



Department
for Education

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Respond by 23 July 2014
Ref: Department for Education

National Curriculum Reform (England): Key Stage 4 Science

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To Schools, teachers and organisations representing teachers, parents, colleges and universities, subject associations, employers, children and young people, local authorities, governors associations and others with an interest in the national curriculum.

Issued 11 June 2014

Enquiries To If your enquiry is related to the policy content of the consultation you can contact the Department by telephone: 0370 000 2288 or by email: NCreformKS4science.CONULTATION@education.gsi.gov.uk

Contact Details

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

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This consultation seeks views on draft programme of study for science at key stage 4. It follows the publication of the national curriculum framework document on 11 September 2013 which covered the whole national curriculum apart from the programmes of study for English, mathematics and science at key stage 4.
- 1.2 The programme of study for science at key stage 4 will be taught from September 2016 alongside the timetable for introducing the new science GCSEs. The current programme of study has been disapplied for school years 2013/14 and 2014/15 and we propose to extend the disapplication to school year 2015/16 to fit in with this timetable.

1.3 The review of the national curriculum was launched in January 2011 with the following aims:

- to ensure that the new national curriculum embodies rigour and high standards and creates coherence in what is taught in schools;
- to ensure that all children are taught the essential knowledge in the key subject disciplines; and
- beyond that core, to allow teachers greater freedom to use their professionalism and expertise in order to help all children realise their potential.

1.4 The Department undertook a consultation on the draft programmes of study for most of the national curriculum between February and April 2013. Following this consultation, the proposals were revised and a one-month consultation was undertaken on 8 July 2013. The [outcome of the latter consultation](#) and the new [programmes of study](#) were published in September 2013.

1.5 Following a consultation on the draft programmes of study for key stage 4 English and mathematics from 2 December 2013 to 3 February 2014, the department is consulting until 13 June on the draft Order and regulations that will give effect to the new programmes of study. The final programmes of study for English and mathematics are planned to be published by the end of the current school year.

1.6 The national curriculum acts as a benchmark for all schools and provides young people with the knowledge they need to move confidently and successfully through their education. The content at all key stages must compare favourably with the most successful international curricula in the highest performing jurisdictions and set rigorous requirements for pupil attainment. The proposal for science at key stage 4 has been developed to meet these high expectations.

1.7 The draft programme of study for key stage 4 science builds on the key stage 3 science programme of study. It is consistent with the relevant subject content for the new [combined science GCSE](#), which was published on 9 April 2014.

2 Scope and coverage of the consultation

2.1 This consultation covers the government's proposals for changes to the programme of study for key stage 4 science. The consultation will close on 23 July 2014.

- 2.2** We are seeking the views of schools, teachers and organisations representing teachers, parents, colleges and universities, subject associations, employers, children and young people, local authorities, governors' associations and others with an interest in the national curriculum.
- 2.3** We believe that it is important to consider the content of this proposed programme of study alongside the new requirements for the subject content of the GCSEs in science, to ensure that the curriculum and qualifications are fully coherent. The programme of study for science will be phased in from September 2016, alongside first teaching of the new qualifications. This means that they will be first taught to pupils in year 10 from September 2016 and to pupils in years 10 and 11 from September 2017.

3 Using the consultation document

- 3.1** Respondents should refer to the draft 'programme of study for key stage 4 science' when responding to this consultation.

4 The programme of study

- 4.1** The draft programme of study seeks to ensure that the curriculum and qualifications are fully coherent.
- 4.2** **Question 1:** Do you have any comments on the content set out in the draft programme of study for science?

Question 2: Do you think the draft programme of study for science provides for appropriate progression from key stage 3?

Question 3: Do you have any comments on the proposal to extend the disapplication of the current programme of study by a further year i.e. to the end of the 2015/16 academic year, and to phase the introduction of the new programme of study as set out in section 2?

Question 4: Does the proposal have potential to have a disproportionate impact, positive or negative, on specific pupil groups, in particular the 'protected characteristic' groups? (the relevant protected characteristics are disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation); if they have potential for an adverse impact, how can this be reduced?

5 Plans for publishing the results of this consultation

- 5.1 The consultation will close on 23 July 2014. We plan to publish a summary of the responses to the consultation on the e-consultation website in September 2014.

6 Legislative context

- 6.1 The Secretary of State proposes to make provision under part 6 of the Education Act 2002 having the effect that the current programme of study for key stage 4 science – which is disapplied for school years 2013/14, 2014/15 and which we are proposing should also be disapplied for school year 2015/16 - will be revoked and replaced with a new one from September 2016; Section 96 of the Education Act 2002 requires the Secretary of State to consult those with an interest in the proposal.

7 How To Respond

- 7.1 Consultation responses can be completed online at: www.education.gov.uk/consultations, by emailing NCreformKS4science.CONSULTATION@education.gsi.gov.uk or by downloading a response form which should be completed and sent to: Chris Ward (Mrs), Department for Education, Assessment, Curriculum and General Qualifications Reform Group, Level 6 (Area J), 2 St Paul's Place, 125 Norfolk Street, Sheffield, S1 2FJ.

8 Additional Copies

- 8.1 Additional copies are available electronically and can be downloaded from the Department's e-consultation website at: www.education.gov.uk/consultations.