

UPDATE ON THE CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT REVIEW



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As previously notified to members, the new government is undertaking a review of the curriculum and its assessment for 5-18 year olds.

The review seeks to ensure that the curriculum appropriately balances ambition, excellence, relevance, flexibility and inclusivity for all children and young people.

Specifically it seeks to deliver:

- an excellent foundation in core subjects of reading, writing and maths
- a broader curriculum, with improved access to music, art, sport and drama, as well as vocational subjects
- a curriculum that ensures children and young people leave compulsory education ready for life and ready for work
- a curriculum that reflects the issues and diversities of our society, ensuring all children and young people are represented
- an assessment system that captures:
 - the strengths of every child and young person
 - the breadth of the curriculum

The EBEA has responded to the call for evidence from the review panel which closed on 23 November. The EBEA feels very strongly that economics, business and enterprise education have a great deal to contribute to the curriculum the review team is seeking to promote. You can read the EBEA's full submission on the website (www.ebea.org.uk) but in summary:

- We emphasised the popularity of economics, business and enterprise (EBE) as option choices at Key Stage 4 and post-16. Economics and business combined

account for more entries at A level than any other subject apart from mathematics. Business related subjects have the largest vocational entries of any subject area at Key Stage 4 and post-16. They are popular choices because students see them as being relevant and valuable to their future lives as consumers, producers and citizens.

- We argued that EBE plays a vital role in preparing students for adult life, helping to overcome social injustice and economic disadvantage and developing critical awareness of current issues.



WE EMPHASISED THE POPULARITY OF ECONOMICS, BUSINESS AND ENTERPRISE (EBE) AS OPTION CHOICES AT KEY STAGE 4 AND POST-16

- We stated that the importance and status of our subjects needs to be recognised by including them fully in accountability measures at Key Stage 4 and post-16.
- We strongly advocated that EBE education should be part of the statutory curriculum for all students in state funded schools from 5-18. It needs to be taught in dedicated curriculum time in secondary schools by appropriately qualified teachers, properly assessed and included in the Ofsted inspection framework.
- We drew attention to the alarming shortage of economics and business teachers (one in five lessons is taught by a non-specialist) and

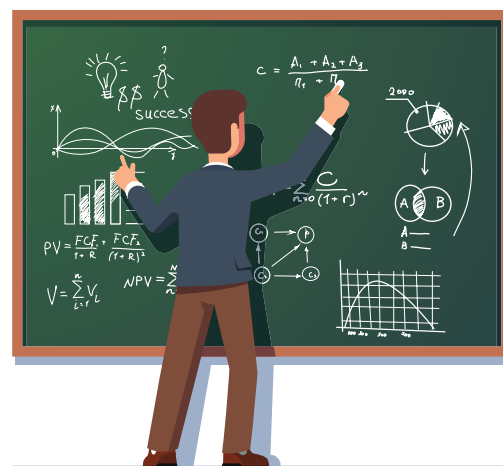
the need to re-introduce bursaries for trainees.

- We argued that BTEC and Cambridge National courses serve the needs of large numbers of learners and should be retained. While T levels are a welcome alternative, they are complex, and many schools find them difficult to implement. Consequently, take up has been low and many students will be disadvantaged if they provide the only alternative to GCSE and A levels.
- We suggested that innovation in economics and business examination courses, which could improve their relevance and appeal, has been stifled by over prescription of the specifications by the DfE and Ofqual.

There were few responses from EBEA members to our request to comment on the proposed thrust of our submission but those we did receive were overwhelmingly supportive and we made the assumption that

silence from the majority of members meant they did not have serious objections to what we were proposing.

Just prior to the closure of the call for evidence the chair of the Association





of Citizenship Teaching hosted a meeting of representatives from the EBEA, the Royal Economics Society (Discovering Economics) and the Economic Research Council to discuss the submissions to the curriculum and assessment review. There was very close agreement on the key messages, particularly in terms of making economic literacy part of the statutory curriculum for all students. It was pointed out that although economic

and financial literacy are related, they are not the same thing (the EBEA supports the case for both being part of the statutory curriculum). We (Adrian and David) pointed out that there have been numerous attempts over many years to develop EBE (including financial literacy) but provision remains very patchy, resulting in many students being disadvantaged. Just making EBE statutory will not guarantee it is delivered in schools to a

consistently high standard.

Next steps

A member of the review team has informed us that there will be minor 'tweaks' to economics and business courses and we will be consulted on these.

David Butler and Adrian Lyons EBEA Advocacy team

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