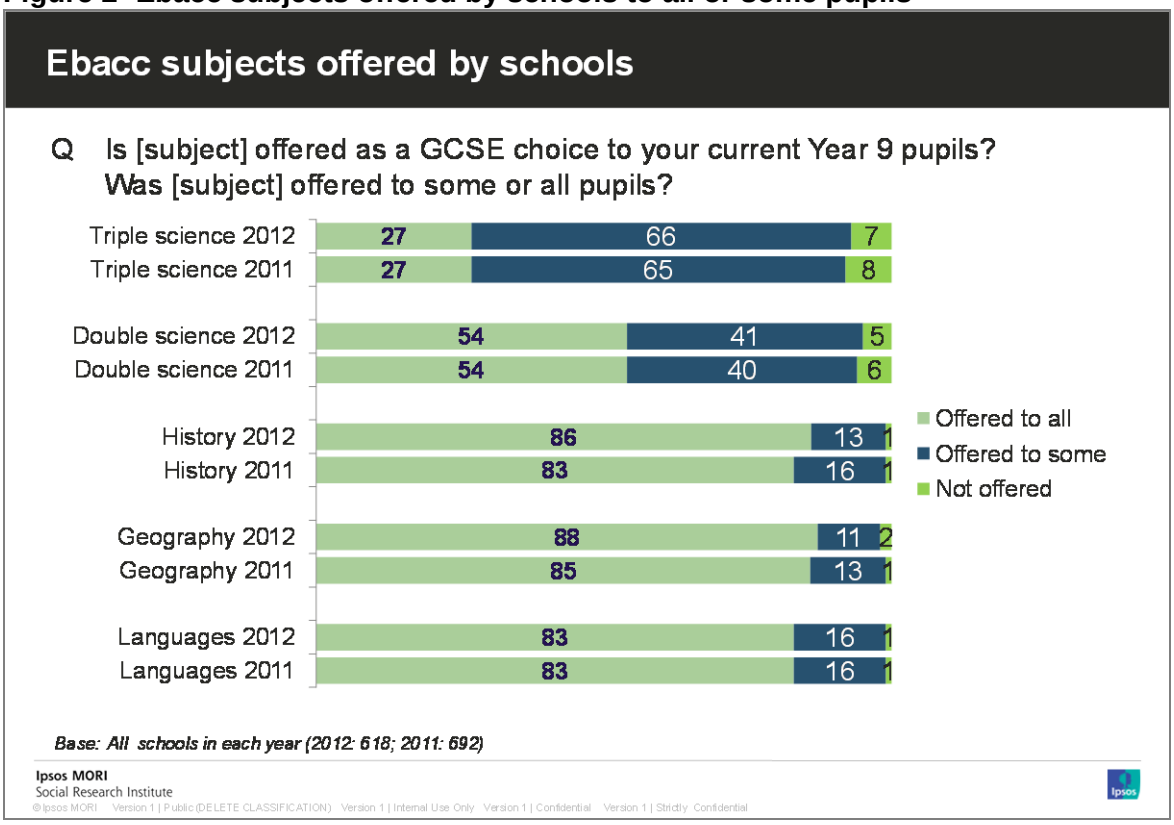
Just over a quarter (27%) of teachers say their school offers triple science to *all* pupils, and 54% say double science is offered to all. Considering the sciences together, three fifths (60%) of schools say they offer *either* double or triple science to all their pupils.

[13] Schools were grouped into tertiles based on the number of Year 9 pupils on roll and classified as having a relatively 'large' (272+ Year 9 pupils), 'medium' or 'small' (136 or fewer Year 9 pupils) Year 9 group.

Just over eight in ten (83%) say that they offer a language to all pupils, and a similar proportion say they offer history (86%) and geography (88%) to all.

The figures for all subjects have remained steady year-on-year, with no statistically significant changes.

Figure 2- Ebacc subjects offered by schools to all or some pupils



There are some consistent patterns across different types of school:

- Schools with smaller numbers of pupils in Year 9 are more likely than schools with a relatively large Year 9 intake to offer triple science to *all* pupils, while larger schools are more likely to offer it only to *some* pupils.

- Schools with a high proportion of FSM-eligible pupils are more likely than schools with a small proportion of FSM-eligible pupils to offer triple science to *some* pupils, and less likely to offer it to *all* their pupils. Schools with a high proportion of FSM-eligible pupils are only half as likely as those with a low proportion to offer triple science to *all* their pupils (19% compared with 38%). The same pattern is evident for history, geography and languages, although the differences are less marked for other subjects.

- Selective schools are more likely to offer triple science, history and languages to *all* their pupils than other types of school. For example, triple science is offered to all pupils in 88% of selective schools, but in only 23%

of non-selective schools. Languages are offered to all pupils in 100% of selective schools but in only 82% of non-selective schools.

The findings from the quantitative survey that schools' subject offers are remaining constant over time is consistent with the findings in the qualitative work. In the case study schools, the changes made in response to the EBacc generally related to facilitating the uptake of EBacc subjects, for example by re-arranging subject blocks, increasing resourcing or taking steps to improve teaching in EBacc subjects. Only a few schools described changing their subject offer. Indeed, the overall message from many schools was that the EBacc is in line with what was happening before its introduction.

> *"We've had to slightly change our option columns to enable more pupils to be able to do the EBacc choices if they feel that's appropriate for them." (Teacher, School 5)*

Are EBacc subjects compulsory for all or some pupils?

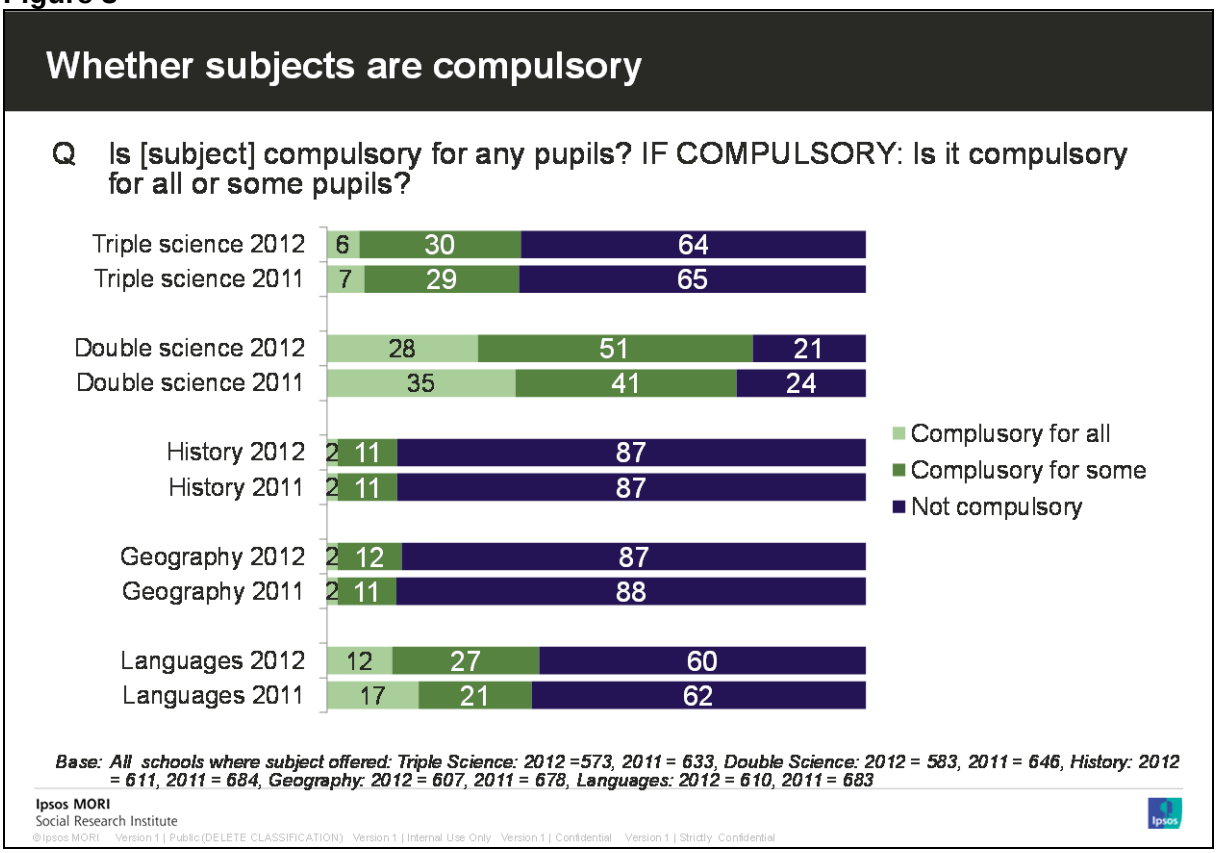
Of all the optional EBacc subjects, the sciences are most likely to be compulsory for all pupils. Either double or triple science is compulsory for *at least some* pupils in 80% of schools, and in 30% of schools studying double or triple science is compulsory for *all* pupils. In line with findings in 2011, double science is more likely than triple science to be compulsory. The figures for double science show a statistically significant change from 2011: schools are now more likely to make double science compulsory for *some* pupils, rather than compulsory for all.

Four in ten (40%) teachers say that a language is compulsory for some or all pupils at their school. Of these, just over a quarter (27%) say that it is compulsory for some of them whilst slightly more than one in ten (12%) say that it is compulsory for all of them. Three fifths say that a language is not compulsory for any of their pupils. Over time, there appears to be a trend towards schools making languages compulsory for only some pupils, rather than all pupils, although the change is not statistically significant.[14]

Geography and history are the EBacc subjects least likely to be compulsory for any or all pupils. There has been no statistically significant change in these figures since 2011.

[14] This difference is not statistically significant when tested at the 95% or 90% level.

Figure 3



Among schools that offer each subject, there are some consistent patterns in terms of subjects that are compulsory:

- Schools with smaller Year 9 groups are more likely than large schools to make triple science, history and geography compulsory for at least some pupils. For example, teachers from schools with a small or medium number of Year 9 pupils are more likely than those from schools with a high number to say that triple science is compulsory for all their pupils (10% and 8% compared with 1%).

- Schools with a high proportion of FSM-eligible pupils are less likely than schools with low proportions of FSM-eligible pupils to say that it is compulsory for their pupils to study history or geography. Schools with relatively high proportions of FSM-eligible pupils are also less likely than schools with relatively low FSM-eligible numbers to make triple science compulsory for all their pupils (1% compared with 15%), or a language compulsory for all (5% compared with 27%).

- Academy converters are more likely than other schools to say that it is compulsory for all pupils to take triple science (13% compared with 6% overall) and a language (21% compared to 12% overall).

- Academy converters (90%) are more likely than sponsor-led academies to make geography compulsory for all pupils.

- Triple science and a language are more likely to be compulsory for pupils studying at single sex schools than co-educational schools. Triple science is compulsory at 26% of single sex schools compared with 3% of co-educational schools, and a language is compulsory at 40% of single sex schools compared with 8% of co-educational schools. These findings reflect the fact that single sex schools are proportionately more likely to be selective than co-educational schools.

- Voluntary aided/controlled schools are more likely than average to make it compulsory for their pupils to study double science, history, and geography. Teachers from voluntary aided/controlled schools are less likely than average to say that double science is *not* compulsory for any pupils (11% compared with 21%). History is more likely to be compulsory for *all* pupils in voluntary aided or controlled schools (5% compared with 2%), as is geography (5% compared with 2%).

Very few schools involved in the qualitative research explicitly compel their pupils to take all of the EBacc subjects. Most commonly, maths, English and either double or triple science are compulsory, whilst the option blocks enable pupils to have a free choice regarding whether to take a language, history or geography. Indeed, in a small number of the case study schools, there are no option blocks at all and pupils are allowed a completely free choice, beyond the schools' core subjects. This reflects a principle shared by many schools that forcing pupils to take subjects they do not enjoy would be counter-productive.

> *"We pride ourselves on giving pupils a reasonably free choice in their options. We don't band subjects and say take one from here and one from there. We don't say that pupils have to take the EBacc." (Teacher, School 2)*

A small number of case study schools however did compel pupils to choose particular subjects; for example, one school was previously a language college and continues to compel its pupils to take at least one modern language GCSE, and one school said that the EBacc combination is compulsory for their pupils.

However, whilst pupils are typically given a nominally free choice, the way the option blocks are structured in some schools may effectively compel them to take particular subjects, or require them to select one of a particular type of subject. Furthermore, whilst some subjects may not *technically* be compulsory, some case study schools explained that there is a '*strong expectation'* that academically able pupils take the EBacc combination of subjects.

Chapter Three: Effects of the introduction of the EBacc on schools

Key findings

Over half of schools (53%) say that the EBacc has not impacted the curriculum offer for the current academic year, whilst almost half (47%) say that it has[15]. Similarly, a little over half (52%) say that it has not had an effect on option blocks, whilst a little under half (48%) say that it has. In both cases, schools with a high proportion of FSM pupils are more likely to say that the EBacc has had an effect.

These findings are consistent with the qualitative research which reveals that in many schools the EBacc reflects existing practice; in these cases, teachers say the EBacc has had a limited effect on what their school is doing, although some have observed increased uptake in the EBacc subjects. Several case study schools noted that they have made changes to help facilitate pupils in taking the EBacc, such as adjusting their options blocks or increasing the provision of EBacc subjects. Several case study schools were targeting their most able pupils and encouraging them to take the EBacc, while encouraging less academic pupils to take other subjects.

The survey findings indicate that although there were changes as a result of the EBacc in the 2011/12 academic year, the proportion anticipating further changes is much smaller, suggesting that many schools have now made the changes they feel are necessary to adjust to the EBacc. Whilst in almost half of schools teachers felt the EBacc had impacted curricula in 2011/12, only 15% say they expect to make changes in 2012/13.

In 2012 a lower proportion of schools reported that a non-EBacc course had been withdrawn as a result of the EBacc compared to the 2011 survey. A little over a quarter (27%) of teachers say that their schools have withdrawn a course or qualification as a result of the EBacc. The subject most likely to be affected is drama or the performing arts; almost a quarter (23%) of these teachers say qualifications or courses in these subjects have been withdrawn.

The EBacc has had little impact on schools' early entry policies, with 94% of teachers saying that these have not been affected.

Three in ten (30%) schools say that the EBacc has had an impact on their staffing structure in the 2011/2012 academic year and one in five (20%) expect it to have an impact on staffing in the 2012/13 academic year.

Schools described a variety of changes that they have made in response to the EBacc. These can be summarised as falling broadly into four groups:

[15] Please note, however, that the majority of changes that teachers described related to changing option blocks rather than changing their curriculum. In reality, the proportion of schools making changes to their curriculum offer is much smaller.

- **Provision of information** to parents/carers and pupils explaining the EBacc and, in some schools, encouraging some pupils to take the EBacc combination of subjects.

- **Adjusting option blocks**, for example by increasing the number of blocks featuring languages, history or geography, in order to make it easier for pupils to take EBacc subjects. In some schools, this has also involved **making some subjects compulsory** for the first time.

- Some schools have made **changes to the teaching or resourcing** of EBacc subjects. This often entails increasing the number of classes available in the optional EBacc subjects. Some case study schools also mentioned that resources for EBacc subjects were improved, or new teachers recruited.

- Less commonly, schools had made **changes to the curriculum**. These typically include expanding the number of classes on offer in EBacc courses, and sometimes limiting the number or availability of non-EBacc courses.

The qualitative research made it clear that not all schools are making all of these changes, and some are not doing anything differently as a result of the EBacc. The case study schools fell broadly into three groups: schools which had made no changes due to the EBacc, schools which had made changes to facilitate the EBacc, and schools which were actively targeting some pupils to take the EBacc. (Note that the first group is fairly distinct, but that there is some overlap in the second and third groups.)

(a) This is what we were doing anyway

Around half of the case study schools said that the EBacc reflects what they were already doing: they already offered all of the EBacc subjects, and pupils were either compelled or strongly expected to take a science, humanity and language. In these schools the only changes made by the school tend to be the information and guidance provided to pupils and parents/carers. In most cases this information aimed purely to inform pupils and parents/carers that the EBacc exists, and typically schools did not actively encourage pupils to take EBacc subjects. For example, several teachers made clear that they would not encourage pupils to take history or geography if they were interested in another humanity simply in order to attain an EBacc.

> *"In a sense we're lucky in that they all do a language anyway...[and] history and geography have always had a pretty big take up…So in a way we didn't need to change anything."*
> *(Teacher, School 8)*

Teachers in several of these schools noted that, despite them not particularly encouraging the EBacc, they had seen greater rates of take-up of EBacc subjects, whilst some non-EBacc subjects had seen a corresponding decrease (e.g. a decline in technology in favour of history or geography). From discussions with pupils, it appeared that pupils and parents/carers may place more importance on

the EBacc than teachers in some of these cases, or were more concerned about the possible implications of *not* having the EBacc on their future progression.

(b) We are just facilitating the EBacc

Several case study schools said the EBacc largely reflects existing practice, but they had made efforts to facilitate pupils selecting this combination of subjects. This mainly entailed adjusting option blocks to give pupils more opportunities to select the EBacc subjects, and was not perceived to be a significant or difficult adjustment to make.

Several case study schools said they had 'bolstered' their language, geography and history departments, through recruiting new – and, in some cases, better – teachers, and refreshing the resources used in these subjects. In a few cases, headteachers acknowledged that the poor quality teaching in a few EBacc subjects had dampened demand and aimed to recruit more inspirational teachers to encourage greater uptake. A few case study schools had introduced new subjects, such as ancient history and new languages, to increase provision in the EBacc subjects.

(c) Targeting pupils and introducing compulsion for EBacc subjects

Several case study schools explained that they carefully targeted the EBacc offer to their most academic pupils. Usually pupils who were identified as capable were 'strongly encouraged' to select the EBacc, but in one school these pupils were not given any GCSE option choices and all were studying towards the EBacc.

Schools in this group seemed to have pupils with lower aspirations than pupils in the most academic schools. Most of these schools had made no other changes to their offer beyond the information and advice they offered to pupils and parents/carers. A few of these schools said that they had previously struggled with pupils whose aspirations fell short of their academic potential; these teachers seemed to welcome the EBacc as a means of encouraging pupils to select subjects that could demonstrate their abilities. A few other schools explicitly referenced their conscious decision not to jeopardise other GCSE performance metrics (5 'A*'-'C') by making the EBacc mandatory: pupils may achieve 5 good GCSEs but they may not be capable of achieving them in the EBacc subjects. One school used languages, seen as the most difficult EBacc subject, as a filter to determine whether pupils were capable of attaining the EBacc.

Influence of the EBacc on school curricula and GCSE option blocks

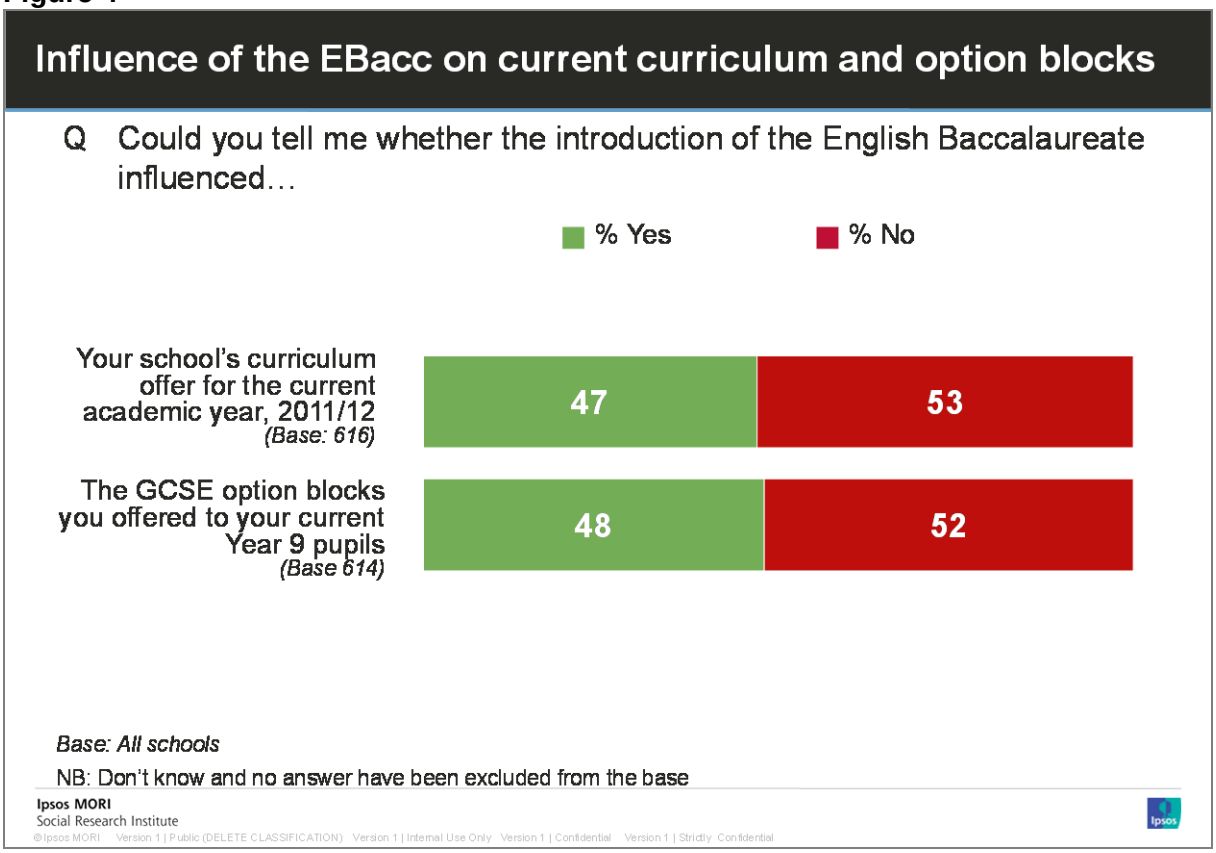
Teachers are evenly split as to whether the EBacc has influenced their schools' curriculum offer for the current academic year, with a little over half (53%) saying that it has not and just under half (47%) saying that it has. These figures are in line with teachers' expectations in 2011: a year ago just over half said they *expected* to make changes to their school's curriculum offer in the next academic year due to the EBacc (52%)[16].

[16] Note that different teachers were interviewed each year, but that teachers from a representative sample of schools were interviewed each year.

A similar split was found when teachers were asked whether the EBacc has influenced the option blocks offered to their current Year 9 pupils (52% say that it has not, whilst 48% say that it has).

However, analysis of the types of changes teachers have made to their curriculum offer and option blocks suggests that much of what teachers classify as *curriculum* changes would more accurately be described as changes to option blocks and the resourcing of subjects (see later in this chapter for detailed analysis).

Figure 4



Considering whether the EBacc has influenced their school's curriculum offer for the current academic year, teachers from schools with high and medium proportions of FSM-eligible pupils are more likely than those with low proportions of such pupils to say that it has (61%, 46%, and 32% respectively). The same pattern is evident in relation to option blocks; teachers from schools with high and medium proportions of FSM-eligible pupils were more likely than those from schools with low proportions to say that it had (65%, 46%, and 30% respectively).

Teachers from Academy converter schools are less likely than average to say the EBacc has affected their school's current curriculum offer (38% compared with 47%), whilst those from community schools are more likely to say it has had an impact (53%). Similarly, teachers from Academy converter schools are less likely to say that option blocks have been affected by the EBacc (35% compared with 47%), while teachers from community schools and foundation schools are much more likely to feel it has influenced option blocks (57%).

Teachers from small schools are more likely than those based in large schools to say that their option blocks for current Year 9 pupils have been affected by the EBacc (52% compared with 41%).

Ways in which the EBacc has influenced schools' curriculum offer and option blocks

Table 4 shows that when teachers were asked about the ways in which the EBacc had influenced their curriculum offer for the current academic year the most commonly given responses relate to changing option blocks and providing information about the EBacc rather than curriculum change *per se*.[17] For example, the most common changes mentioned related to restructuring option blocks to increase pupils' opportunities to take the EBacc combination (23%) and providing guidance or encouragement to pupils to select these subjects (19%).

Nevertheless, it is clear that some schools have made changes to their curriculum offer. These changes most often involve increasing the provision for teaching EBacc subjects, including languages (9%), history (8%), and geography (7%), and 'creating a more academic curriculum' to align with the EBacc (7%). Other commonly mentioned changes involved reducing the non-EBacc subjects offered (9%), and reducing the vocational subjects offered (8%).

In terms of the options that pupils themselves are offered, the results show that a significant minority of schools are starting to make EBacc subjects compulsory, including the humanities (9%) and languages (6%), and EBacc subjects in general (7%). There is also more evidence – which is consistent with the findings from the case study work – that schools are creating a two-tier pathway, with the more academically able pupils directed towards EBacc subjects. Sixteen percent of schools say their higher attaining pupils are advised or encouraged to take the EBacc, and 6% refer to a two-tier pathway.

[17] These changes may affect the curriculum that pupils are taught, but in most cases responses suggest there are no fundamental changes to the curriculum schools were already offering.

Table 4

Ways the EBacc has influenced schools' curriculum offer in 2011/12 Showing all responses mentioned by at least 5% of responding schools; responses highlighted in grey relate to curriculum change.	
Base: All schools whose curriculum offer in current academic year has been influenced by the EBacc (288)	%
Created different option blocks/ restructured the option blocks to increase EBacc pathways/ opportunities	23
Provided guidance/ encouragement to take EBacc/ EBacc subjects	19
Directed at higher attaining pupils/ higher attaining pupils encouraged or advised to do EBacc	16
Reduced choice of options/ smaller curriculum/ reducing non-EBacc options	9
Geography/ history/ humanities compulsory	9
Increased number of language classes/ pupils	9
Decreased number of vocational subjects/ pupils/ qualifications that are not GCSEs	8
Increased number of history classes/ pupils	8
Compulsion for some subjects/ EBacc compulsory for at least some pupils	7
Increased focus on EBacc subjects as part of curriculum/ created a more academic curriculum	7
Increased number of geography classes/ pupils	7
Made the curriculum more flexible/ re-designed the curriculum	7
Created a two-tier pathway/ curriculum/ one for EBacc and one for non-EBacc	6
Made EBacc/ EBacc subjects accessible to all pupils/ as many pupils as possible	6
Compulsion for languages	6
	Source: Ipsos MORI

Teachers who had indicated their school's option blocks had been influenced in the 2011/12 academic year due to the EBacc were asked about the changes made. The most commonly mentioned changes are aimed at increasing pupils' opportunities to take the EBacc combination of subjects (21%), as well as humanities subjects specifically (17%). Teachers also referred to their schools having reduced the non-EBacc choices available to pupils (16%). Other responses relate to having made some EBacc subjects compulsory, for example by placing languages in its own option block, thus compelling pupils to select a language (12%). There is also more mention of schools having used option blocks to create two-tier pathways for pupils (5%) and filtering the more academically able pupils into the EBacc pathway (7%).

Table 5

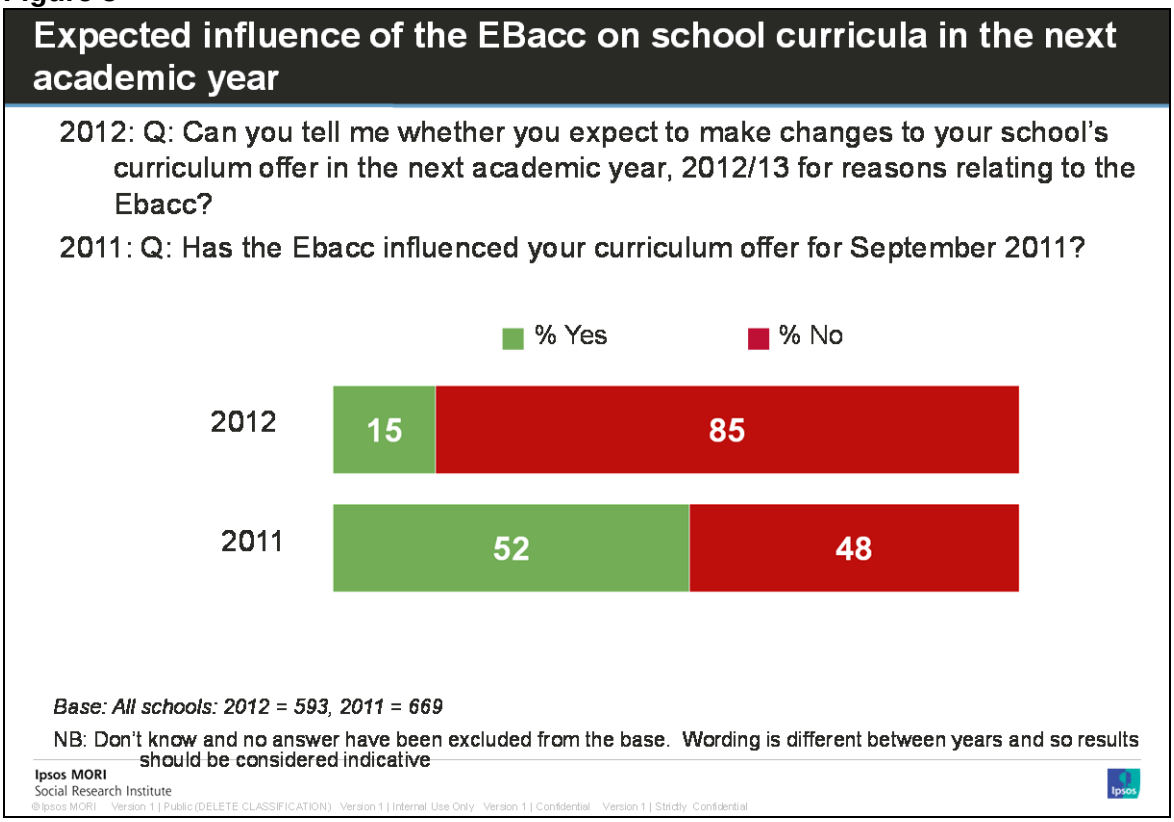
Ways the EBacc has influenced schools' option blocks in 2011/12 Showing all responses mentioned by at least 5% of responding schools	
Base: All schools whose option blocks in current academic year have been influenced by the EBacc (292)	%
Restructuring options blocks/ changing options to offer a route to facilitate gaining an EBacc	21
Re-organised option blocks to facilitate pupils taking history/ geography/ humanities	17
Fewer option blocks/ reduced choice/ removing emphasis on non-EBacc or vocational subjects	16
Languages has its own option block/ option blocks designed to facilitate uptake of languages	12
Increase in the provision of languages/ languages	7
Directed at more able pupils	7
Pupils' option choices have been extended/ wider range/ additional pathway	7
Geography/ history/ humanities compulsory	6
Pupils offered different pathways depending on whether or not taking EBacc/ offered multiple pathways	5

Source: Ipsos MORI

Expected influence of the EBacc on school curricula and GCSE option blocks in 2012/13

Considering the future, over eight in ten (85%) teachers say that they do not expect to make changes to their school's curriculum offer for the next academic year because of the EBacc, whilst fifteen percent say that they do. The expectation of change is markedly different than one year ago, which perhaps reflects that most schools have now adapted their curriculum offer.

Figure 5



Teachers from schools with a high or medium proportion of FSM-eligible pupils are more likely than those from schools with a low proportion to say that they expect to make changes to their curriculum offer (21%, 15%, and 7% respectively). Teachers from schools with a high proportion of FSM-eligible pupils are also more likely than average to say that they expect to make changes to their GCSE option blocks (17% compared with 13%).

Thinking about the GCSE option blocks their schools will offer to Year 9 pupils next year, almost nine in ten (87%) teachers say that they do not expect these to change for reasons related to the EBacc. Just over one in ten (13%) say that they do.

Changes schools expect to make to their curriculum offer and option blocks in 2012/13 due to the EBacc

Tables 6 and 7 summarise the changes teachers expect their schools to make in the next academic year in response to the EBacc. In general, the types of changes outlined here reflect the changes that schools have made already (see Table 4). There are some common themes in the curriculum changes schools expect to make (Table 6):

- A significant minority of schools mention providing more opportunities to study languages (20%), or making it compulsory for their pupils to study languages (9%). The same pattern of planning for increased opportunity/compulsion is evident for humanities, but to a lesser degree.

- Some schools intend to provide more guidance and encouragement to their pupils to study the EBacc (10%); again, a significant minority refer to targeting particular types of pupils and creating pathways for the more academically able pupils to study for the EBacc.

- The findings suggest that curricula will be narrowed, with reductions in the choice of subjects pupils are offered (10%) and in the BTECs offered (6%). At the same time, some schools mention creating pathways that enable pupils to study EBacc and other types of subjects in order to retain some flexibility and choice for pupils (6%).

Table 6

Changes schools expect to make to their curriculum offer in 2012/13 due to the EBacc
Showing all responses mentioned by at least 5% of responding schools

Base: All schools expecting to make changes to their curriculum offer in the next academic year due to the EBacc (86)	%
Increased opportunities/ number of pupils taking languages	20
Changes to the type of subjects/ subject combinations/ courses being offered	10
More guidance/ encouragement for pupils to take EBacc	10
Reduction in the choice of subjects/ options offered	10
Compulsion for languages	9
Recommendations aimed at pupils with high academic abilities	8
Increased number of pupils taking EBacc	7
Geography/ history/ humanities compulsory	7
Creation of pathways/ routes for EBacc pupils	7
Increased flexibility to make sure those taking EBacc subjects can still do other subjects	6
Increased opportunities/ number of pupils taking humanities	6
Reduction in BTECs/ changes to BTECs	6
Compulsion for some EBacc subjects/ more emphasis on EBacc subjects	5

Source: Ipsos MORI

As shown in Table 7, those schools intending to make changes to option blocks are usually planning the types of change seen among schools that have already made changes in 2011/12, including narrowing the choice of vocational/non-EBacc subjects offered, and increasing opportunities for pupils to study the EBacc by adjusting option blocks (17%).

Table 7

Changes schools expect to make to their option blocks in 2012/13 due to the EBacc Showing all responses mentioned by at least 5% of responding schools	
Base: All schools expecting to make changes to option blocks in the next academic year due to the EBacc (78)	%
Reduction of choices/ options/ vocational subjects/ smaller curriculum	18
Restructuring of option blocks/ dropping some subjects	17
EBacc subjects offered in more option blocks/ change option blocks to facilitate the EBacc	17
Extension of the choices/ more options/ subjects available	12
Increase in language provision	10
Provision of guidance/ encouragement to take EBacc subjects	5
Uptake of geography/ history compulsory/ encouraged through option blocks	5
Increase in science provision	5

Source: Ipsos MORI

Withdrawal of non-EBacc subjects

Just under three quarters (73%) of teachers say that no subjects or courses have been withdrawn or failed to recruit enough pupils for the 2012/13 academic year because of the EBacc. Just over a quarter (27%) say that a subject or course has been withdrawn.

These results are statistically different than the results in 2011, when a significantly higher proportion (45%) of teachers said that a course or subject had been withdrawn because of the EBacc.

The most commonly withdrawn subject is drama or performing arts, with almost a quarter (23%) of teachers whose schools have withdrawn a subject saying that they no longer offer this. Around one in six (17%) say that art has been withdrawn, whilst around one in seven (14%) say that design or design technology has been withdrawn. Eleven percent say that textiles has been withdrawn.

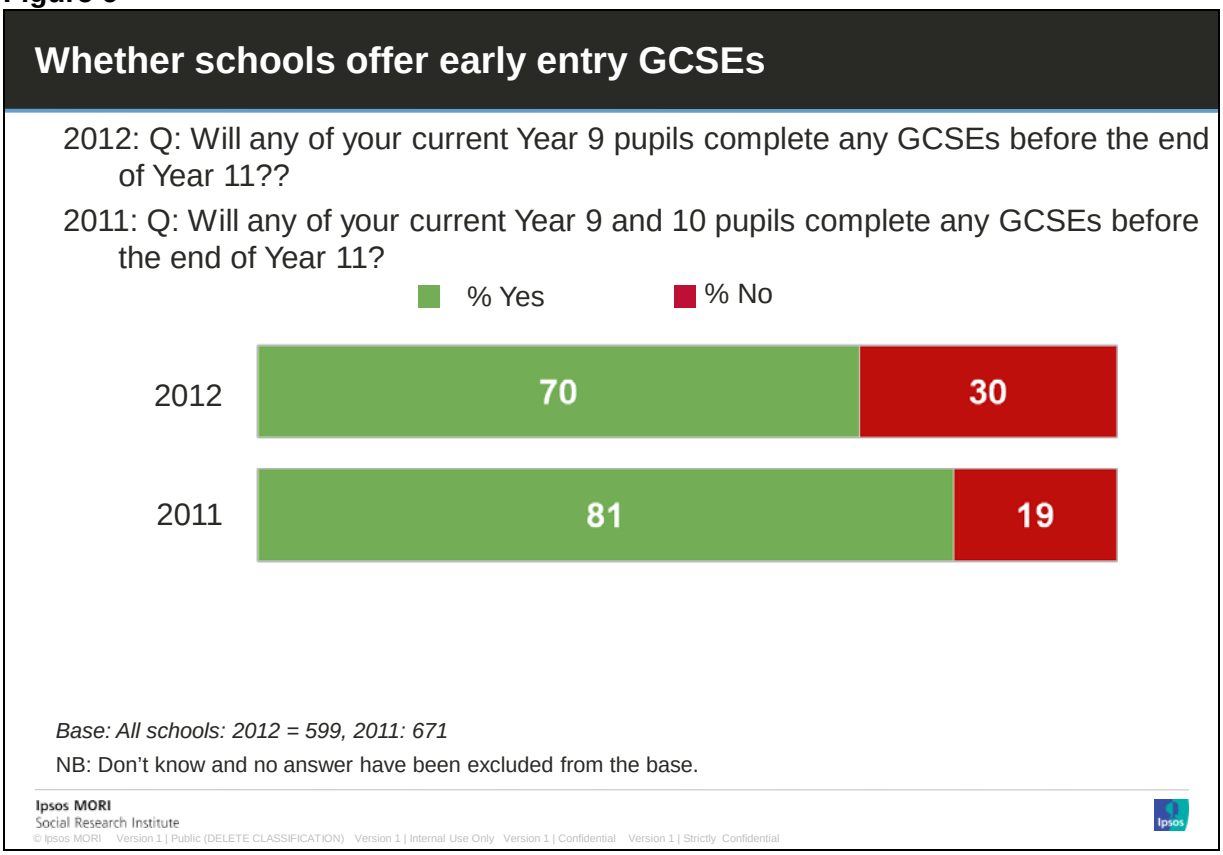
A fifth (20%) say that they have withdrawn a BTEC (but do not specify the subject).

Are schools offering early entry?

Seven out of ten teachers interviewed say that they have Year 9 pupils who will complete a GCSE before the end of Year 11. Three out of ten (30%) say they do not.

These figures represent a statistically significant change from those seen in 2011, when 81% of teachers said that they had Year 9 pupils who would complete a GCSE before Year 11, and 19% said that they did not (although note that teachers were asked about both Year 10 and Year 9 last year).

Figure 6



Impact of the EBacc on early entry policies in 2011/12

The great majority of teachers (94%) said their school did not make changes to their early entry policy in 2011/12 because of the EBacc. Six percent of teachers said that their school had done so.

These findings are in line with those of the qualitative research; teachers from the case study schools overwhelmingly said that the introduction of the EBacc has not had an impact on their early entries policies.

Expected impact of the EBacc on early entry policies in 2012/13

Thinking about the future, teachers were asked whether they expect their school to make any changes to its early entry policy because of the EBacc. Over nine in ten (94%) say that they do not, whilst six percent say that they do.

There has been a statistically significant decrease since 2011, when nine in ten (90%) teachers expected their school to not change its policy, and one in ten (10%) did.

Teachers from non-religious schools are significantly more likely than religious schools to say they expect their school to make changes to their early entry policy

next year because of the EBacc. Seven percent of non-religious schools say this, compared with no teachers from religious schools.

Teachers from community schools are more likely than average to say that they expect their school to make changes to its early entry policy (10% compared with 6%).

Are early entry pupils allowed to re-take examinations?

Of those teachers with pupils who will complete GCSEs early, almost two thirds (64%) say that pupils who get a C on early entry are always allowed to retake. Just under a third (30%) say that they are sometimes allowed to retake and six percent say that they are not allowed to retake.

These figures remain steady year-on-year: in 2011 59% of teachers said their early entry pupils were always allowed to retake, and 35% that they were sometimes allowed to retake.

Teachers from some types of school were more or less likely to say their early entry pupils were allowed to re-take examinations:

- Teachers from schools with a high proportion of FSM-eligible pupils are more likely than average to say that early entry pupils are *always* allowed to retake (73% compared with 64%). Those from schools with a low proportion of FSM-eligible pupils are more likely to say that they are not (10% compared with 6%).

- Foundation schools are more likely than average *always* to allow early entry pupils to retake (75% compared with 64%). Voluntary aided or controlled schools are more likely to allow retakes *sometimes* (38% compared with an average of 30%).

- Co-educational schools are more likely than single sex schools to allow retakes *sometimes* (32% compared with 15%), whereas single sex schools are more likely not to offer an opportunity to re-take (13% say they don't compared with 5% in co-educational schools).

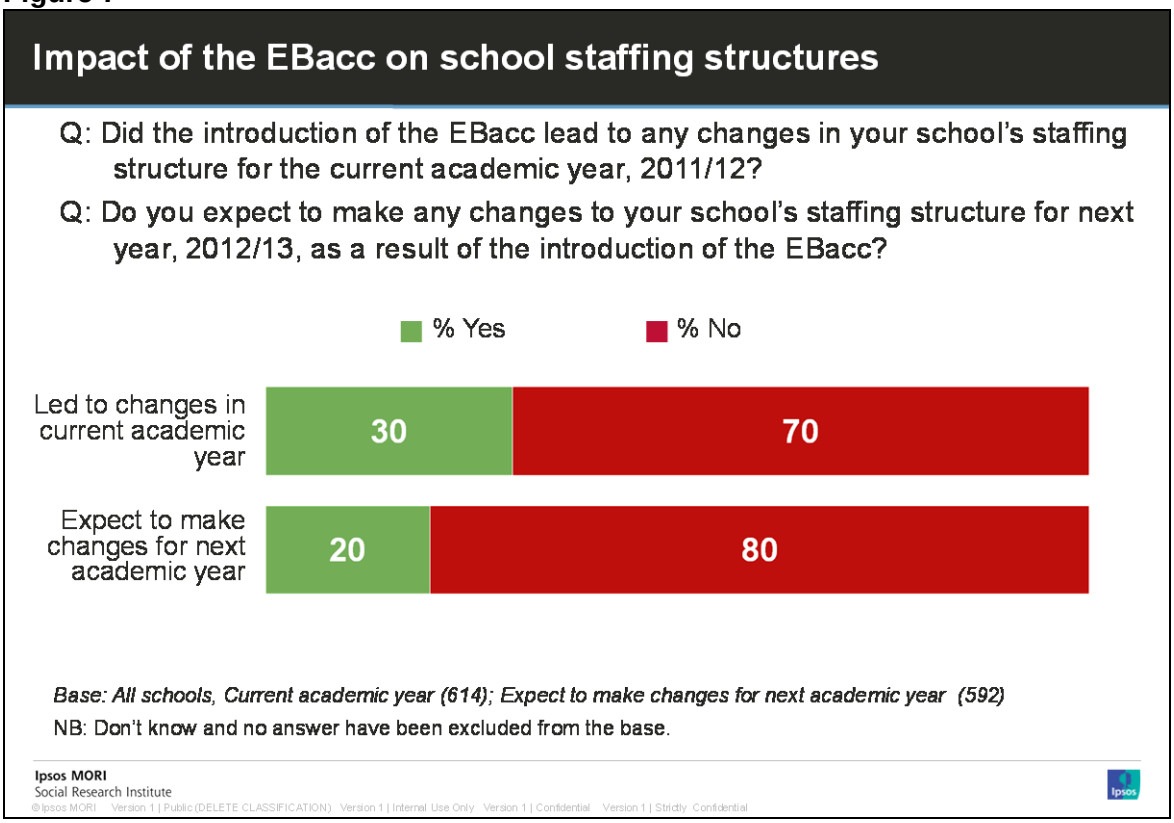
Teachers were asked whether they expect their school to make any changes to its early entry policy because of the EBacc in the next academic year; over nine in ten (94%) say that they do not, whilst six percent say that they do. This is a slight but statistically significant fall in the expected levels of change compared with 2011, when one in ten (10%) teachers expected their school to change its policy.

Impact of the EBacc on school staffing structures in 2011/12 and expected impact in 2012/13

Seven in ten (70%) teachers say that the EBacc has not led to any changes in staffing structures at their school in 2011/12. Three in ten (30%) say that it has.

Teachers were asked whether they expect their school to make changes to its staffing structure because of the EBacc in the next academic year. Four fifths (80%) say that they do not, whilst one fifth (20%) say that they do.

Figure 7



Schools with a high proportion of FSM-eligible pupils are more likely to have made changes to their staffing structure than those with low or medium numbers of FSM-eligible pupils (39%, 29%, and 21% respectively).

Teachers from voluntary aided or controlled schools are more likely than average to say that they have not made changes to their staffing structures (80% compared with 70%).

The data highlights a link between pupil numbers and likelihood of staffing structures changing in the next academic year. Teachers from schools with a small number of pupils are more likely than average to say that they do not expect to make changes to their staffing structure (85% compared with 80%).

In the qualitative research, most schools said that they have not made any changes to their staffing structures because of the EBacc. Where changes have been made, these tend to be aimed at increasing the levels of staffing for languages. Such changes reflect increased levels of demand, and the new compulsion, for EBacc subjects in some schools.

In addition to these changes, there was also some evidence from the qualitative research of teachers being redeployed to teach their secondary subjects, and of efforts to improve the quality of teaching in EBacc subjects, in order to attract more pupils and to attain better grades. When teachers were asked about the changes they had made to their curriculum offer in the current academic year a few (2%) mentioned staffing changes.

> *"Our French teacher is not a whizzy teacher, and people don't choose her subject because they don't like her as a teacher. I think the employment of this new Spanish/French teacher in September will change that and I think that will push more into doing the EBacc."*
> *(Teacher, School 1)*

Chapter Four: Awareness and understanding of the EBacc

Key findings

The vast majority of schools are providing information about the EBacc; over nine in ten schools say they have given pupils (93%) and/or parents (94%) advice or information regarding the EBacc. This is supported by qualitative case study findings, where parents describe receiving a significant amount of advice and information regarding GCSE choices and the EBacc. Both the quantitative and qualitative findings indicate that generally more has been done to increase awareness of the EBacc in schools where take-up tends to be lower.

The messages that schools give around the EBacc vary. In the qualitative case studies some schools were providing relatively neutral advice to pupils, which mainly involved informing them what the EBacc was. This approach was more evident in schools where many pupils would be doing the EBacc naturally. In contrast, other schools actively encouraged pupils they identified as academically capable to select the EBacc subjects; these schools often highlighted the potential importance of the EBacc to their pupils.

Whilst the EBacc had most influence in schools that were aiming actively to encourage a greater uptake of the EBacc (as opposed to schools where pupils were selecting those subjects naturally), generally the EBacc did not fundamentally change the way in which GCSE subjects are selected. If it did impact on a pupil's choice of subject it tended to be in terms of deciding between two subjects or influencing their decision on one subject choice. Its greatest impact is evident in pupils selecting languages: in schools where uptake of languages has historically been lower, and where pupils are less likely naturally to opt for a language, there is some evidence that the EBacc is motivating larger numbers of pupils to study a language.

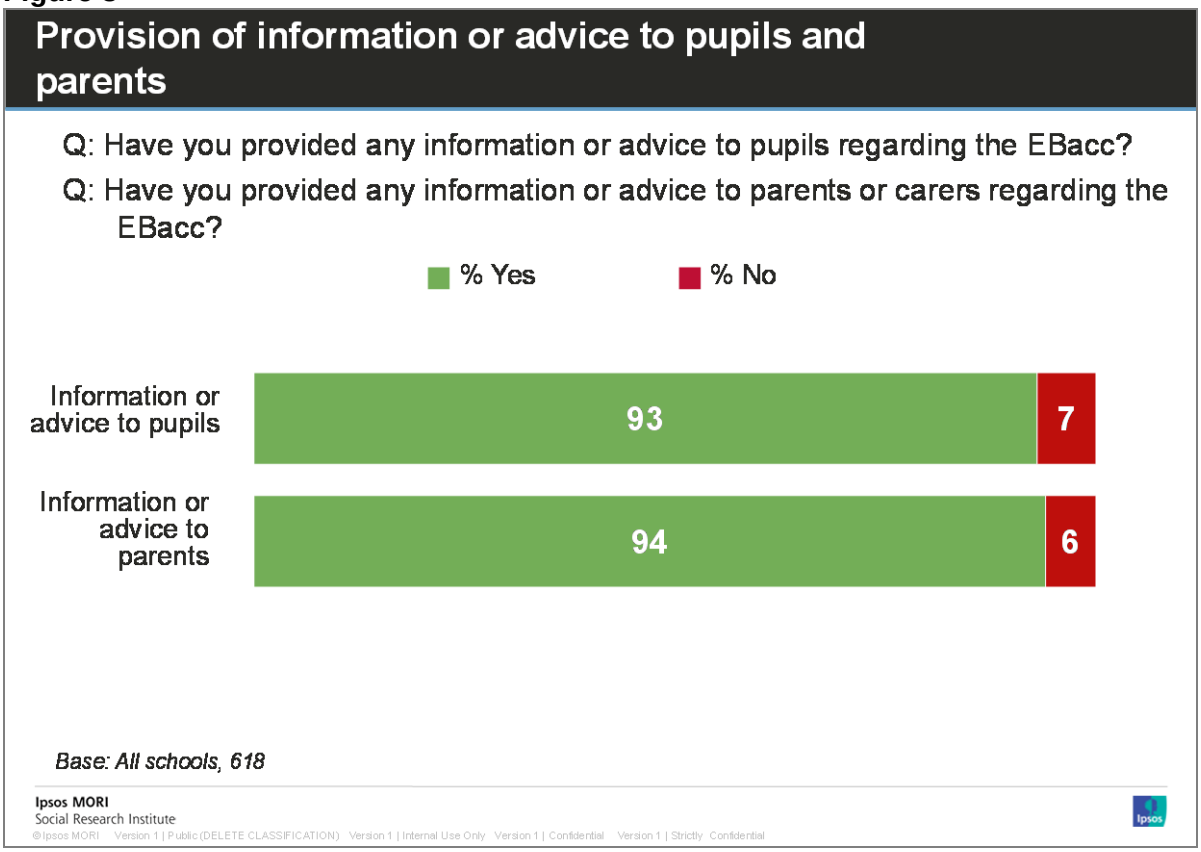
In spite of these impacts, the way in which GCSEs are selected is largely unchanged by the EBacc: pupils select subjects they enjoy and are good at, and those which will help towards their career choices (if known).

Advice and information schools provide about the EBacc

Over nine in ten (93%) teachers say that their school has given information or advice to pupils regarding the EBacc. Just seven percent say that they have not. The proportion of teachers saying that their school gave information or advice about the EBacc has increased significantly from 88% in 2011.

Teachers were also asked whether their school had provided any information or advice to parents/carers about the EBacc. Over nine in ten (94%) say that they have, whilst six percent say that they have not.

Figure 8



Teachers from schools with a high or medium proportion of FSM-eligible pupils are more likely than those from schools with a low proportion to say that they have given information to pupils (95%, 95% and 87% respectively).

Teachers from Academy converters are less likely to say that they have given information to pupils (88% compared with an average of 93%).

Teachers from co-educational schools are more likely than those from single sex schools to say that they have provided pupils with information (94% compared with 84%). They are also more likely to say that they have provided advice to parents/carers (95% compared with 87%).

Channels of information

It is evident from both the survey and the case study qualitative work that schools provide extensive support and information to pupils to support them in making their GCSE choices. As shown in Table 8 below, schools use a range of channels to provide information to pupils and parents/carers, including options evenings, literature and options booklets, one-to-one discussions with subject teachers and options advisors, and careers coaching. In general, the pupils we spoke to in the qualitative work were satisfied that they had received lots of information about their GCSE choices, and had ample opportunity to discuss their selections with teachers.

Table 8

Information and advice provided by schools to pupils and parents/carers
**codes with over 5% mentioned to pupils/parents shown*

Base: pupils: All schools that have provided advice to pupils (570) and parents/carers (576) about the EBacc	Pupils	Parents/ carers
	%	%
Told them what the EBacc is/ what subjects are included/ what it means[18]	42	35
Explained EBacc/ GCSE options in options evening/ parents evening/ assemblies/ presentations/ workshops	40	50
Passed on awareness literature/ options booklets/ brochures/ online resources	32	39
Told them that this may be an entry requirement for some universities/ may help them secure a place at university/ should check if universities require EBacc	20	14
Encouraged the EBacc subjects/ told them why the school encourages it/ why EBacc is important	15	14
Explained EBacc/ GCSE options in one to one/ individual interviews/ talks with tutors	14	9
Told them that the EBacc subjects are optional/ that they should take the subjects they wish to	9	6
Advice aimed mainly at pupils with higher attainment/ those who will study the EBacc/ suggested EBacc suitable for higher attaining pupils	7	4
Told them the importance of taking languages/ a foreign language	6	3
Told them that it is an academic pathway	5	3
Told them that at this stage the EBacc's future is not clear/ no clarification from Government/ not sure what it will mean for them	5	4
Basic careers advice/ lessons/ days	5	2

Source: Ipsos MORI

The quantitative research indicates that in schools where EBacc take-up is lower[19] more steps were taken to increase awareness and to explain GCSE options. For instance, schools with a lower proportion of pupils entered for the EBacc are more likely than schools with the highest proportion entered to say that they:

- Explained EBacc options to pupils in options evenings/ parents' evenings/ assemblies/ workshops (50% say this compared with 29% in schools with higher proportions taking the EBacc).
- Passed on awareness literature/ options booklets/ online resources to help them make their choices (36% compared with 25% where take up is highest).

[18] This code was used for instances where schools did not expand on how they explained the EBacc or what channels of information were used to disseminate information and advice.
[19] In the data schools were divided into similar sized quartiles based on the proportion taking the EBacc. Those with the lowest proportion were in the 4th quartile; those with the highest proportion were in the 1st quartile.

- Explained EBacc/ GCSE options to pupils in one to one individual interviews/talks with tutors (18% said this compared with 8% in schools with highest proportion taking EBacc).

Conversely, schools with a higher proportion entered for the EBacc are more likely to say that they told pupils (and parents/carers) that the EBacc subjects were optional/ that they should take the subjects they want to (13% report saying this to pupils compared with 4% in schools with the lowest proportion entered for the EBacc).

While these findings may seem contradictory, they are in line with the qualitative findings which suggest that schools that are traditionally very academic – and where EBacc subjects are already the default subject choices for most pupils – tend to give more limited advice and encouragement than schools where EBacc subjects have historically been less popular choices. Where the uptake of EBacc subjects has typically been lower, teachers feel a greater need to encourage pupils to take subjects they may regard as more challenging or intrinsically less appealing.

What messages do schools give about the EBacc?

The qualitative case study work suggests that schools' basic advice to pupils is to select GCSE subjects that they enjoy and will perform well in. This consideration takes precedence over any others in most cases, and is far more important in guiding subject choices than the EBacc.

In most case study schools the EBacc was discussed with pupils, but the messages schools provide vary widely, as does the degree of encouragement they provide to take the EBacc subjects. At one end of the scale, schools provide information about the EBacc without giving any encouragement to pupils to take it; pupils instead have freedom to choose the subjects they prefer. In many of these schools, however, the EBacc combination is the default subject combination anyway, because there is a culture of selecting academic subjects that pre-dated the EBacc.

At the other extreme are schools that encourage pupils they identify as being academically capable to work towards the EBacc, while not providing any information or encouragement about the EBacc to other pupils. A few of these schools filtered pupils on the basis of their ability in languages, which these schools and pupils often considered to be the most difficult of the optional EBacc subjects: those capable of achieving a C in languages are encouraged to study towards the EBacc. The level of encouragement across the case study schools ranged from encouraging high attainers to take the EBacc, to one school which did not give high attainers any subject choices and made them all take the EBacc combination.

> *"We targeted the most able pupils … we thought it would be better for them to do [languages], as well as ticking the EBacc box."*
> *(Assistant Headteacher, School 9)*

"All of our youngsters are put into one of three bands depending on their academic ability and the long and the short of it is that the top band are encouraged very forcibly to go and do the EBacc options; the middle band are encouraged strongly, less forcibly; and the lowest band we don't offer them [the EBacc]… they have more flexibility and there are more vocational courses available to them."
(Assistant Headteacher, School 10)

Even in schools that do not actively encourage pupils to take the EBacc, there was some indication that they may sometimes steer pupils towards the EBacc subjects where they felt it appropriate. A few teachers noted they would steer academic pupils towards the EBacc if they had not naturally selected EBacc subjects. This guidance was not necessarily motivated by the EBacc itself, but a recognition that the subjects within the EBacc are generally the most useful for pupils: they are regarded as academically rigorous and keep pupils' options open regardless of their later career choices. (See later in this chapter for more discussion.)

Mixed messages about the EBacc

The advice given around the future impact of the EBacc and its potential importance to pupils varies by school, reflecting a genuine uncertainty amongst members of the teaching community who took part in the qualitative research about the EBacc's future importance. Some schools were very clear that the EBacc was a performance measure for the school and not for pupils. Other schools suggested the EBacc would be important as a pupil measure in the future, and others acknowledged they were unsure whether or not the EBacc would be important to pupils. This uncertainty about the EBacc is reflected in the quantitative survey where teachers reported giving a range of advice to pupils (see Table 8). For instance, 15% of schools that gave advice to pupils say they encouraged the EBacc subjects/told pupils why the EBacc was important, whereas 5% told them that at this stage the EBacc's future is unclear/ that they are not sure what the EBacc will mean.

An example of the inconsistent messages provided between schools lies in information given about how the EBacc will affect university admissions in the future. The survey findings show that one in five schools report saying that they told pupils that the EBacc may be a university selection criteria/ may help with university admission, but the qualitative research showed there is considerable variation in the messages schools give in this regard, which impacts on pupils' decision-making.

"When parents are sat there, if there's two people looking for a Uni place, one has an EBacc and one doesn't, I don't know the answer as to whether the EBacc person would get preference over the person who hasn't and I do that scenario with them."
(Deputy Headteacher, School 1)

"We've said we don't know whether that's going to matter, whether universities are going to care about it or not, we just don't know, but those are the subjects and we've left it to [parents to decide whether it's important]."
(Teacher, School 8)

"…the school at the open evening [was] suggesting, "You're going to have to have a language if you want to go to university." … the school seemed to be pushing it as though it was [the] be all and end all."
(Parent/carer, School 6)

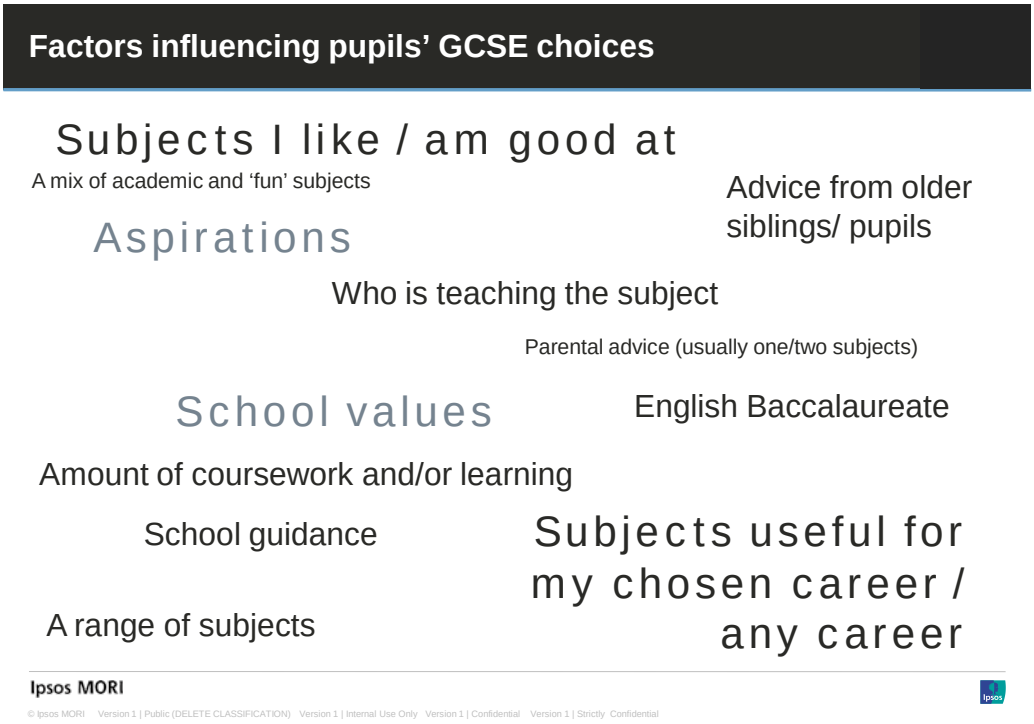
"They're saying that we might need it to get into university and everything and I don't know … so we're having to take it just in case we need it."
(Pupil taking EBacc, School 6)

There is an appetite among parents/carers and pupils to understand more about what the EBacc means for them and for future career or further education choices. The uncertainty about the future impact of having achieved the EBacc seems to pull in opposite directions. Some take the EBacc '*just in case'* it proves important in the future, while others do not opt for the EBacc because they have no conviction or evidence that it will benefit them in the future. For now, many pupils have selected the EBacc subjects in the belief that it will provide them with *'an extra qualification'* or *'something else for the CV'*; parents/carers and pupils participating in the research often had questions about how they would be able to use and reference the EBacc in the future.

How pupils select GCSE subjects

In this section we look at the factors that are important in influencing pupils' GCSE selections, and the relative importance of the EBacc in their decision-making. The key factors are summarised in the graphic below, and discussed in more detail throughout the remainder of the chapter. Those in larger font were mentioned more regularly in the case study work. Those factors shaded grey tended to exert an indirect influence on pupils, while the factors in black font had a more direct influence.

Whilst pupils tend to have the final decision in terms of GCSE options, there are a number of people they consult or who provide guidance, including the school, parents/carers and older siblings.



The influence of schools

In general, schools have a strong indirect as well as direct influence on pupils' choices. Most obviously, the curriculum and GCSE option blocks offered by schools limits the options pupils can select. As noted earlier, many schools have shifted their option blocks to facilitate pupils selecting the EBacc, or to compel them to take particular subjects.

In some schools, while the EBacc itself may not have been widely discussed, there was a culture of pupils being 'expected' to select academic subjects at GCSE. In effect, the great majority of pupils in these schools were studying towards the EBacc.

It was also evident from the case study research that the culture and ethos of the school strongly affected pupils' impressions of the value of particular subjects, and this in turn influenced their GCSE choices. An example of this type of indirect influence is that where schools make a subject core at Key Stage 3 or 4, pupils tend to accept this as one of the most valuable subjects they can study. Another example lies in pupils' attitudes to ancient languages. Pupils in traditionally academic schools placed a high value on ancient languages such as Latin, and referenced Latin's practical value in careers such as the law or medicine. In another school, where the school's outlook was focussed on science and technology and reflected a local labour market based around manufacturing and production, pupils felt that ancient languages would have no practical value for them.

Individual subject teachers can play an important role in encouraging pupils to take their subjects. Teachers tend to encourage pupils to select their subjects where they feel pupils can perform well. There is also some evidence of teachers using the EBacc to recruit pupils. In one school where the Headteacher told us

she did not encourage pupils to take the EBacc, and had reassured parents/carers that it would not form the basis of university admissions criteria, the pupil discussions revealed that the school's French teacher had 'tried to scare everyone' into selecting French, on the basis that the EBacc would be essential for university admissions.

> *"There is clearly propaganda … from teachers encouraging the right people to take their course"*
> *(Teacher, School 8)*

> *"Apparently I'm quite good at art and Miss X was saying that she'd be quite cross if I wasn't doing art. Mrs Y was saying that she'd be quite cross if I didn't take triple science"*
> *(Pupil not taking EBacc, School 1)*

The teacher is also an important consideration from pupils' perspectives: several headteachers acknowledged that the popularity of subjects rises and falls according to the quality of teaching. In a few schools, headteachers were making efforts to replace teachers with more dynamic and inspiring teachers in EBacc subjects in order to encourage higher take-up.

The influence of parents/carers and older siblings

In most cases, parental advice and input seemed to be limited. The parents/carers we interviewed for the case study work tended to say their children had known which subjects they wanted to select, and they had merely helped to sense check their decisions. In a few cases parents/carers helped to investigate the careers routes that their children were interested in, to check that the subject choices were appropriate, for example. Pupils also mentioned discussing options with parents/carers where they were unsure of the choice between a few subjects; in a few cases, pupils seemed to feel their parents/carers could offer a 'real world' view of what would be important in future careers. In general, parents/carers supported children in taking the subjects they enjoyed and were good at; it was relatively rare for parents/carers to have taken a very active role in decision-making.

> *"In the end we'd rather our child be happy for the next seven years in his education and do well in what he does [rather than choose EBacc subjects simply to get the EBacc]"*
> *(Parent/carer, School 6)*

> *"50% what he likes and 50% what he was talented at"*
> *(Parent/carer, School 1)*

There were some exceptions to this pattern. Parents had sometimes advised their children to take particular subjects they felt would be valuable, such as business studies and history. However, the main point of parental input was around languages. Where pupils mentioned that their parents/carers had influenced their decisions, or insisted they select a particular subject, they usually

referenced their advice in relation to languages. In several cases, parents/carers saw the value of languages where pupils did not, and had encouraged their children to study a language, sometimes against their children's preferences.

> *"I think I had the final decision. My parents did advise me, but I had the final decision"*
> *(Pupil taking EBacc, School 5)*

> *"I was always going to end up doing French 'cause my mum wanted me to take it"*
> *(Pupil taking EBacc, School 5)*

> *"You have a lot of parents encouraging their children to do French or German even though the child doesn't necessarily rank that in their top three or four subjects"*
> *(Teacher, School 8)*

The advice from older siblings was often practical – the day-to-day implications of subject selections – rather than views about the subjects that may be most helpful in the future. Older siblings were able to give views about the teachers leading different GCSE courses, and the amount of work involved in GCSE courses for different subjects. A few pupils mentioned that their older siblings had advised them to take a mix of academic and 'fun' subjects rather than narrowing their studies in order to keep their school life interesting. It was also clear that a few pupils looked to the subjects their siblings had studied as guidance.

> *"My sister did business and she's going to university and she's doing well"*
> *(Pupil not taking EBacc, School 6)*

Enjoyment of subjects and subject pupils perform best in

Pupils ultimately make their decisions based on the subjects they enjoy and feel they are strongest in; these are often seen to be synonymous. In many of the parent/carer interviews it emerged that where pupils are higher attainers their choices tend towards the traditional academic subjects quite naturally. Pupils feel that securing the best grades possible is the most important factor and feel they are likely to do so if they focus on subjects that they enjoy.

> *"I looked to the thing I was good at and picked it, which, you know, if you're good at something, you might as well pick it if you know you're going to get a good grade out of it."*
> *(Pupil not taking EBacc, School 5)*

> *"[I chose art] because I wanted something that I could look forward to in the week."*
> *(Pupil taking EBacc, School 1)*

Career / future aspirations

Another factor that is important for many pupils is thinking ahead to career choices or the direction in which they wish to pursue further education. In most case study schools, careers advice was part of the GCSE options process, and many pupils had clear ideas about the types of careers they would like to pursue.

In the pupil discussion groups, pupils were asked to discuss a scenario involving a pupil who wanted to take GCSE subjects that focussed on a particular career (engineering) rather than EBacc subjects[20]. Pupils tend to prioritise taking GCSEs that will help achieve career ambitions, and most pupils felt that it was appropriate for pupils who had a career in mind to focus on GCSE options that suited that pathway rather than take the EBacc.

> *"I think if they haven't taken the EBacc…and they don't feel that what they want to do when they're older needs the EBacc, [that] is fair enough"*
> *(Pupil taking EBacc, School 6)*

> *"If you know what you want to be when you're older and you really want that job because you enjoy doing it, then you should do what you need to do to get that job."*
> *(Pupil not taking EBacc, School 1)*

However, some pupils expressed concerns that choosing options based on a specific career choice could be overly restrictive and have a detrimental impact on future choices.

> *"He's going to be stuck with just the GCSEs that he needs to be an engineer. If that job doesn't work out then he won't be able to get a decent job because he won't have the right qualifications."*
> *(Pupil not taking EBacc, School 1)*

Subject range

The emphasis on pupils not narrowing choices was a theme throughout the research. Pupils spontaneously mentioned the importance of this and the desire for pupils to have a broad range of subjects was echoed by parents/carers and schools; parents/carers and schools tend to intervene if they feel that pupils' GCSE subject choices are too narrow. This took on particular significance where pupils were unsure of what they wanted to do in the future.

> *"We are here to guide not to enforce …. but they do need to be aware of the consequences [of their choices]. …If we had a pupil who wanted to do music, dance and drama, for example, there would be some conversations about, "well you are, at the age of 13/14, really narrowing down"..."*
> *(Headteacher, School 5)*

[20] The full scenario wording is in Appendix 3

However, having a 'rounded' education through studying a broad range of subjects did not always mean studying traditional academic subjects: in some cases there was a desire to mix academic with creative subjects, often referred to as 'fun' subjects:

> *"I asked [my daughter] whether it would be good to do a slightly less academic subject such as possibly drama, music, or one of those, but it wasn't because I wanted her to do it, it was more I thought it might put a different perspective on what she is doing, something not so academic."*
> *(Parent/carer, School 7)*

> *"I think I wanted to keep my options open. I didn't want to do all really academic stuff. I didn't want to do all really arty stuff either."*
> *(Pupil taking EBacc, School 2)*

Perceptions of EBacc subjects

The subjects included in the EBacc tend to be those that pupils and parents/carers think are the most valuable *generally*. For example, when asked to rank a set of subjects according to how valuable they would be in the future, pupils spontaneously ranked the EBacc subjects above all others. They explained this was because they are subjects that would be useful for any career you choose to study in the future; other subject choices may be more restrictive. Parents/carers revealed similar views when they were interviewed.

One exception to this lay in views of languages. In some schools, particularly the more academic schools, pupils universally seemed to accept that languages had a great practical value for their future career. In other schools, pupils' views were far more mixed. This was especially evident in less academic schools; some teachers felt their pupils had an 'insular' outlook, and were not strongly engaged with languages. This view was prevalent even among the higher attaining pupils.

> "*[Our pupils] haven't got a very strong world view…They're not very interested in [languages], and will find it very challenging."*
> *(Teacher, School 6)*

While they accept the EBacc subjects as generally being of great value, parents/carers and pupils feel that where pupils are not academic or have no interest in academic subjects, or where pupils are interested in particular careers, the EBacc combination is not always optimal. In general, selecting a set of subjects that were appropriate for individual pupils was considered more important than achieving a broad range of academic subjects.

> *"My personal concern about the EBacc is that there may well be some pupils along the road who choose this combination of subjects when actually a different combination or a more vocational set of qualifications would, I think, be more appropriate."*
> *(Teacher, School 6)*

"If the school was a very academic based school and they didn't offer drama and they didn't offer health and social care and we couldn't find a venue to offer dance and so on and so forth, we wouldn't be working to her strengths. And if she does go on to do a performing arts degree, she'll need the skills she's learnt through GCSE and A Level within those subjects."
(Parent/carer, School 2)

Whilst there was agreement that the subjects included in the EBacc are important, there was often a desire to see the breadth of subjects expanded. In particular, RE is seen to be as academically rigorous as history and geography, and to include many of the same skills. Teachers in some schools are disinclined to discourage pupils from taking RE, even if it means that they do not take history or geography and cannot achieve an EBacc.

Does the EBacc influence GCSE subject choices?

The EBacc influenced subject choices in different ways depending on the school setting. In general, however, the EBacc had not fundamentally changed the way GCSE options were selected. It had most influence in schools that were aiming actively to encourage a greater uptake of the EBacc by targeting their most able pupils and encouraging them down an EBacc pathway.

In most schools, the basic notion of selecting subjects that reflect individuals' abilities and preferences held. However, the EBacc did help in decision-making in some cases. For example, the EBacc sometimes helped pupils to make the choice between two subjects or informed their selection of one subject that they may not have chosen otherwise. Often this was because pupils and parents/carers assumed they would receive an additional certificate or qualification by taking the EBacc, or could reference the EBacc on their university applications.

The influence of the EBacc was particularly evident for languages. In some case study schools, the number of pupils taking languages had increased as a result of greater emphasis on the subject. In some schools, languages are the EBacc subject that pupils are least likely to opt for, and therefore where the EBacc has had greatest influence on subject uptake.

"The EBacc has made a massive difference on the numbers of uptake of languages and… it's no doubt that despite the work… the good work that's been done with international schools and promoting foreign languages [to make languages more appealing to our students]… it's the EBacc that's had the main… influence there."
(Teacher, School 6)

"The questions from parents [about the EBacc] have really been around… "How important is it that they do French?" That's a question that I get asked a lot."
(Headteacher, School 5)

"The English Baccalaureate thing is why I chose French 'cause I originally wasn't going to choose it….. But then I thought if you get an extra [qualification] you might as well."
(Pupil taking EBacc, School 5)

"The English Baccalaureate kind of consolidated the options I picked so it was a plus instead of just me going, "oh well I'll pick that because it gives me the English Baccalaureate".
(Pupil taking EBacc, School 7)

Even where schools said they provided neutral advice about the EBacc and did not encourage pupils to select the EBacc subjects, teachers often noted a greater uptake in these subjects in recent years. It was evident from the case study work that parents/carers and pupils often placed more faith in the EBacc's value than teachers – even where teachers appeared to down play the value of the EBacc for their pupils, some pupils opted for the EBacc in case it proves important in the future.

Other factors influencing GCSE choices

There have also been changes in education policy and practice in addition to the EBacc that schools see as influencing GCSE choices; most notable has been the changes in vocational qualifications and other non-GCSE qualifications.

"It's not just the EBacc pressures that we've had, it's [also]changes to vocational education and the uncertainty around that and it's had a major impact on what we offer at the moment."
(Deputy Headteacher, School 5)

"We haven't dropped [vocational courses] because of the EBacc specifically, we've dropped them because they're not worth four GCSEs anymore, so, I think, you know, I think the OCR National we dropped, and a good deal of the science bottom sets."
(Teacher, School 11)

Chapter Five: Other effects of the EBacc

Key findings

Generally schools felt that it was too early to provide informed comment on the effect of the EBacc on post-16 progression. However, some schools felt that it provided them with an additional tool for encouraging higher achieving pupils towards subject choices most beneficial for further and higher education.

Parents'/carers' views of the EBacc as a useful performance measure were mixed. Some felt that an additional performance measure was not necessary or that it was not a suitable measure as it focused on a range of subjects they considered to be too narrow. Others felt that the EBacc was a useful measure of academic ability based on subjects they considered to be more rigorous. The importance that parents/carers placed on the EBacc as a measure ultimately depended on how relevant they perceived the subjects it included to be for their child.

Influence on post-16 progression

The schools interviewed for the qualitative case studies felt it was too early to comment on whether the EBacc will have an influence on post-16 progression.

A few case study schools appeared to welcome the EBacc as a way to raise the aspirations of their most academic pupils. In a few schools, teachers expressed some frustration that, in the past, their most able pupils' aspirations often fell short of their academic potential. They welcomed the EBacc as giving them a means of encouraging higher attaining pupils to make more academic subject choices that will enable them to apply for elite universities in the future. However, one implication of these schools placing such emphasis on the EBacc as a gateway into elite universities was that pupils who had not taken the EBacc in these schools felt that they had little chance to go into higher education in the future.

> *"Our pupils tend to have very low aspirations and you will find more able pupils might want to do Health and Social Care….. But these children should be getting 'A's at GCSE, 'A's at A-level and going on to lots of really good universities, but they don't think they can do that, so we are trying to steer them into a more academic pathway and to change their mind-set."*
> *(Teacher, School 9)*

One school felt that the EBacc encouraged pupils themselves to consider their post-16 destinations in greater depth, and take the options selection process more seriously; this appeared to emerge in part from concern and uncertainty about what the EBacc may mean for pupils and a desire not to take options that will limit their choices later on.

"The options process was always high profile anyway… It's been even more high profile now … we're only going to get more focused on it ... you notice them being more career focused earlier on... I think that that is a positive of the EBacc."
(Teacher, School 1)

EBacc as a school performance measure

Parents'/carers' views of the EBacc as a performance measure were linked to their views of performance tables more generally. Some felt that the way in which a school's performance was measured was often negative or misleading.

"I take [the league table results] with a great pinch of salt, you have to look at the population the school receives"
(Parent/carer, School 7)

In instances where parents/carers felt that there were a range of factors that they would use to select a school for their child (such as recommendations or the atmosphere of the school upon visiting it), performance tables were afforded less importance and as a result there was perceived to be less need for an additional performance measure. Several parents/carers saw the EBacc as an unnecessary addition to the previous performance measures. Some parents/carers mentioned that stating the achieved grades in all subject areas was all that was required, whilst others felt the existing 5 'A*'-'C' measure was adequate.

"I can't see that it's giving any more information than we've already got … I think we already have a lot of data through the English and the maths and the science really … The five 'A' to 'C' passes I think, whatever [subjects] they're in, they include English and maths, I think that's the best measure personally."
(Parent/carer, School 4)

Reflecting the debate as to whether the EBacc provides an appropriately rounded education – and what constitutes a 'rounded' education – some parents/carers felt that the focus of the EBacc was too narrow to act as a performance measure, or were concerned that measuring performance in this way could lead to a fall in non-EBacc subjects.

"They [non-EBacc subjects] will just die the death because parents will say, the whole culture will shift to we're only interested in these EBacc subjects, children will come home desperate to study BTEC PE and their parents will say no because it's not important. Then we won't have athletes … but then on the other hand how far do you go with that? GCSE Street Dance? … I understand that there has to be a limit to what we're studying in an academic environment but I'd like to see … everything valued equally."
(Parent/carer, School 2)

Ultimately the parents/carers interviewed as part of this research considered the EBacc less relevant as a performance measure if their child was not interested in the EBacc combination of subjects. This fits naturally with their view that the EBacc is important only for pupils who naturally have an interest and talents in these academic subjects.

In contrast to this general view, a few parents/carers agreed the EBacc was a useful performance measure because it was measuring pupils' academic ability and moving away from newer vocational subjects. These parents/carers tended to consider the more traditional subjects as academic and rigorous, whereas vocational subjects were considered to be easy.

> *"It would be a good reflection of people that are getting five or more solid GCSEs really. And it would discount, I think, the GCSEs in fluffy subjects."*
> *(Parent/carer, School 6)*

Appendices

Appendix 1: Schools discussion guide for Headteachers and Head of Year 9/ Year 9 Options

Background to the research:

The research was commissioned by the Department for Education (DfE) to understand the effect of the introduction of the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) on schools, pupils and parents/carers.

The EBacc is a performance measure introduced in the 2010 performance tables. It recognises pupils who achieve GCSEs or iGCSEs at grades A*-C across a core of academic subjects – English, maths, history or geography, the sciences and a language. It is not a qualification in itself.

Objectives of the research:

- Establish levels of EBacc take-up
- Understand how schools have responded to the EBacc
- Examine what impact the introduction of the EBacc has had on schools in terms of curriculum arrangement, pupil's subject choices and any other impact
- Understand schools' perceptions of the EBacc

Outline of the research programme (to be covered in this discussion guide):

Depth interviews with school staff (Head teachers, Head of Year 9, School leaders) in 10 schools – 2-3 per school.

Guide Sections	Who asked	Guide Timings
Introductions	All	3 mins
School background and context	All	3 mins
Responding to the EBacc	All	7 mins
Information and advice for schools relating to EBacc	All	10-15 mins
Influence of EBacc on school curricula, pupil subject choice and aspirations	All	10-15 mins
Other effects of the EBacc	All	5 mins
Conclusions	All	3 mins

Time	Key Questions	Notes
5 mins	**1. <u>Introduction</u>** - Thank participants for agreeing to take part - Interview will take around 45 minutes - Introduce self and Ipsos MORI as an independent research company - Introduce research aims - Anonymity of participants and MRS (Market Research Society) code of conduct - Permission to audio record – only for analysis, no attribution of comments . Ask participants to introduce self - Name - Position - Any particular subjects taught (if relevant to position) - Length of time teaching/in post at this school	*Introduce research to participant and understand participant professional role* **<u>3 minutes</u>**
	2. <u>School background and context</u> **Can you describe your school in a few sentences?** - Number of pupils/teachers - Type of catchment area/intake - What subjects specialised in, if any? - Proportion of pupils with SEN – higher/lower/in line with average? - Proportion of pupils eligible for FSM? – higher/lower/in line with average? **What's the balance of leavers in Year 11 who go on to work/ apprenticeships versus further education?**	*Just ask this for first interview.* *Understand school context as background to perceptions of, and practice around, EBacc.* **<u>3 minutes</u>**

Time	Key Questions	Notes
	3. <u>Responding to the EBacc</u> MODERATOR: EXPLAIN THAT WE'LL NOW BE DISCUSSING THEIR EXPERIENCES AND PERCEPTIONS OF THE EBACC. FIRSTLY WE'D LIKE TO GET A VERY GENERAL OVERVIEW OF HOW THE EBACC HAS AFFECTED THEIR SCHOOL, BEFORE WE GO INTO MORE DETAIL. **To start with, can you tell me what you know about the EBacc? What do you understand as the reasons for introducing the EBacc?** PROBE: - What subjects does it apply to? - What do you think it intends to achieve? **What, if anything, are the main things that you've done or changed here in response to the EBacc performance measure?** **How easy or difficult has it been to make these changes?** **Were there any changes that you considered making but didn't? If so, why?**	*Understand awareness of EBacc and how introducing it has worked in schools generally.* *Aim is to get an overview of the scale/type of impact EBacc has had, to guide the further discussion where we ask in more depth about different elements.* **<u>7 minutes</u>**
	4. <u>The process of choosing options and information given</u> MODERATOR: EXPLAIN THAT WE NOW HAVE SOME QUESTIONS ASKING IN DETAIL ABOUT THE PROCESS FOR YEAR 9 PUPILS TAKING THEIR OPTIONS, AND ANY CHANGES MADE IN RECENT YEARS. **Can you talk me through the process for Year 9 pupils choosing their options?** FOR EACH, PROBE IF NOT RAISED: How, if at all, has this changed since 2010/11 because of the EBacc? - **What option blocks are available?** – how much choice do pupils have? - **Are any subjects compulsory?** What subjects? Who are they compulsory for? - **Are there any restrictions** on what pupils can take? What subjects/ who do they apply to? The number of GCSEs pupils can take? - **Who advises pupils**? What advice given/ through what channels? - **What sorts of questions do pupils usually have, if any?** What, if any, concerns do they have? How do you address them?	*Understand the process for pupils and parents choosing options – what options are open to different types of pupil, how has this changed, and what information and support do schools offer in making decisions. Understand the 'message' that schools are giving to parents/carers and pupils about the EBacc* **<u>10-15 minutes</u>**

Time	Key Questions	Notes
	Has the EBacc influenced the advice you give to pupils and parents/carers about their GCSE choices generally? If so, to what extent? **What sorts of information and guidance do you give to different types of pupils about the EBacc, if any?** - Is the advice about taking EBacc subjects, and the EBacc combination of subjects, different for pupils with differing levels of attainment? If so, how? - How far do you actively encourage pupils to take EBacc subjects? Is it encouraged more or less than before the introduction of the EBacc? How do you feel about this? - Are pupils able to mix academic/EBacc subjects and vocational subjects? **How much do you involve parents/carers in the process of choosing options? How do you involve them?** **Do you give any advice or information to parents/carers about their children's options?** IF YES: **What advice or information do you give? Through what channels?** **Do parents/carers come to you with questions about GCSE option choices? If so, what sorts of questions do they ask? Do they have any concerns? If so, what concerns do they have?** How do you address them? PROBE IF NOT MENTIONED: **What, if anything, have parents/carers said about EBacc?**	
	5. <u>Influence of EBacc on school curricula, pupil subject choice and aspirations</u> MODERATOR: EXPLAIN THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO DISCUSS THE IMPACT OF THE EBACC ON THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM AND PUPIL'S SUBJECT CHOICES IF NOT ALREADY COVERED **Which EBacc subjects are offered?** IF NOT ALREADY COVERED **Which EBacc subjects are compulsory for all or some pupils at GCSE?** IF SOME PUPILS; PROBE WHICH PUPILS **Has the introduction of the EBacc influenced your school's curriculum offer?** - Range of subjects available? - Is there more or less provision of certain subjects	*Examine the influence of the EBacc on the subjects that schools offer, the school's strategy in enrolling/encouraging pupils to take EBacc subjects, and how this differs for different types of pupil.* **<u>10-15 minutes</u>**

Time	Key Questions	Notes
	as a result of the EBacc? - What curriculum changes have there been in response to the introduction of the EBacc in the 2011/12 academic year compared to 2010/11? - Do you anticipate further changes in the next academic year? Why/ why not? **Can you tell me what proportion of year 9 pupils taking their options in the 2011/12 academic year have opted for a combination of GCSE subjects that would make them eligible to achieve an EBacc?** **Is the proportion of pupils opting for EBacc subjects in the current Year 9 different compared to 2010/11? And compared to 2009/10?** IF CHANGE IN DEMAND FOR EBACC SUBJECTS COMPARED TO PREVIOUS YEARS, PROBE: - What has this meant for the school? - Have there been any challenges related to the change in demand for these subjects? If so, what have these been? **Have you set targets for EBacc entry and achievement? If so, how is the school working towards meeting these?** **In what ways, if at all, have 'non-EBacc' courses been affected by the introduction of the EBacc? PROBE:** - Certain courses being withdrawn – if so, which ones? What subjects have been most affected? - Lack of demand for certain courses **Are all pupils opting to study the EBacc able to do so?** - Are the EBacc subjects offered at GCSE offered to all or some pupils? IF SOME: How is it decided which pupils will be offered EBacc subjects? **In your experience, what factors influence the take-up of EBacc subjects at GCSE – why is it higher in some schools than others?** - Pupil subject interest - School specialism/subject focus - School policy - Other factor? **In your experience, does the EBacc influence pupil subject choice in GCSEs? If so, to what extent?** - Has it influenced the motivations of pupils? - Has it influenced more pupils to take GCSE subjects that they might not otherwise have	

Time	Key Questions	Notes
	taken? - Has it influenced different types of pupil to take more 'academic' subjects? PROBE: - Pupils with higher levels of attainment - Pupils with lower levels of attainment - Pupils from different socio-economic backgrounds **Has the EBacc had any effects on pupils who are in Year 10 and Year 11 now? If so, what effects?** PROBE: - Effects on attainment? - Effects on engagement/motivation? - Any other ways that the EBacc has affected pupils? **What types of pupil in particular have been affected or influenced by the EBacc?** PROBE: - In what ways have they been affected? - Which pupils have not been affected as much? **Have you seen any indication that taking EBacc subjects may have an effect on the likelihood of pupils entering further education, higher education or gaining employment? If so, in what ways?**	
	6. <u>Other effects of the EBACC</u> **How, if at all, has the introduction of the EBacc influenced school early entry policies in 2011/12? How do you see it affecting early entry in the next academic year? PROBE:** - Changing subject choices - Changing number of pupils for early entry - Any other effects? **Has the EBacc led to any changes in staffing structures in the 2011/12 academic year? Do you anticipate any changes during the next academic year?** **Has the EBacc had any other effects on your school, systems, or pupils that we've not already covered?**	*Understand other effects of the EBacc outside school curriculum* - *Impact on early entry policies* - *Impact on staffing/ resource* **<u>5 minutes</u>**
	7. <u>Conclusions</u> **Is there anything else that you would like to add?** THANK PARTICIPANT FOR THEIR TIME	**<u>3 minutes</u>**

Appendix 2: Pupil discussion guide

Discussion guide: Research on the Effects of the English Baccalaureate

Pupil discussion guide – 200612_FINAL (J12-035435-01)

Background to the research:

The research was commissioned by DfE to understand the effect of the introduction of the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) on schools, pupils and parents/carers.

The English Baccalaureate is a performance measure introduced in the 2010 performance tables. It recognises pupils who achieve GCSEs or iGCSEs at grades A*-C across a core of academic subjects – English, maths, history or geography, the sciences and a language. It is not a qualification in itself.

Objectives of the guide:

- Understand awareness and perceptions of the EBacc
- Examine factors that influence pupil's GCSE choices and the extent of the influence of the EBacc on what subjects year 9 pupils decide to take
- Examine pupil's views on ways in which EBacc subjects may help them in the futures
- Understand what information, advice and guidance schools provide relating to the EBacc

Outline of the research programme (to be covered in this discussion guide):

- Mini-groups with pupils in Year 9 across 10 schools – 3 per school.
- 2 groups with pupils taking the EBacc combination of subjects
- 1 group of pupils not taking the EBacc combination (ideally middle-attainers taking some EBacc subjects)

Guide Sections	Guide Timings
Introductions	5 mins
GCSE subject choices	10 mins
Awareness of EBacc (including information and advice)	5 mins
Influence of EBacc on GCSE choices	10 mins
Conclusions	3 mins

Time	Key Questions	Notes
5 mins	**1. Welcome and introduction** - Thank participants for agreeing to take part - Explain it is an informal discussion lasting up to 30 minutes. - Introduce self and Ipsos MORI as an independent	*Inform participants about research and introduce group*

Time	Key Questions	Notes
	research company - Introduce research aims – explain research focuses on EBACC – explain who DfE are - Anonymity of participants and MRS (Market Research Society) code of conduct - Permission to audio record – only for analysis, no attribution of comments . Ask participants to introduce self - name, year group and favourite subject at school	**5 minutes**
	2. GCSE subject choices **To start with can you tell me which subjects you have chosen to take a GCSE in?** **How did you decide which subjects you would study at GCSE?** PROBE: - Did you think about subjects that you enjoy most? - Did you choose subjects that you think that you perform better in? - Did you think about what subjects may be most useful in the future, for instance for a job or college course you want to do or for university? - Was there anything else that helped you decide which subjects to study at GCSE? What was this? **Who, if anyone, was involved in helping you decide which GCSE subject options you would take? What impact did the following have on your GCSE subject choices?** PROBE: - Advice from your school/ teachers - Advice from your parents/carers - Advice from friends - The Media - Entry requirements of a college or university course or subject that you would like to study in the future - A careers advisor **What was the most important factor in helping you decide which GCSE subjects to take?** Why is that? **How much choice did you have in what subjects you selected to study at GCSE?** PROBE: What, if any, subjects are compulsory to study at GCSE at your school? Are there any subjects included in 'blocks' of GCSE options that you must choose from?	*Understand the subject choices of pupils and what are the most important influences on what subjects are taken at GCSE* **10 minutes**

Time	Key Questions	Notes
	Is there a limit to the number of GCSEs you can study? What, if any, subjects were you unable to study? Why were you unable to study them? **Are there any GCSE subjects that you think <u>all</u> pupils should take?** PROBE: - If so, what are they? Why do you say this? - If not, why should pupils be able to choose their GCSE subjects? What are the benefits of this? What are the drawbacks? EXERCISE – USING SHOWCARDS WITH SUBJECTS ON, ASK PUPILS TO RANK WHICH TYPES OF SUBJECTS THEY THINK WILL BE MOST USEFUL FOR THEM IN THE FUTURE. PROBE WHY THEY THINK THIS IS THE CASE	
	3. <u>Awareness of EBacc</u> MODERATOR EXPLAIN: For the rest of the session we'll be talking about the English Baccalaureate. **Have you heard of the English Baccalaureate?** If no: PROVIDE CARD WITH EBACC EXPLANATION AND EBACC SUBJECTS INCLUDED FOR REFERENCE: *The English Baccalaureate recognises where pupils have secured a 'C' grade or better in GCSEs across a core of subjects – English, mathematics, history or geography, two sciences and a language (including modern foreign languages and ancient languages).* **If yes: What do you understand the English Baccalaureate to be?** PROBE: - How do you achieve an English Baccalaureate? - What subjects do you need? - Why do you think the EBacc has been introduced? What is the purpose of the EBacc? **What, if anything, were you told about the English Baccalaureate before you made your GCSE choices?** - Were you told before you made your final GCSE choices whether or not the subjects you chose will mean you may be able to achieve the English Baccalaureate? **If yes: Who discussed the English Baccalaureate with you?** - How much has your school/ teachers spoken to you about it? - Parents - Careers advisor	*Examine pupil awareness of the EBacc and any advice they had been given about it* **<u>5 mins</u>**

Time	Key Questions	Notes
	- Anyone else?	
	4. <u>Impact of EBACC on subject choices</u> **How much did you consider the English Baccalaureate when deciding what subjects to study at GCSE?** Why was this? FOR GROUPS TAKING EBacc SUBJECTS: **How did you come to the decision to take EBacc subjects?** PROBE: - Would you have chosen the subjects that you did if it wasn't for the EBacc? Did you decide the subjects that you were taking at GCSE before hearing about the EBacc? - When you were choosing your subjects, did you think about what would help you gain admission to further/higher education, or employment? What influence, if any, did this have on your decision to take EBacc subjects? - Who, if anyone, encouraged you to take subjects that make you eligible for an EBacc? **Why do you think some pupils want to achieve the English Baccalaureate?** **What other reasons do you think pupils might have, other than the ones we have already talked about, for wanting to achieve the English Baccalaureate?** **Why do you think some pupils choose not to take English Baccalaureate subjects at GCSE?** USE SOME CASE STUDIES HERE FOR ALL PUPILS Case study 1 & 2: **What should they do? Why do you say that?** PROBE: Should pupils take the subjects they enjoy most or should they consider other factors when choosing subjects? **Case study 3:** When choosing your GCSEs how do you make decisions between subjects that are included in the EBacc and subjects where you are likely to get higher grades? Which subjects do you think are going to be better for you in the future?	*Examine issues around impact of EBacc on subject choices and perceived benefits and drawbacks of the EBacc* **<u>10 minutes</u>**

Time	Key Questions	Notes
	RETURN TO EXERCISE ABOUT WHAT SUBJECTS ARE MOST BENEFECIAL FOR PUPILS/ WHAT SHOULD BE INLCUDED IN EBACC – SHOWCARDS OF SUBJECTS – DO THEY STILL AGREE? FOR PUPILS NOT TAKING EBACC SUBJECTS: **How did you decide which subjects to study for GCSE?** PROBE: - When you made your choices, did you consider whether or not the subjects you chose were EBacc subjects? Why/why not? What difference, if any, did this make to your choices? - When you were choosing your subjects, did you think about what would help you gain admission to further/higher education, or employment? What influence, if any, did this have on your subject choices? **Why do you think some pupils want to achieve the English Baccalaureate?** PROBE: - What, if any, benefits do you think there are to pupils taking the English Baccalaureate subjects?	
	<u>CONCLUSION</u> **Just to finish up, is there anything else that we've not discussed that you think is important in helping us to understand how you make your decisions about your options in Year 9?** THANK PARTICIPANTS FOR TAKING PART	

Appendix 3: Case studies used in pupil discussions

Case study 1: should pupils change their GCSE subject choices to receive an EBACC?

Joe is deciding on his GCSE options. He has chosen to take English literature, English language, maths, double science, geography, information technology and religious education. Joe performs well in these subjects and he is likely to get at least a C grade in each in his GCSEs. Joe is trying to decide which other subject to take at GCSE. If Joe also decided to take French then he would be able to try to gain the English Baccalaureate. Joe's parents are encouraging him to take French so that he may get the English Baccalaureate. However, Joe does not enjoy French much and prefers art, which he would like to take as his final GCSE option.

Case study 2: how much emphasis should there be on the EBACC versus options that are more useful for career aspirations?

Andrew is deciding on his GCSE options. Andrew thinks that he would like to be an engineer when he is older and he enjoys subjects where he is able to design and make things. He always does well in design technology and physics and would like to take Design and Technology, Physics, Graphics and ICT as well as the GCSEs all pupils at his school have to do (English, maths and science). Andrew feels that these GCSEs will be the most useful in helping him become an engineer but it will mean that he cannot achieve an English Baccalaureate.

Case study 3: should some subjects be more recognised than others?

Gemma has just received her GCSE results. She achieved A* and A grades in English, maths, science, textiles, art, business studies, media and drama. Gemma did not receive an English Baccalaureate. Her friend Anna has also received her GCSE results. She achieved B and C grades in English, maths, science, history, French, German, business studies and drama. Anna will receive an English Baccalaureate.

Appendix 4: Parent/carer discussion guide

Discussion guide: Research on the effects of the English Baccalaureate

Parent/carer discussion guide – 200612_FINAL (J12-035435-01)

Background to the research:

The research was commissioned by the DfE to understand the effect of the introduction of the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) on schools, pupils and parents/carers.

The English Baccalaureate is a performance measure introduced in the 2010 performance tables. It recognises pupils who achieve GCSEs or iGCSEs at grades A*-C across a core of academic subjects – English, maths, history or geography, the sciences and a language. It is not a qualification in itself.

Objectives of the guide:

- To understand levels of awareness of the EBacc amongst parents/carers
- Understand the advice that parents/carers give to their children about GCSE choice and the influence of the EBacc on this
- Understand the amount and type of information that parents/carers are given by schools on the EBacc
- Examine how important parents/carers consider EBacc subjects to be
- Examine how important parents/carers consider the EBacc to be as a measure of school performance

Outline of the research programme (to be covered in this discussion guide):

- Telephone interviews with parents of year 9 pupils.

Guide Sections	Guide Timings
Welcome and introduction	3 mins
GCSE subject choices	10 mins
Awareness of EBacc and information received from schools	5 mins
Importance of EBacc subjects	5 mins
Measuring school performance	5 mins
Conclusion	3 mins

Time	Key Questions	Notes
5 mins	**5. <u>Welcome and introduction</u>** - Thank participants for agreeing to take part - Explain it is an informal discussion lasting up to 40 minutes. - Introduce self and Ipsos MORI as an independent research company - Introduce research aims – explain research focuses on EBACC - Anonymity of participants and MRS (Market Research Society) code of conduct - Permission to audio record – only for analysis, no attribution of comments . **Ask participants to introduce self** - What is your occupation at the moment (work/home/study etc.)? - How many children do you have and what are their ages? - What are your children doing currently? (e.g. at school, college/university, working etc.) - Can I just check – roughly how long ago was it that you took your 'O' levels or GCSEs? And what age were you when you left full-time education? (MODERATOR EXPLAIN IF NEEDED; WE KNOW THAT PARENTS HAVE HAD DIFFERENT AMOUNTS OF EXPERIENCE OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM THEMSELVES, AND THAT THIS MAY AFFECT THEIR VIEWS ON THEIR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION)	*Inform participants about research and introduce group* **<u>5 minutes</u>** *Understand context that may influence parent's views: e.g. previous experience of children choosing options, their own educational background.*
	6. <u>GCSE subject choices</u> MODERATOR: EXPLAIN THAT TO START WITH, WE'D LIKE TO UNDERSTAND A BIT ABOUT THEIR CHILD'S GCSE SUBJECT CHOICES. WE WANT THEM TO THINK ABOUT THEIR CHILD WHO IS CURRENTLY IN/ JUST FINISHING YEAR 9 **To start with, can you tell me what subjects [child] has chosen to study towards a GCSE in?** IF THEY DON'T REMEMBER ALL PROBE: - English, maths? (compulsory) - Science? Double Science? Triple Science? - History? Geography? - A language? - Other GCSEs? - Any vocational qualifications?	*Understand involvement of parents in their child's GCSE subject choices and factors they see as important in influencing this choice* **<u>10 minutes</u>**

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Time	Key Questions	Notes
	Are you aware whether [child] has any idea what they'd like to do after leaving school? If so, PROBE: Further study/ Apprenticeship/ Work **Were you involved in helping your child to decide which GCSE subjects to take? If so what, if any, advice or information, did you give your child?** **Can you talk about the process of [child] choosing their options:** - **Do you know when option selection was first raised by the school?** - **At the beginning of the process did [child] have a clear idea of what GCSEs they wanted to study? What was this based on?** - **Did what [child] wanted to study change throughout the process of choosing their options? If so, why do you think this was?** - **Did you want [child] to study any particular subjects? If so, which subjects? Why did you want them to study these subjects?** PROBE: - Subjects that they enjoy most - Subjects that they perform better in - Subjects that may be most useful for the future - Was there anything else that they considered? **Were you aware of what GCSE options were offered by the school? If yes, How did you find out what the option choices were?** **Were you given any advice or information about the GCSE option choices for [child] by the school? If so, what advice or information did you get about the GCSE option choices available to [child] from their school?** **Did you obtain information from a source other than your child's school? If so, what information did you obtain and from who/where?** Did the information you received (either from your child's school or elsewhere) influence your thinking about what subjects [child] should take? If so, in what ways did it influence your thinking?	*Get an idea of likely future progression routes for child as context.* *NB – many of the prompts in this section may be unnecessary but please use for reference.* *Look out for spontaneous mentions of the EBacc.*

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Time	Key Questions	Notes
	IF AWARE OF OPTIONS OFFERED **How much choice, if any, did your child have in what subjects they will study at GCSE?** PROBE: - Are there any subjects that were compulsory to study? - Are there any subjects/ combinations of subjects that they were unable to study? **What subjects do you think are most useful for your child's future?** Why is this? PROBE ON ANY DIFFERENCES WITH PREVIOUS QUESTION. PROBE: - Academic subjects – which subjects? - Vocational or career-specific subjects – which subjects?	*Understand parents' views of the principle underlying EBacc*
	7. <u>Awareness of EBacc and information received from schools</u> MODERATOR: EXPLAIN THAT WE NOW WANT TO TALK ABOUT THE ENGLISH BACCALAUREATE **Have you heard of the English Baccalaureate (sometimes called "EBacc")?** Where did you hear about it? **What do you understand the English Baccalaureate to be?** - How do pupils achieve an English Baccalaureate? - What subjects are required? - What do you think the English Baccalaureate is intended to achieve? MODERATOR: EXPLAIN THE EBACC AND THE SUBJECTS INVOLVED: EBACC IS NOT A QUALIFICATION IN ITSELF, BUT IT IS THE TERM APPLIED TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF GCSEs AT GRADES A*-C ACROSS FIVE ACADEMIC SUBJECTS: ENGLISH, MATHS, HISTORY/GEOGRAPHY, SCIENCE, A LANGUAGE. (NB – IF RESPONDENTS BRING UP, EXPLAIN IT IS DIFFERENT THAN THE INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE – IBACC – WHICH IS A QUALIFICATION IN ITSELF FOR 16-19	*Understand parents' awareness of the EBacc and information they have been given about it* **<u>5 minutes</u>**

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Time	Key Questions	Notes
	YEAR OLDS) **Why do you think that the Government has introduced the English Baccalaureate?** PROBE: - What effects do you think they expect as a result? **Were you given any information or advice about the EBacc by your child's school? If so, what?**	
	8. <u>Importance of EBacc on decision-making (if not covered earlier)</u> IF HEARD OF EBACC: **How much of a role did the EBacc play in your child deciding their GCSE subjects?** PROBE: - Would your child have chosen the subjects that they did at GCSE before hearing about the English Baccalaureate? **Were other factors more important than the EBacc in your child making their GCSE choices?** What were these? ALL RESPONDENTS: **Did you encourage your child to take EBacc subjects?** Why/ Why not? PROBE: - What are the benefits of these subjects in particular? - How do they compare to other subjects? In what ways are they more/less useful? - Should all pupils take these subjects? Are they not suitable for some Pupils? Why is this?	*Examine role of EBacc in GCSE subject choices – NB only ask if not covered/ clear from initial discussion* **<u>5 minutes</u>**
	9. <u>Measuring school performance</u> **When you were deciding which secondary school you'd like your children to go to, what sorts of things were you looking out for in schools?** **How important are school performance tables when considering which school to send your child to?** Why is this? IF IMPORTANT: What do you look for in performance tables to determine how well a school is performing?	**<u>5 mins</u>**

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Time	Key Questions	Notes
	EXPLAIN THAT THE EBACC – GETTING 5 A*-C GRADES IN THE SUBJECTS ENGLISH, MATHS, HISTORY/GEOGRAPHY, SCIENCE, A LANGUAGE – IS NOW BEING USED IN SCHOOL PERFORMANCE TABLES AS WELL AS THE NUMBER OF PUPILS GETTING 5 A*-C IN ANY GCSE SUBJECTS. **How important is the EBacc as a measure of school performance?** - If you were choosing a secondary school again now, would this be a useful performance measure for you? - How much importance would you put on this versus other features of the school? - What role should non-EBacc subjects have in measuring performance?	
	CONCLUSION **Just to finish up, is there anything else we've not talked about that you think it's useful to discuss on the subject of GCSE choices?** THANK PARTICIPANTS FOR TAKING PART	**3 mins**

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Appendix 5: topline

		2012	2011
	Effects of the English Baccalaureate: Uncoded Topline Findings		
	Findings are from research conducted on behalf of DfE by Ipsos MORI (2012) and NatCen (2011). This year's fieldwork was conducted between 25 June and 20 July 2012. A representative sample of 1500 maintained secondary schools across England was selected from Edubase. We invited any member of staff in the school who knew about GCSE option choices to complete the survey either online or by telephone. In total teachers from 618 responded. Figures are unweighted. An asterisk denotes a value of less than one half of one percent, but not zero. Don't know and No Answers have been excluded from the base. Where data is not presented for 2011 it is because questions were asked for the first time in 2012. There were some minor changes in question wording in 2012: numbers in brackets after question wording relate to notes at the end of this document that describe these changes. Findings are based on all who specified an answer at each question (excluding those ineligible to answer the question, and those not stating responses).		
		Total	Total
	Base size:	**618**	**692**
Q.1a	**Which of these EBacc subjects are offered as GCSE choices to your current Year 9 pupils? (1)**		
	a) Triple science: physics, chemistry, and biology		
	Offered	93%	92%
	Not offered	7%	8%
	Base size:	**618**	**690**
Q.1b	**Which of these EBacc subjects are offered as GCSE choices to your current Year 9 pupils? (1)**		
	b) Double science: core and additional		
	Offered	95%	94%
	Not offered	5%	6%
	Base size:	**618**	**692**
Q.1c	**Which of these EBacc subjects are offered as GCSE choices to your current Year 9 pupils? (1)**		
	c) History		
	Offered	99%	99%
	Not offered	1%	1%

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	Base size:	**618**	**692**
Q.1d	**Which of these EBacc subjects are offered as GCSE choices to your current Year 9 pupils? (1)**		
	d) Geography		
	Offered	98%	99%
	Not offered	2%	1%
	Base size:	**618**	**692**
Q.1e	**Which of these EBacc subjects are offered as GCSE choices to your current Year 9 pupils? (1)**		
	e) A language GCSE		
	Offered	99%	99%
	Not offered	1%	1%
	Base size:	**574**	**633**
Q.2a	**Was triple science offered to all or some pupils?**		
	Offered to all pupils	29%	29%
	Offered to some pupils	71%	71%
	Base size:	**573**	**633**
Q.2b	**Is triple science compulsory for any pupils? IF COMPULSORY: Is it compulsory for all or some pupils?**		
	Compulsory for all pupils	6%	7%
	Compulsory for some pupils	30%	29%
	Not compulsory	64%	65%
	Base size:	**584**	**648**
Q.3a	**Was double science offered to all or some pupils?**		
	Offered to all pupils	57%	57%
	Offered to some pupils	43%	43%
	Base size:	**583**	**646**
Q.3b	**Is double science compulsory for any pupils? IF COMPULSORY: Is it compulsory for all or some pupils?**		
	Compulsory for all pupils	28%	35%
	Compulsory for some pupils	51%	41%
	Not compulsory	21%	24%
	Base size:	**611**	**685**
Q.4a	**Was history offered to all or some pupils?**		
	Offered to all pupils	87%	84%
	Offered to some pupils	13%	16%
	Base size:	**611**	**684**
Q.4b	**Is history compulsory for any pupils? IF COMPULSORY: Is it compulsory for all or some pupils?**		
	Compulsory for all pupils	2%	2%
	Compulsory for some pupils	11%	11%
	Not compulsory	87%	87%
	Base size:	**607**	**681**
Q.5a	**Was geography offered to all or some pupils?**		

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	Offered to all pupils Offered to some pupils	89% 11%	86% 14%
	Base size:	**607**	**678**
Q.5b	**Is geography compulsory for any pupils? IF COMPULSORY: Is it compulsory for all or some pupils?**		
	Compulsory for all pupils Compulsory for some pupils Not compulsory	2% 12% 87%	2% 11% 88%
	Base size:	**610**	**685**
Q.6a	**Was a language GCSE offered to all or some pupils?**		
	Offered to all pupils Offered to some pupils	84% 16%	84% 16%
	Base size:	**610**	**683**
Q.6b	**Is a language GCSE compulsory for any pupils? IF COMPULSORY: Is it compulsory for all or some pupils?**		
	Compulsory for all pupils Compulsory for some pupils Not compulsory	12% 27% 60%	17% 21% 62%
	Base size:	**589**	**636**
Q.8	**How many pupils in Year 9 have opted to take all the subjects that could lead to them achieving the English Baccalaureate? (2)**		
	None 01-30 31-50 51-100 101-200 201-300 301+ Mean Std Dev.	1% 13% 15% 37% 32% 2% 1% 90.29 54.39	2% 14% 13% 39% 30% 3% * 85.79 54.25
	Base size:	**557**	**585**
Q.9a	**And how many of your current Year 9 pupils have opted to take the following GCSEs, whether or not they are taking all the EBacc subjects.**		
	Triple science: physics, chemistry, and biology		
	None 01-30 31-50 51-100 101-200 201-300 301+ Mean Std Dev.	1% 27% 18% 41% 13% 1% - 63.44 41.42	2% 32% 16% 38% 12% 1% * 58.4 41.27
	Base size:	**566**	**600**

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Q.9b	**And how many of your current Year 9 pupils have opted to take the following GCSEs, whether or not they are taking all the EBacc subjects.**		
	Double science: core and additional		
	None	2%	2%
	01-30	5%	6%
	31-50	9%	9%
	51-100	35%	34%
	101-200	43%	44%
	201-300	6%	6%
	301+	*	1%
	Mean	112.97	110.43
	Std Dev.	57.16	60.12
	Base size:	**593**	**639**
Q.9c	**And how many of your current Year 9 pupils have opted to take the following GCSEs, whether or not they are taking all the EBacc subjects.**		
	History		
	None	*	-
	01-30	10%	13%
	31-50	19%	17%
	51-100	50%	48%
	101-200	21%	20%
	201-300	-	1%
	301+	*	-
	Mean	75.37	74.08
	Std Dev.	37.22	39.32
	Base size:	**590**	**636**
Q.9d	**And how many of your current Year 9 pupils have opted to take the following GCSEs, whether or not they are taking all the EBacc subjects.**		
	Geography		
	None	1%	1%
	01-30	16%	17%
	31-50	23%	24%
	51-100	47%	45%
	101-200	13%	12%
	201-300	*	*
	301+	*	-
	Mean	66.55	62.63
	Std Dev.	35.48	34.606
	Base size:	**599**	**641**
Q.9e	**And how many of your current Year 9 pupils have opted to take the following GCSEs, whether or not they are taking all the EBacc subjects.**		
	Language GCSE		
	None	1%	1%
	01-30	10%	12%
	31-50	13%	12%

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	51-100	36%	34%
	101-200	35%	37%
	201-300	5%	5%
	301+	*	1%
	Mean	100.02	98.35
	Std Dev.	58.19	69.22
	Base size:	**616**	
Q.10a	**Could you tell me whether the introduction of the English Baccalaureate influenced**		
	a) Your school's curriculum offer for the current academic year, 2011/12?		
	Yes	47%	
	No	53%	
	Base size:	**614**	
Q.10b	**Could you tell me whether the introduction of the English Baccalaureate influenced**		
	b) The GCSE option blocks you offered to your current Year 9 pupils?		
	Yes	48%	
	No	52%	
	Base size:	**593**	**669**
Q.11a	**Can you tell me whether you expect to make changes to**		
	a) your school's curriculum offer in the next academic year, 2012/13, for reasons related to the EBacc? (3)		
	Yes	15%	52%
	No	85%	48%
	Base size:	**594**	
Q.11b	**Can you tell me whether you expect to make changes to**		
	b) the GCSE option blocks you will offer to Year 9 pupils next year, for reasons related to the EBacc?		
	Yes	13%	
	No	87%	
	Base size:	**617**	
Q.OPT	**Do your option blocks allow all pupils who want to study towards the Ebacc to do so or not?**		
	Yes - all pupils who want to study EBacc can do so	89%	
	No	11%	
	Base size:	**67**	
Q.OPTB	**Can you explain why this is the case? Is it because...**		
	The EBacc is not available to pupils with low attainment	63%	
	The EBacc combination is not available in all option blocks	21%	
	Some pupils are encouraged on alternative pathways	6%	
	Do not have option blocks	4%	
	Some other reason	19%	
	Base size:	**616**	**666**

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Q.12a	**Have you provided any information or advice to pupils regarding the EBacc?**		
	Yes	93%	88%
	No	7%	12%
	Base size:	**616**	**666**
Q.12c	**Have you provided any information or advice to parents or carers regarding the EBacc?**		
	Yes	94%	88%
	No	6%	12%
	Base size:	**590**	**670**
Q.13	**Have any subjects or courses been withdrawn from the curriculum or failed to recruit enough pupils for the 2012/13 academic year as a result of the introduction of the EBacc? (4)**		
	Yes	27%	45%
	No	73%	55%
	Base size:	**599**	**671**
Q.14	**Will any of your current Year 9 pupils complete any GCSEs before the end of Year 11?**		
	Yes	70%	81%
	No	30%	19%
	Base size:	**411**	**515**
Q.15	**Do pupils who get a C on early entry have an opportunity to retake the exam? IF YES: Do these pupils always have an opportunity to retake the exam, or sometimes have the opportunity? (5)**		
	Yes, always	64%	59%
	Yes, sometimes	30%	35%
	No	6%	6%
	Base size:	**618**	
Q.16a	**Did you change your policy on early entries for the current academic year, 2011/12, because of the EBacc?**		
	Yes	6%	
	No	94%	
	Base size:	**397**	**506**
Q.16c	**Do you expect to make any changes to your policy on early entries for pupils in Year 9 next year because of the EBacc?**		
	Yes	6%	10%
	No	94%	90%
	Base size:	**614**	
Q.17a	**Did the introduction of the EBacc lead to any changes in your school's staffing structure for the current academic year, 2011/12?**		
	Yes	30%	
	No	70%	

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	Base size:	**592**	
Q.18a	**Do you expect to make any changes to your school's staffing structure for next year, 2012/13, as a result of the introduction of the EBacc? (6)**		
	Yes	20%	
	No	80%	

Question wording used in 2011

(1) Which of these EBacc subjects are offered as GCSE choices to your current Year 9 and Year 10 pupils?

(2) And how many pupils in Year 9 will be taking all the subjects that could lead to them achieving the English Baccalaureate?

(3) Has the EBacc influenced your curriculum offer for September 2011?

(4) Have any other subjects/courses been withdrawn from the curriculum or failed to recruit enough pupils for the next academic year?

(5) Do pupils who get a C on early entry have an opportunity to retake the exam?

(6) Are you changing your policy on early entries in the light of EBacc?

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Appendix 6: Sample design and profile

The sample was designed to replicate the sampling for a comparable survey conducted in 2011 on behalf of the DfE. The sample population comprised secondary institutions flagged as 'open' on the most recent version of Edubase (dated May 2012). Community special, Foundation special and Welsh Establishments were excluded from the frame. Middle schools that covered Key Stage 4 were included.

In total, there were 2,828 schools on the sampling frame. A small number of schools which had taken part in recent Ipsos MORI research projects were excluded to avoid over-burdening these schools, leaving 2,813 schools on the frame before the sample was selected.

The sample was stratified, as in 2011, by Government Office Region, establishment type, and (implicitly) by the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals.

A sample of 1500 schools and 500 'reserve' schools was selected using a '1 in N' method. During the fieldwork period, a randomly-selected sub-set of the reserve sample was used. In total, a sample of 1,620 schools was used; 618 participated, giving a response rate of 38%.

As the data closely matched the population profile, no weights were applied.

Profile of achieved sample and population					
	Achieved sample (N)	**Achieved sample %[21]**	**Population (N)**	**Population %**	**Difference between achieved sample and population %**
School type					
Academy converters	190	31	765	27	+4%
Academy free school	1	*	4	*	-
Academy sponsor led	42	7	286	10	-3%
Academy	233	38	1,055	37	+1%
Community school	189	31	929	33	-2%
Foundation school	95	15	412	15	-
Voluntary aided school	86	14	365	13	+1%
Voluntary controlled school	15	2	52	2	-

[21] Where percentages do not equal 100% this is due to rounding

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	Achieved sample (N)	Achieved sample %[22]	Population (N)	Population %	Difference between achieved sample and population %
Religious character					
Religious character	126	20	525	19	+1%
No religious character	215	35	870	31	+4%
Does not apply	277	45	1418	50	-5%
Gender of school pupils					
Boys	30	5	153	5	-
Girls	46	7	198	7	-
Co-educational	541	88	2459	88	-
Admissions policy					
Comprehensive	548	89	2535	90	-1%
Modern	29	5	127	5	-
Selective	41	7	151	5	+2%
Number of year 9 pupils (bands)					
Small	208	34	n/a	n/a	n/a
Medium	201	33	n/a	n/a	n/a
Large	204	33	n/a	n/a	n/a
Information not available	5	1			
Proportion of FSM-eligible pupils (bands)					
Low	195	32	769	29	+3%
Medium	214	35	976	35	-
High	209	34	1009	36	-2%
Government Office Region					
East Midlands	59	10	247	9	+1%
East of England	68	11	290	10	+1%
London	71	12	387	14	-2%
North East	31	5	131	5	-
North West	100	16	416	15	+1%
South East	93	15	444	16	-1%
South West	62	10	282	10	-
West Midlands	70	11	340	12	-1%
Yorkshire and the Humber	64	10	276	10	-

[22] Where percentages do not equal 100% this is due to rounding

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Appendix 7: Statistical reliability

Because a sample, rather than the entire population, was surveyed the percentage results are subject to sampling tolerances – which vary with the size of the sample and the percentage figure concerned. For example, for a question where 50% of the people in a sample of 618 respond with a particular answer, the chances are 95 in 100 that this result would lie within +/- 3.9% of the result that would have been obtained from a census of the entire population (using the same procedures). The tolerances that may apply in this report are given in the table below. These calculations assume a purely random sample and are based on a 95% confidence level. It should be highlighted though that because some survey questions are routed (and therefore asked of a smaller number of respondents), these tolerances will not apply to the data from every question, just those where the full base size is used.

Approximate sampling tolerances applicable to percentages at or near these levels (at the 95% confidence level)

Size of sample or sub-group on which survey result is based	10% or 90% ±	30% or 70% ±	50% ±
618 teachers	2.	3.6	3.9

Source: Ipsos MORI

Tolerances are also involved in the comparison of results between different elements of the sample. A difference must be of at least a certain size to be statistically significant. The following table is a guide to the sampling tolerances applicable to comparisons between the 2011 and 2012 data.

Differences required for significance at the 95% confidence level at or near these percentages

Effective sample size			10% or 90%	30% or 70%	50%
2011 sample (692)	***Vs.***	***2012 sample (618)***	3.3	5	5.4

Source: Ipsos MORI

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