



Department
for Education

New programmes of study for key stage 4 English and mathematics from September 2015

Government consultation response

July 2014

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Introduction

This report summarises the responses received to our recent consultation on the draft Order and Regulations that will give effect to a revised national curriculum framework document which will include the new programmes of study for English and mathematics at key stage 4, to be taught from September 2015.

Background

On 11 September 2013, the government published a national curriculum framework document which covered the whole national curriculum except for the programmes of study for key stage 4 English, mathematics and science. The aim was to prepare the key stage 4 programmes of study for English, mathematics and science in tandem with the development of new GCSE content for these subjects. Following the publication of the GCSE subject content for English and mathematics in November 2013, the Department undertook a statutory consultation on draft programmes of study for key stage 4 English and mathematics from 2 December 2013 to 3 February 2014. In line with the statutory procedures, the Department published a summary of the responses received to that consultation on 14 May and undertook a one-month consultation on the draft Order and regulations. We also published a revised draft of the programmes of study with the latter consultation. This consultation closed on 13 June and we received 8 responses.

Summary of responses received

Q1. Do you have any comments on the draft Order which is proposed to give effect to the new 'National Curriculum in England – Framework Document', which includes the programmes of study for English and mathematics for key stage 4? The programmes of study will be taught to year 10 pupils from September 2015 and to all key stage 4 pupils from September 2016.

There were 6 responses.

Two respondents commented on the appropriateness of the draft Order with one supporting the phased introduction of the new programmes of study which is consistent with the implementation of the new GCSE subject content for English and mathematics.

Other respondents tended to respond in more general terms by commenting on the programmes of study, mostly reiterating comments made during the first consultation. One respondent raised concern about the timeframe for the consultation, including the suggestion that introducing the new programmes of study too quickly may have an effect on teachers' morale, resulting in the loss of experienced teachers. Other comments included:

English

- lack of prescribed texts from other cultures or traditions;
- no justification on the inclusion of Romantic poets;
- no weighting for Spoken English in the GCSE qualification, creating uncertainty about how it will be assessed and moderated;
- support for the inclusion of project based learning;
- the importance of digital literacy/ICT not included.

Mathematics

- over emphasis on facts and procedures at the expense of understanding and problem solving;
- the inclusion of trigonometry, simultaneous equations and inverse proportions will not necessarily engage students or encourage further study post-16.

Q2. Do you have any comments on the draft Regulations which are proposed to disapply the current programmes of study for English and mathematics for key stage 4 for year 11 pupils in school year 2015/16 to allow for the phasing of the new programmes of study?

There were 5 responses.

There were two responses about the draft regulations, with one respondent agreeing with the provision to phase the introduction of the new programmes of study. Other respondents tended to respond in more general terms by commenting on the programmes of study, mostly reiterating comments made during the first consultation, for example:

- the draft subject content appears to focus on academic demand at the expense of functional literacy;
- the new curriculum may have implications for teacher workload, particularly in the case of small and rural schools;
- there is insufficient focus on progression between key stages;
- the question of disapplication of the programme of study for year 11 pupils is largely irrelevant given that the national curriculum does not apply to many secondary schools.

Next steps

The Government believes that the key stage 4 programme of study for English published in May 2014 is consistent with the GCSE content and that it will help to raise standards. The key stage 4 mathematics content has been amended slightly to ensure coherence between the GCSE subject content published in November 2013 and the KS3 and KS4 programmes of study. The Order and regulations are planned to be laid in July 2014 to give effect to the new programmes of study which are set out in a revised national curriculum framework document. The new key stage 4 programmes of study for English and mathematics will be taught from September 2015, starting with year 10 pupils.

Overview of responses

The organisational breakdown of respondents was as follows:

School	1
Representative bodies	1
Other	2
Parent	1
Awarding organisation	1
Union	1
Young person	1
Total	8



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