

Public Consultation Paper

The Future of Secondary School Qualifications for 14-19 year olds

March 2014

Purpose and type of consultation

This is a consultation for the Bailiwick of Guernsey community to provide views on the options for the future of qualifications offered to students in our Secondary schools including GCSEs and A Levels.

Changes outside the Bailiwick will have an impact on the Curriculum, Qualifications and Assessment Framework for our students in the future. This consultation paper considers the qualifications that should be offered by States-maintained schools. The curriculum and assessment framework will flow from any decision taken about the qualifications to be offered.

The implications of the changes that will have to be made are many and complex. The Education Department has already conducted an initial closed consultation across the Education Service to help inform the Education Department's consideration of this critically important issue (responses to this survey are included in a separate document titled Appendix 4). This public consultation will further assist the Education Department identify the best way forward for our young people.

A glossary of education terms used in this document is available on page 30.

Closing date: 30th April 2014

Information received from the consultation will assist the Education Board in making informed decisions on Transforming the Bailiwick of Guernsey Curriculum, Qualifications and Assessment Framework.

Please complete the online questionnaire at

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/secexams> by the end of

Wednesday 30th April 2014.

Circulation

This consultation paper has been made available to the following individuals / organisations:

Public
Institute of Directors

States Members
Chamber of Commerce

Staff Associations
GIBA
CGI

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1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 In its Vision for Education “Today’s Learners: Tomorrow’s World”, which was approved unanimously by the States of Deliberation in July 2013, the Education Department outlined its intention to introduce a new curriculum, qualifications and assessment framework with the required support and training for staff and the necessary engagement of parents and employers. The Education Department has to undertake this critically important workstream in response to changes that are being introduced in England by the Secretary of State for Education, Mr Michael Gove. The framework we currently use in Key Stages 4 and 5 (i.e. GCSEs and A/AS Levels respectively) will no longer exist in the same form as they do now and so the status quo is not an option. Guernsey has always adopted, adapted or rejected changes implemented in England’s education system; now we have to decide the right option for us to follow with regards to qualifications for our young people.
- 1.2 We are not alone in having to look at our qualifications framework. Wales and Northern Ireland are also having to look at what is right for them. Similarly, Jersey and the Isle of Man are considering what is right for their young people. Scotland alone is unaffected by the changes in England as they have historically operated their own education system with their curriculum and their own Qualifications and Assessment Framework, although they have regularly updated their qualifications and have recently introduced a new framework.
- 1.3 At a time of significant change in the three-country qualifications system (England, Wales, Northern Ireland) and the introduction of new qualifications in Scotland there is both an opportunity and a need to consider what is best for the future of curriculum, qualifications and assessment for Guernsey. Due to the pace of change in England, in particular, there is a need in the first instance to focus on a qualifications and assessment framework for Guernsey.
- 1.4 The Education Department has been working closely with the four Home Nations and the other Crown Dependencies to research and understand how their proposals are developing and in particular how Wales and Northern Ireland intend to respond to the changes in England. Northern Ireland has only recently published its proposals and we have waited to see the full detail that is available so that we can consider all the options.
- 1.5 The Education Department believes that a qualifications system should be capable of stretching learners and differentiating between them whilst, at the same time, being inclusive and recognising the achievement of all young people. It is important that qualifications are designed in such a way that the assessment of a subject is mapped onto the content of the course and appropriately supports teaching and learning. In addition, qualifications should support the development of a wide range of skills not all of which can be assessed through written examination.
- 1.6 With these principles in mind, and the core values of Guernsey’s Education Vision at the centre of consideration, this consultation paper looks at the current position in Guernsey and highlights the changes proposed in England with the associated potential implications and the outcomes for regulation in the rest of the UK. It then gives a brief analysis of developments in the other UK Nations and gives some information on international systems.
- 1.7 From this basis the Education Department has identified six potential options for Guernsey and has consulted with staff in Guernsey’s Education service as well as the profession in the

grant-aided and private schools. At this stage the Education Department believes there are three possible ways forward:

- 1.8 **Option 1 - Adopting the new system of examinations for 14-19 year olds being introduced in England**
- 1.9 **Option 2 - Adopting the Scottish examination system for 14-19 year olds**
- 1.10 **Option 3 - Implementing an interim system whereby schools could use International GCSEs (legacy iGCSEs, still graded A*-G) or qualifications from Northern Ireland or Wales including GCSEs, AS and A Levels plus a range of vocational qualifications whilst taking time to further review and plan for the introduction of an alternative system. This could be the English or Scottish system.**
In most cases, this would have the effect of, in the interim, a move to an alternative examination board rather than a more significant change.
- 1.11 In all three options the Education Department is planning to continue offering the International Baccalaureate at post 16 at the Sixth Form Centre.
- 1.12 The Education Department recognises the fundamental importance of the qualifications framework for our young people and the implications for their future lives as well as the implications for Guernsey's economy. We therefore are seeking the views of the people of the Bailiwick to help the Education Department identify what is the right solution for Guernsey.
- 1.13 There are advantages and disadvantages with each of the options considered and the Consultation Paper goes into greater detail but the following tables summarise the risks and benefits of each system:

Option 1 – England (see sections 5 and 12 for further details)

GCSEs and A Levels to be comprehensively reformed to become linear with exams taken at the end of the course. There will be a major reduction in coursework or other controlled assessment.

Reformed GCSEs will have a new grading system from 9 to 1 (with 9 being the highest) AS to be decoupled from A Level.

First teaching for new reformed qualifications to begin in Sep 2015 in some subjects with others following later.

Reduction in alternative qualifications and tiered papers.

<u>Benefits include</u>	<u>Risks include</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • nearest and largest UK neighbour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • does not fit with agreed core values and principles
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • potential ease of recruitment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • contrary to most international research based developments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ease of move for students/families from England to Guernsey & vice-versa 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • may disadvantage large numbers of students (linear courses with award only on the basis of an exam or written test at the end of the course)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • known familiar qualifications brand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • could narrow curriculum offer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • perception of increased rigour of qualifications by some 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • could limit teaching and learning approaches
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • working with familiar Examination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • could result in teaching to test and

Boards	over emphasis on examination preparation
• currency and portability	• lack of political stability in education system in England
	• lack of wider skills/attributes development
	• limited assessment methods
	• considerable opposition from the profession in England
	• would impact on primary school approach
<p>Conclusion</p> <p>Adopting the proposed changes in England could have a negative outcome for large numbers of learners of all ages. It is not supported generally by Secondary phase Headteachers or Education Department officers as the best option for Guernsey.</p>	

Option 2 – Scotland (see sections 6 and 12 for further details)

Curriculum for Excellence and different structure of qualifications – Nationals, Highers and Advanced Highers plus a wide range of vocational and personal development opportunities. All qualifications include opportunities for coursework and other added value assessments including projects and also have a focus on skills development. Highers and Advanced Highers provide progression to further and higher education and are recognised outside of Scotland.

<u>Benefits include</u>	<u>Risks include</u>
• Excellent match with curriculum statement	• Massive change for system
• Excellent match with vision and principles	• Recruitment
• Inclusive curriculum and framework	• Short timescale for such significant change
• Well recognised international currency	• Cost (likely to be in region of implementation of £1m)
• Significant support available from SQA and Education Scotland	• Issues for families moving from England to Guernsey and back (short-term licence)
• All party support for Curriculum For Excellence and qualification framework	• Public perception
• Prioritises Literacy, Numeracy and Well-being	• Delivery of training and support to staff to sufficient level and standard
• Seen in theory as best option by most Headteachers (but not in time available)	
• Wide range of personal development qualifications	
<p>Conclusion</p> <p>The Curriculum for Excellence and the qualifications framework in Scotland has support from officers and many Headteachers. There have been three positive visits from a range</p>	

of stakeholders. However, to implement this significant change in the timescales available (by September 2015), with all the other developments underway is unlikely to be successful. Due to the excellent match with expressed values and principles a move to this system over three to five years is a more realistic proposition. This would require an interim position to be taken on qualifications until fully implemented.

Option 3 – Interim while review long term qualifications system (see sections 7, 8 and 12 for details)

Allowing schools to choose GCSEs and AS/A levels from Northern Ireland and Wales as well as opting for legacy iGCSEs. All would be similar to current qualifications and maintain the same grading structure A*-G. All would also still provide elements of coursework and other controlled assessment as well as end of course examinations.

Schools would not be able to offer the new linear GCSEs and A levels from England as they are to be graded differently and so would lead to confusion for parents, students, employers etc. A range of vocational qualifications would also still be offered.

This interim position would allow further time to review how the new system in England develops and also to look more closely at the Scottish system.

This interim option is similar to the stance being adopted by Northern Ireland.

<u>Benefits include</u>	<u>Risks include</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Familiar qualifications (little change with continuation of coursework or other assessments throughout duration of courses) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Future uncertainty over framework
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effectively changing exam Board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Difficulty making comparisons within Guernsey and with other jurisdictions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Similar curriculum principles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural fit
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extended timescale for preparing to move to a longer term solution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Possibility to be seen as lesser versions of qualifications
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Broader range of qualifications available 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public perception of reasons for change
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to tailor the qualifications to the needs of the students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May require further change
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Range of assessment methods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery of training and support to staff to deliver new syllabuses

Conclusion

This is a realistic option with support from CCEA, the Northern Ireland government, WJEC and the Welsh Government.

This is the Education Board's preferred option.

1.14 **Having carefully considered all the options, the Education Board's preferred option is to select the interim position.**

1.15 The Education Board believes that there remains considerable uncertainty as to the final position that England will adopt, particularly with a potential change in Government in the UK in the forthcoming General Election. Adopting the Scottish model now would require significant changes in too short a timescale and potentially could have an adverse impact on

our ability to recruit teachers from the mainland. There is also some uncertainty about the impact the Scottish Referendum on Independence could have on its education system.

- 1.16 The Education Board, therefore, believes that the interim option is the most prudent and in the best interests of all the islands' students. It will continue to review and develop a final long term curriculum, qualifications and assessment framework.
- 1.17 The Board invites members of the public and all interested stakeholders to complete a short online survey available at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/secexams> by the end of Wednesday 30th April 2014.
- 1.18 Further comment or questions may be submitted to cqaframework@education.gov.gg

2 Introduction

- 2.1 The consultation paper starts by setting out the Education Department's views on the objectives of a qualifications and assessment framework i.e. start with the end in mind. This helps to provide a context to consider the various options which are available. Appendix 1 contains a list of links to relevant websites to help with further background reading for those who wish to investigate aspects in other jurisdictions in more detail.
- 2.2 The document then describes the current arrangements in Guernsey, again to provide some context which helps to frame the debate and core issues. The driver for this consultation and the inevitable change that is necessary is then described in Section 5 which explains what is happening in England. It also explains what some of the concerns are in the three Home Nations, the Crown Dependencies and indeed the profession in England with regard to Mr Gove's intended direction of travel.
- 2.3 The next section describes the remaining three Home Nations approach to their qualifications and assessment frameworks together with the risks and benefits of each as an option. The Education Department has conducted a closed consultation with staff in the Education Service in the Bailiwick, including the teachers at the grant aided schools. The Education Department received 195 responses to the closed consultation and the results are included in this paper. There are further annexes which contain the comments from the staff consultation on each of the options.
- 2.4 Section 9 looks at what the other Crown Dependencies are doing.
- 2.5 The document concludes by presenting the three main options which the Education Department believes might be appropriate for Guernsey and which the Guernsey Federation of Secondary Schools will be able to deliver for the benefit of all our young people.
- 2.6 There is a glossary of education terms on page 30.

3 What is a Qualifications and Assessment Framework?

Objectives of a Qualifications and Assessment Framework

- 3.1 The Education Department believes that a qualifications system should be capable of stretching learners and differentiating between them whilst, at the same time, being inclusive and recognising the achievement of all young people. It is important that qualifications are designed in such a way that the assessment of a subject is mapped onto the content of the course and appropriately supports teaching and learning. In addition, qualifications should support the development of a wide range of skills not all of which can be assessed through written examination.
- 3.2 The OECD "Review of Evaluation and Assessment in Education"¹ states:
"High-stakes" uses of evaluation and assessment results might lead to distortions in the education process as a result of school agents concentrating on the measure to hold them accountable. For instance excessive focus on teaching students the specific skills that are

¹ OECD, April 2013 –
<http://www.oecd.org/education/school/oecdreviewonevaluationandassessmentframeworksforimprovingchooloutcomes.htm>

tested, narrowing the curriculum, training students to answer specific types of questions, adopting rote learning of styles of instruction allocating more resources to subjects that are tested, focussing on students near the proficiency cut score.

- 3.3 The Education Department believes that we must ensure our qualifications system and evaluation framework align with the educational objectives of learners and the system as a whole to prevent this distortion.
- 3.4 Qualifications taken in Guernsey must be comparable in standards to similar qualifications taken by learners in other jurisdictions. They must also motivate and engage learners and recognise and reward their efforts. A qualifications system should provide opportunities for every young person to achieve his or her potential and facilitate their progression into further education, higher education, work or training.

Components of a Qualifications and Assessment Framework

- 3.5 There are a number of key aspects of a qualifications and assessment framework where differences occur and the implications of which need to be clearly understood.
- 3.6 Awarding of qualifications through assessment can be undertaken through modular assessment (tests, coursework or other assessments taken at points throughout the duration of the course) or linear assessment (an exam or test at the end of the course) or a combination of both.
- 3.7 The Education Department believes it is important for there to be flexibility in assessment to allow for subject differences, variations in learning styles and equality of access and opportunity. Students learn in different ways and there is no single approach that is likely to suit all students. It is important to ensure changes to assessment mechanisms do not create an inequality in the system by favouring one type of learner more than another. There is no conclusive evidence that a linear route is more rigorous than a modular one. There is also no conclusive evidence that a linear route is more difficult than a modular one. Research has shown that the issue of 'teaching to the test' remains whether a modular or linear route is chosen, and that a linear route does not offer the flexibility to spend more time holistically on the delivery of topics.
- 3.8 Whilst modularity is valued as a route to allow flexibility and motivation of learners, there are concerns that re-sit opportunities could be abused i.e. by continually re-taking modular tests until an acceptable grade is reached. There is a need for flexibility in assessment and breadth of subject offer as a means of providing qualifications which meet the needs of the larger number of learners now staying on post-16 to study A levels or other equivalent qualifications. Assessment models should accommodate subject differences, variations in learning styles and equality of access.
- 3.9 The skills developed in some subjects cannot be assessed by written examination and written examinations are not always the most appropriate form of assessment and as a result controlled assessment (a range of assessment including projects, presentations, practical experiments and performances etc.) is another means of contributing towards the award of qualifications. Where controlled assessment is reliant upon internal assessment then it is important that the quality and rigour of internal assessment is protected and verified.

- 3.10 In line with the need for flexibility in assessment and development of qualifications to best suit the needs of the subject and learners, tiering (the use of differentiated examination papers for Foundation Tier – GCSE grades C to G - and Higher Tier - GCSE grades A* to D - learners), or a similar model which addresses the challenge of targeting all-ability examination papers, is an option when it is appropriate for the subject.
- 3.11 Qualifications need to ensure that students are able to progress to the next stage of their education, work or training – this is referred to as ‘currency’.
- 3.12 Qualifications need to be recognised and valued both across the UK and worldwide – this is referred to as ‘portability’.
- 3.13 Our qualifications must meet the needs of all our learners and provide a breadth of options.

4 The Current Position in Guernsey

- 4.1 Guernsey has traditionally followed developments in England for curriculum, qualifications and assessment and has adopted or adapted initiatives as they are implemented in England, although there are exceptions to this. For example, the current purposes of the Bailiwick Curriculum are based on the Curriculum for Excellence in Scotland. However the content and assessment framework are modified from the English National Curriculum. Guernsey’s current curriculum framework could therefore be considered a hybrid.
- 4.2 Assessment at age five is based on a previous English Foundation Stage Profile which has now been changed in England. Assessment at age 7 is by moderated teacher assessment based on National Curriculum Levels in a similar format to England. Assessment at age 11 (end of the Primary phase) is by moderated teacher assessment, again using English National Curriculum Levels. Moderated teacher assessment at 7 and 11 is externally verified. In England, however, assessment at age 11 includes testing (SATs) in core subjects.
- 4.3 In Guernsey at age 16 (or in Years 10 and 11) most learners will sit GCSEs from English examination boards although some will sit Welsh Examination Board (WJEC) GCSEs, or particularly at the Grant-Aided Colleges, iGCSEs. GCSEs from CCEA in Northern Ireland have also previously been used. Some students will sit BTEC qualifications or other applied or vocational qualifications at school or at the College of Further Education.
- 4.4 At age 18 (or Years 12 and 13) in the Sixth Form Centre and in the Grant-Aided Colleges, AS and A Levels are followed, again predominantly from English examination boards. The International Baccalaureate Diploma is also offered at the Sixth Form Centre. At the College of Further Education a wide range of vocational/applied courses are on offer from Entry Level to Level 3 for 16-19 year olds.

5 Changes in England’s Qualifications and Assessment Framework

- 5.1 The Secretary of State for Education in England, Michael Gove, has proposed a number of changes to GCSE and A Levels which include a review of subject content to “ensure rigour, breadth and depth”.

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- 5.2 GCSEs in England are being comprehensively reformed. The qualification will remain, but Mr Gove says: 'will be subject to significant reform in order to command the respect our pupils deserve as reward for their hard work'.
- 5.3 The reformed GCSEs will remain universal qualifications of about the same size as they are currently. At the top end, the new qualification is intended to prepare students properly to progress to A levels or other study and this should be achieved through a balance of more challenging subject content and more rigorous assessment structures.
- 5.4 As part of the changes, the qualifications will become linear, with all assessments taken at the end of the course. This means there will be a major reduction in course work or other controlled assessment e.g. projects, presentations, performances, practical experiments etc.
- 5.5 The reformed GCSEs in England will prioritise stretching assessment, which tests the depth and breadth of a student's knowledge and abilities. Therefore, examinations must test extended writing in subjects such as English and history, have fewer bite-sized and overly structured questions, and in mathematics and science have a greater emphasis on quantitative problem-solving. Internal assessment and the use of exam aids will be kept to a minimum and used only where there is a compelling case to do so.
- 5.6 The reformed GCSEs will also have a new grading scale, to reflect the step change in expectations for students. A new grading system of 9 to 1 (with 9 being the highest) will be introduced. These changes will apply across all subjects.
- 5.7 There will be a use of examinations (question papers) whenever possible. There will be a major reduction in tiered papers and it is highly likely that these will only continue to be used in maths and science.
- 5.8 There will be significant changes in school accountability measures. This will result in only the first entry in an examination counting for school performance measures in England – this means students are less likely to have the opportunity to re-sit. There will also be a reduction in so called 'alternative' qualifications that count for school performance measures and an overall reduction in approved alternative qualifications. Schools will be held to account on the performance of students in eight subjects (referred to as Attainment 8).
- 5.9 New GCSE examinations in English, English literature and mathematics will be available for examination in 2017. Other subjects will follow in 2018 with a possible reduction in the numbers of GCSE subjects offered.
- 5.10 At A Level, the January examination window has now ceased and therefore all modules will be taken in the summer. A Levels are to be reformed to become linear. AS will be decoupled from A Level, but will be available as a separate qualification.
- 5.11 A number of A Levels will be reformed for first teaching from September 2015. However, other subjects e.g. maths and further maths will need more significant change and will follow later.
- 5.12 The implications if we followed the new qualifications and assessment framework in England are described in Section 11.

6 Scotland's Qualifications and Assessment Framework

- 6.1 Scotland is not affected by the difficulties caused by the change in the three country regulation as it has always had a highly regarded and well-regulated system separate from the rest of the UK. The outcome of the Referendum on Scottish Independence which will take place in September 2014 should have no effect on Scotland's education system as it has been separate from the English system for many years.
- 6.2 The Scottish Curriculum for Excellence is now fully implemented from age 3-15 in schools. It is designed to strengthen the importance of literacy, numeracy and well-being across the curriculum. Delivery and assessment are based on progressive experiences and outcomes with teachers integral to development of content and programmes of study. Like Guernsey, the Curriculum for Excellence aims to develop successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens.
- 6.3 The purposes and principles of Curriculum for Excellence include the teaching and learning of the skills for learning, skills for life and skills for work. These fall into five main areas:
- Literacy
 - Numeracy
 - Health and wellbeing
 - Employability, enterprise and citizenship
 - Thinking skills
- 6.4 Recognition can be given for the development of these skills through the achievement of qualifications on the Scottish Qualifications and Credit Framework.
- 6.5 Scotland is in the process of rolling out new qualifications for 15-18 year olds. These will be based on Nationals 1-5 (Nationals at Level 4/5 are GCSE equivalent), Highers and Advanced Highers although a wide range of vocational and personal development opportunities are also available.
- 6.6 There are seven National Courses: National Grades 1 to 5, Highers (normally at age 15-18) and Advanced Highers (normally at age 17-18). National Courses can be taken in a wide range of subjects, from the purely academic, such as English and Mathematics to the purely vocational, such as Accounting and Mental Health Care.
- 6.7 Scottish qualifications can be easily compared with those of other jurisdictions.

Scottish qualification	Year of introduction of new courses	Equivalent in England
National 1	2013-14	Entry Level 1
National 2	2013-14	Entry Level 2
National 3	2013-14	Entry Level 3
National 4	2013-14	GCSE grades D-G
National 5	2013-14	GCSE grades A*-C

Higher	2014-15	AS/A2 Level
Advanced Higher	2015-16	

- 6.8 The Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) believes that these new qualifications have more focus on skills development compared to the existing qualifications. The SQA believes that these qualifications also place a greater emphasis on 'deeper learning' by helping learners to think for themselves; to apply and interpret the knowledge and understanding they have developed and to demonstrate the skills they have learned.
- 6.9 National 1-4 are assessed internally by the student's own school or institution, subject to regulation by the SQA. National 5 courses and above will also have a number of internal assessments, followed by an externally-marked exam.
- 6.10 These qualifications will be less prescriptive and there will be more personalisation and choice. For example, there will be 'added value assessments', many of which will be projects; so in history, students will be able to take an aspect of the course that interests them and study it in more depth. At National 5, more coursework will contribute to the final grade so exams should be shorter.
- 6.11 Highers are aimed particularly at students who have passed subjects at the new National 4 and 5 Levels. Highers are normally needed for entry into university or college to study for degree or Higher National Certificate or Diploma courses (HNCs or HNDs). University offers often focus on three, four or five Higher passes at grades A to C for a degree course and two to three passes for an HNC or HND
- 6.12 The introduction of the new Highers will see the introduction of coursework to a greater range of courses.
- 6.13 Advanced Highers are aimed at students who have passed Highers, and are usually taken in sixth year of school or at college. These courses extend the skills and knowledge gained at Higher and are useful for entry to university or employment. Advanced Highers tend to have higher UCAS tariffs than A Levels. It is worth noting that 11,000 Scottish students attend English universities each year. If a student chooses to go to university outside of Scotland, they are likely to be asked for Advanced Highers in up to three subjects. This is to ensure they are at the same level of knowledge as those students who have been studying AS and A levels for two years.
- 6.14 Students may take a Scottish Baccalaureate. There are four types of Baccalaureate in Scotland:
- science;
 - languages;
 - expressive arts; and
 - social science.
- 6.15 Each Baccalaureate is made up of National Courses at Higher and Advanced Higher level, plus an Interdisciplinary Project. The project allows students to utilise their skills and knowledge in

an applied context and sits at an Advanced Higher level. Scottish Baccalaureates are awarded at Pass and Distinction.

For further information visit www.sqa.org.uk

7 The Welsh Qualifications Assessment Framework

- 7.1 The Welsh Joint Education Committee (WJEC) is an examination board that provides examinations, assessment, professional development, educational resources, support for adults who wish to learn Welsh, and access to youth arts activities. It currently provides examinations throughout Wales, England and Northern Ireland. WJEC's qualifications include traditional academic and work-related subjects at Entry Level, GCSE and AS/A Level, as well as Functional Skills and Key Skills. More detailed information is available at <https://www.wjec.co.uk/uploads/publications/16456.pdf>
- 7.2 Wales have decided not to follow the changes being made to GCSEs and A Levels in England. They will retain a range of GCSE formats with linear and modular qualifications where deemed appropriate. They will retain a range of assessment methods and tiered papers if they are considered in the best interests of learners. However, a minimum of 40% of the assessment will be at the end of the course.
- 7.3 Up to 40% of the qualifications available must be vocational options at 16 although 14-19 pathways proposals recommend a minimum of 30 options of courses for students at 14 and at 16. A new equivalence for vocational qualifications will be introduced in 2015 (2 GCSE maximum).
- 7.4 New GCSEs which will be introduced for teaching in September 2015 include English, Welsh, Numeracy and Mathematical Techniques. At the same time a rolling programme of subject reviews at GCSE and A Level will be introduced from 2015.
- 7.5 The Welsh Baccalaureate will be used as an accountability measure from 2017. The Welsh Baccalaureate offers a programme of study incorporating working with employers, community activities, individual investigations and key skills, as well as students' GCSEs, GNVQs or A level studies.
- 7.6 The AS/A2 structure will be retained with 40% of the qualification at AS but with only one re-sit opportunity.
- 7.7 A new Qualifications Wales Advisory Board has been established and it is planned that new arrangements for implementation will be in place by the end of 2014.
- 7.8 The Welsh Government recognises that a long-term communication campaign is required due to the changing landscape for qualifications.

8 Northern Ireland's Qualifications and Assessment Framework

- 8.1 The Northern Ireland Government has published an extensive review containing 49 recommendations which is now out for further consultation². It is clear that the proposals in

² CCEA Review of GCSE and A Level Qualifications http://www.rewardinglearning.org.uk/accreditation/GCSE_GCE_review/index.asp

England will not be recommended for implementation in Northern Ireland. However, they do recommend adopting an interim position to allow the development over a minimum three year period of a long-term vision for the qualifications framework for Northern Ireland.

- 8.2 Northern Ireland is proposing that GCSEs will be retained although there will be modifications for first teaching in September 2016. There will remain a range of assessment methods and formats including modular and linear courses and tiered qualifications. There will only be one re-sit opportunity.
- 8.3 AS Levels will remain as an integral part of A Levels although it is recommended that they will only count for 40% of the A Level assessment. Where these are modular there will only be June examinations with one re-sit opportunity.
- 8.4 Northern Ireland intends to strengthen the non-general i.e. applied/vocational offer. The entitlement framework ensures that students have the option of 24 courses at 14-16 of which at least one third must be general (academic) and at least one third must be applied/vocational. They propose developing Scottish SQA National qualifications for learners attaining below GCSE level.
- 8.5 Whilst developing the long term vision for qualifications, the Northern Ireland government will look at the possibility of aligning with other jurisdictions (although specifically not the England model). They will ensure rigour, portability and currency of existing qualifications. They will explore the role of “High Stakes³” qualifications at 16.

9 Jersey and the Isle of Man

- 9.1 The Isle of Man is planning to go out to public consultation shortly on the best way forward for 14-19 qualifications offered in Manx schools. The Isle of Man is planning to make a decision by the summer break.
- 9.2 Jersey is planning to stick with its current Examination Boards and is not proposing any major shift or public consultation at this time.

10 Implications for Regulation

- 10.1 All qualifications must be approved by a regulator. In England this is Ofqual, in Wales Qualifications Wales (QW) will take over from the Welsh Government as the exam regulator in 2015, in Northern Ireland the regulator is CCEA and in Scotland it is SQA. These regulators currently work closely together.
- 10.2 These regulators are responsible for ensuring that standards, rules and operational quality are met. All qualifications offered by Guernsey schools will have been approved by one of these regulators.
- 10.3 Changes in the three country regulation will have little impact on Scotland as they have had an independent education system with their own regulator (SQA) for many years. They have built a strong reputation within the UK and internationally.

³ High stakes examinations are external exams through which schools are held to account for their performance and which are critical for students to progress to the next stages of education and are recognised or required by employers.

- 10.4 However, it is less clear how comparative the regulation will be across England, Wales and Northern Ireland in the future as the changes may result in three independent regulators as opposed to joint regulators for the three Nations. They will still be working to ensure comparability across jurisdictions but this may prove difficult to achieve. However, each of the three countries will be striving to ensure that their version of GCSEs or A Levels is as rigorous and credible as the others.

11 International Systems

- 11.1 The table in Appendix 2 gives a comparison of international curricular and qualifications systems which does show that many successful jurisdictions do not have high-stakes examinations at 16. This however is unlikely to be acceptable within our community at this time with a structure predominantly based on 11-16 schools.
- 11.2 The International Primary, International Middle and IB Careers Related Cert/IB⁴ Diploma (Post 16 programmes) would fulfil the principles contained in Guernsey's Education Vision approved by the States of Deliberation and are highly regarded. The IB Middle Years Programme is introducing external assessments from 2016 for students who will complete the programme in 2018 but with no current external examinations at 16⁵ such an option is unlikely to be acceptable in Guernsey in the interim, although it may be an option for the longer term. The Education Board is committed to the continuation of the IB Diploma at the Sixth Form Centre.
- 11.3 Education Department Officers have had initial discussions with OECD⁶ PISA⁷ representatives. It could be possible for Guernsey to become part of the international PISA tests for 15 year-olds in 2018. Further exploration of this will now take place to enable reliable international comparisons for Guernsey students. There is also the possibility of Guernsey schools taking part in the PISA for Schools programme which will become more widely available from next academic year following extensive trials. These programmes could be used to benchmark Guernsey against other jurisdictions. They are not individual qualifications for students.
- 11.4 Common to all the curricular and qualifications models which have been examined is their specific relevance to and connectivity with the society and community they serve. Woven into the fabric of the society and bound by their cultural norms, each qualification model is developed and tailored to suit national, educational, societal and economic needs. It is clear there is no one model or solution that can be applied wholesale.

12 Options for Guernsey

- 12.1 An assessment of each of the options available to Guernsey is considered below.
- 12.2 **Common to each of these options is for the IB Diploma at Post 16 to be retained.**

⁴ International Baccalaureate

⁵ In the past, the MYP has solely relied on internal assessment by schools, which was externally moderated to ensure consistency. This has changed, and while internal assessment will remain as a feature of the course, Y10 students starting in 2016 will be externally assessed. The Personal Project is externally moderated.

⁶ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

⁷ Programme for International Student Assessment

Option 1 –England

- 12.3 This was the preferred option from the closed consultation with 32.3% of the respondents recommending this option. However if you just look at the responses from States-maintained schools this was the second favourite option – 27.8% (44) of respondents from States schools wanted to follow England whereas 66.7% (16) of staff from the Grant-aided Colleges preferred England. The supporting reasons and comments from those staff supporting this option are provided in full in Appendix 4 (a separate document) and summarised below.
- 12.4 The close relationship between Guernsey and England was highlighted repeatedly in the responses and is important and pertinent on a number of grounds.
- 12.5 By not aligning with the English education system the attractiveness of Guernsey's schools to potential teachers might be damaged. Guernsey already has difficulty recruiting secondary teachers in several subjects and a system which is unfamiliar to teachers trained in England might limit our ability to attract applicants from England in the future. There is a potential risk therefore that staff will not be attracted to Guernsey and this would be particularly relevant to those on short term licences and with families if it means dropping the English system for three to five years for their own children's education as well as limiting their career options and ability to reintegrate into the English school system.
- 12.6 At the same time Guernsey has to ensure that the States maintained education sector is able to meet the education needs of workers moving to and from the island under licence and that it does not become the norm for the children in this situation to be educated in the private sector. Adopting the English framework is likely to make Guernsey attractive for employees in the private sector who have to relocate with their families from England to the Bailiwick. Potential employees in both the public and private sector may not wish to disrupt their children's education if it means that their children moving in to or out of two education systems during Key Stages 3, 4 and 5. Whilst our education system should serve the interests of our children, the Education Department cannot ignore the wider implications of this decision and the potential impact on Guernsey's education system. However, it is recognised that families do move successfully between education systems within the UK and further afield.
- 12.7 Guernsey students wishing to progress into Higher Education, which typically means going to English Universities, will be able to benefit from familiar and well known qualifications – this is known as the currency of qualifications. Similarly, employers both on island and internationally will also be familiar with Guernsey students' qualifications and give them opportunities in a competitive global economy.
- 12.8 The English framework however does have some disadvantages. In particular the criticism of the Secretary of State's plans in England apply equally to Guernsey. Much of the criticism is based on the fact that Mr Gove's reforms are contrary to most international research-based developments. Academic research suggests that modular assessment can actually be more rigorous than terminal examinations.
- 12.9 It is highly likely that the new framework in England will have a negative impact on outcomes for large numbers of learners of all ages. The framework will limit opportunities for a large number of students, particularly those in our High Schools, to access qualifications. It will

therefore disadvantage large numbers of our young people. It does not align fully with the underlying principles of the Education Board's core values set out in the Vision for Education. For example the English model will narrow the curriculum offer particularly with respect to access to vocational qualifications.

- 12.10 There are significant concerns with the proposed changes being introduced in England and their suitability for Guernsey's education system. Most importantly there is considerable unrest in the profession in England with the Secretary of State's plans. In particular, the proposed changes do not fully accord with the recognised objectives of a qualifications framework. It is feared that the new qualifications framework will lead teaching and learning approaches with an emphasis on rote learning. It is widely believed that it will result in teaching to the tests with an accompanying over emphasis on examination preparation. This, it is believed, will be detrimental to the development of a range of skills valued by employers, further and higher educational establishments.
- 12.11 The new English model is heavily reliant on linear examinations and limited assessment methods which will constrain Guernsey students' ability to achieve the success they deserve.
- 12.12 There is a danger that such an approach will not prepare students for life beyond their formal statutory education. It may lead to the lack of learning of wider skills and development of skills at the core of the Guernsey Curriculum (successful learners, responsible citizens, confident individuals and effective contributors). It does not therefore represent the best fit with the Education Department's Vision for Education.
- 12.13 It is generally acknowledged that education in England is subjected to political interference and consequently suffers from a lack of stability. Conversely it is possible that education policy in England may change further if there is a change in government at the next general election which, it is thought, will be held before May 2015. Similarly it is possible that the Secretary of State may modify his plans in the face of the heavy and intensive criticism. Indeed there have been recent calls for a delay to the introduction of the GCSE reforms so that schools have more time to prepare.

Option 2 - International Primary, Middle and Diploma Programmes

- 12.14 Only 9% of the respondents to the closed consultation supported Guernsey following the International Programmes. Further details of their responses are provided in Appendix 4.
- 12.15 The International Primary, Middle and Diploma Programme is highly regarded internationally which means it does have the necessary currency as qualifications for Guernsey's young people, particularly off-island. It does also complement the Education Department's Vision for Education. There is also strong alignment with the principles agreed by the Headteachers, Department officers and Board members which form the basis of the objectives of a qualifications and assessment framework. Of particular value is the emphasis this system places on wider skills and personal qualities which again aligns with the purposes of the Guernsey Curriculum.
- 12.16 However, there are significant challenges for Guernsey if we wished to adopt this approach. In the first instance the International Programme currently does not have an external

qualification at 16, although this will be introduced from 2016 for students completing the programme in 2018.

- 12.17 Adopting the International Programme would have major implications for staff recruitment and limit Guernsey's ability to compete for staff in the mainland markets. It would also require significant training and development for existing staff in the profession as most would be unfamiliar with the assessment and teaching requirements. Finally it would also be unfamiliar for the wider community within the Bailiwick and as such would represent significant radical change.
- 12.18 In summary, whilst there is a close fit with Guernsey's agreed principles and values, there are too many practical difficulties in supporting this approach. However there is support for the IB diploma to be continued to be offered at Post 16 level.

Option 3 - Wales

- 12.19 The Welsh education system does produce recognised qualifications and is undergoing less significant changes than those being introduced in England. It does also align with the Education Department's values and principles as set out in the Vision. It will also allow for a range of assessment methods which allows greater opportunity of access for Guernsey's young people. Particularly attractive is the support for an alternative qualifications offer. Wales also has an excellent and highly regarded Early Years programme for children.
- 12.20 However there are significant disadvantages from Guernsey's perspective, particularly with respect to uncertainty over regulation and future 14-19 reforms. The Welsh education system does not have the same public perception of high quality as perhaps the other Home Nations. The Education Department also has concerns with the use of the Welsh Baccalaureate as an accountability measure.
- 12.21 Whilst the Welsh model is a realistic option for Guernsey, practically there are many issues to be overcome before solely following the Welsh education system would become a favoured option. It is interesting that the Welsh framework found some support amongst Headteachers and Department officers, but due to the risks it was not considered to be a viable alternative at present. This view is reflected in the response to the initial consultation. Only four respondents to the closed consultation, 2.1%, supported Guernsey following the Welsh qualifications framework. Further details are provided in Appendix 4.

Option 4 - Northern Ireland

- 12.22 The Northern Irish model was supported by 2.6% of the respondents to the closed consultation. Their comments are provided in Appendix 4.
- 12.23 In simple terms it would mean that as an interim measure Guernsey would effectively be switching examination board. So an advantage of the Northern Ireland framework is that the qualifications will remain familiar to the Guernsey community. Their qualifications would be also awarded through a range of assessment methods and not simply relying upon linear terminal examinations which would be beneficial for the development of Guernsey's students. In addition The CCEA have indicated, as have SQA, that they would support Guernsey with the introduction and development of the qualifications in Guernsey.

- 12.24 However there are disadvantages including uncertainty about the future of the framework regime; Northern Ireland is in effect adopting a holding position in order to develop a long term approach. Conversely, this may be an advantage in that it avoids a knee jerk reaction to the changes in England. Another disadvantage stems from the possible perception that the Northern Ireland qualifications may be considered a lesser quality of qualification in comparison to England. However, the Northern Ireland government and CCEA are determined to ensure that the GCSE and A Level qualifications in Northern Ireland have the same currency and portability as they have now.
- 12.25 This is a realistic option with support from CCEA and the Northern Ireland government. It could become a longer term alignment including involvement in the planning for the future development of the framework in Northern Ireland. Alternatively this could be an interim option whilst Guernsey decides on a longer term future.

Option 5 - Scotland

- 12.26 The Scottish qualifications framework was supported by 28% of the respondents to the closed consultation. If only the responses from staff working in States-maintained schools are considered then this was the preferred option with 31% favouring a move to the Scottish system. No staff from the Grant-aided Colleges favoured following Scotland. Comments provided by these respondents are included in Appendix 4.
- 12.27 There are many positive reasons as to why the Scottish Qualifications and Assessment Framework is suitable for Guernsey. In the first instance there is an excellent match with Guernsey's curriculum statement, as indeed this is based on the Scottish model. The Scottish model similarly aligns very closely with the Education Department's Vision for Education with an emphasis on an inclusive curriculum and framework. It is recognised that the framework gives priority to literacy, numeracy and well-being. It also provides for a wide range of personal development qualifications which contribute towards the fulfilment of the purposes of the Guernsey Curriculum (Successful Learners, Effective Contributors, Responsible Citizens and Effective Contributors). The Scottish model scores highly in terms in international reputation (i.e. currency).
- 12.28 In contrast to England, education is seen as apolitical and there is all party support for Curriculum for Excellence and the new qualifications framework which provides the sustainability and stability which is required. Also relevant is that Education Scotland and SQA have indicated that they would provide significant support to help with the training and professional development of staff.
- 12.29 For all of these educational and political reasons the Scottish model is seen in theory as the best option for Guernsey by most Headteachers. However there are serious concerns about the practical implications of such a significant change in approach in the time available.
- 12.30 Switching from the English model to the Scottish qualifications and assessment framework would represent a massive change for Guernsey's education system and there is only a short period of time available to plan for this.
- 12.31 Allied to this is the question of staffing and the challenges of recruiting to posts in Guernsey. Currently a majority of teaching staff on licences are recruited from the English education system and there is a fear that we would be significantly limiting our market for staff to only

Scotland instead of the UK more generally. However, it is recognised that teachers do currently move between Scotland and England.

- 12.32 Likewise our ability to recruit from the English school system may be compromised as teachers may find it difficult to move out of the English model into a Scottish model in Guernsey and then back to England at the end of their licences. This point was made repeatedly in the comments received from the profession during the closed consultation. Conversely it is possible that Guernsey might be perceived as more attractive for teaching as it is not England with the reforms being introduced by the Secretary of State. However all of this is speculation and we simply do not know what the outcome might be. What we do know is that this is a major risk which may have significant ramifications on our ability to recruit quality staff for our schools.
- 12.33 There are also questions regarding the portability of qualifications particularly with Guernsey's migrant economy with many staff in both the private and public sectors moving to Guernsey and bringing school age children. Children moving in and out of Guernsey during their secondary education would be studying for different qualifications if they had to move during Key Stage 4, although it is recognised that these are small numbers. Parents would be unfamiliar with Guernsey's education system and it might constrain our ability to attract essential licence holders to come and work within our economy. The Education Department would not wish to take a decision which would undermine Guernsey's economic competitiveness as it is the strength of our economy which funds the public services our community enjoys.
- 12.34 There is also some uncertainty over whether the Scottish Referendum vote on independence later this year will have an effect on the country's education system.
- 12.35 Finally there is the question of timing. It is highly questionable whether we have the capacity to adopt wholesale changes on this scale in the timescale available.
- 12.36 The Curriculum for Excellence and the qualifications framework has support from officers and many Headteachers. There have been three positive visits from a range of stakeholders. However, implementing this significant change in the timescales available (by September 2015), with all the other developments underway, is unlikely to be successful. Due to the excellent match with expressed values and principles a move to this system over three to five years is a more realistic proposition. This would require an interim position to be taken on qualifications until fully implemented.

Potential Interim Options

- 12.37 The interim option was the third most favoured framework by the respondents to the closed consultation (18%). Appendix 4 contains the comments from these respondents. A different option was supported by 7.9% of staff in the initial consultation. Further details of these respondents' views are also contained in Appendix 4.
- 12.38 Due to the time constraints and the significance of this issue, the Education Department believes that it might be more prudent for Guernsey to adopt an interim option whilst a longer term solution is developed. A number of potential interim options are set out below.

- i) Single regulated jurisdiction (either England or Wales or Northern Ireland) in short-term whilst developing long-term option - 34.5% of staff preferring an interim solution (10 respondents) identified this as their preferred interim approach;
- ii) Single regulated jurisdiction (England/Wales/Northern Ireland) whilst moving to the Scottish Curriculum for Excellence and associated qualifications – this was supported by three respondents who wished to adopt an interim solution;
- iii) Choice of qualifications from any regulated UK jurisdiction plus iGCSE whilst developing a long-term option – this was supported by 27.6% of the respondents (8 respondents) preferring an interim approach ;
- iv) Choice of qualifications from any regulated UK jurisdiction plus iGCSE whilst moving to the Scottish Curriculum for Excellence and associated qualifications. Five respondents (17.2%) who expressed a preference for an interim option expressed a preference for this interim option.

12.39 In following an interim option there would be difficulty in allowing GCSEs from England to be used at the same time as those from Northern Ireland and Wales. There would be confusion as there would be a mix of numerical grades (9-1) and A*-G grades. Therefore, it is recommended that an interim option for GCSEs only allows qualifications from WJEC, CCEA or iGCSE with A*-G grading.

12.40 This option would enable more time and care to be taken over implementation of a longer term option of, for example, moving to the Curriculum for Excellence and SQA examination framework.

13 Comparative Evaluation

13.1 The choice of qualifications and assessment framework for Guernsey's young people is a critically important decision and has ramifications for all our children as they progress through their statutory education. It is probably the biggest single decision that the Island will have to make with regards to its education system, as the discussion in the previous section has highlighted.

13.2 What is apparent is that there is no ideal option which meets the objectives in a practical manner. The Education Department has identified three possible options which it wishes to consult upon:-

- Adopting the new system of examinations being introduced in England;
- Adopting the Scottish examination system;
- Implementing an interim system whereby schools could use International IGCSEs (those still graded A* - G) or qualifications from Northern Ireland or Wales whilst taking time to further review and plan for the introduction of an alternative system.

13.3 The advantages and disadvantages of these three options are summarised in the following three tables:-

Option 1 – England (see sections 5 and 12 for further details)	
Benefits include	Risks include
• nearest and largest UK neighbour	• does not fit with agreed core values

	and principles
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> potential ease of recruitment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> contrary to most international research based developments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ease of move for students/families from England to Guernsey & vice-versa 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> may disadvantage large numbers of students (linear courses with award only on the basis of an exam or written test at the end of the course)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> known familiar qualifications brand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> could narrow curriculum offer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> perception of increased rigour of qualifications by some 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> could limit teaching and learning approaches
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> working with familiar Examination Boards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> could result in teaching to test and over emphasis on examination preparation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> currency and portability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> lack of political stability in education system in England
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> lack of wider skills/attributes development
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> limited assessment methods
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> considerable opposition from the profession in England
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> would impact on primary school approach
<p>Conclusion Adopting the proposed changes in England could have a negative outcome for large numbers of learners of all ages. It is not supported generally by Secondary phase Headteachers or Education Department officers as the best option for Guernsey.</p>	

Option 2 – Scotland (see sections 6 and 12 for further details)	
<u>Benefits include</u>	<u>Risks include</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excellent match with curriculum statement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Massive change for system
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excellent match with vision and principles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruitment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusive curriculum and framework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short timescale for such significant change
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Well recognised international currency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cost (likely to be in region of implementation of £1m)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant support available from SQA and Education Scotland 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issues for families moving from England to Guernsey and back (short-term licence)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All party support for Curriculum For Excellence and qualification framework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public perception
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritises Literacy, Numeracy and Well-being 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery of training and support to staff to sufficient level and standard
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seen in theory as best option by most Headteachers (but not in time 	

available)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wide range of personal development qualifications 	
<p>Conclusion</p> <p>The Curriculum for Excellence and the qualifications framework in Scotland has support from officers and many Headteachers. There have been three positive visits from a range of stakeholders. However, to implement this significant change in the timescales available (by September 2015), with all the other developments underway is unlikely to be successful. Due to the excellent match with expressed values and principles a move to this system over three to five years is a more realistic proposition. This would require an interim position to be taken on qualifications until fully implemented.</p>	

<p>Option 3 – Interim while review long term qualifications system (see sections 7, 8 and 12 for details)</p>	
<u>Benefits include</u>	<u>Risks include</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Familiar qualifications (little change with continuation of coursework or other assessments throughout duration of courses) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Future uncertainty over framework
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effectively changing exam Board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Difficulty making comparisons within Guernsey and with other jurisdictions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Similar curriculum principles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural fit
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extended timescale for preparing to move to a longer term solution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Possibility to be seen as lesser versions of qualifications
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Broader range of qualifications available 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public perception of reasons for change
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to tailor the qualifications to the needs of the students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May require further change
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Range of assessment methods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery of training and support to staff to deliver new syllabuses
<p>Conclusion</p> <p>This is a realistic option with support from CCEA, the Northern Ireland government, WJEC and the Welsh Government.</p> <p>This is the Education Board's preferred option.</p>	

14 The Education Board's Preferred Option

- 14.1 The Education Board's preferred option is to select the interim position. The Board believes that there remains considerable uncertainty as to the final position that England will adopt, particularly with a potential change in Government in the UK in the forthcoming General Election. Adopting the Scottish model now would require significant changes in too short a timescale and potentially could have an adverse impact on our ability to recruit teachers from the mainland.

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- 14.2 The Education Board, therefore, believes that the interim option is the most prudent and in the best interests of all the islands' students. It will continue to review and develop a final long term curriculum, qualifications and assessment framework.

15 Responses to Consultation Process

- 15.1 The Board invites members of the public and all interested stakeholders to complete a short online survey available at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/secexams> by the end of Wednesday 30th April 2014.
- 15.2 Further comment or questions may be submitted to cqaframework@education.gov.gg

16 Appendix 1 – Links to Further Reading

England	
Department for Education	www.education.gov.uk
Ofqual	www.ofqual.gov.uk
Reforming qualifications and curriculum to better prepare pupils for life after school	www.gov.uk/government/policies/reforming-qualifications-and-the-curriculum-to-better-prepare-pupils-for-life-after-school
International	
O.E.C.D	www.oecd.org
Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA)	www.oecd.org/pisa/
International Baccalaureate	www.ibo.org
Alberta	www.education.alberta.ca
Queensland	www.education.qld.gov.au
Wales	
Government	www.wales.gov.uk
Review of Qualifications for 14 to 19-year-olds in Wales	http://wales.gov.uk/docs/dcells/publications/121127reviewofqualificationsen.pdf
Northern Ireland	
Dept of Education	www.deni.gov.uk
CCEA Council for Curriculum Examinations and Assessment	www.rewardinglearning.org.uk
Northern Ireland Curriculum	www.nicurriculum.org.uk/
Scotland	
Government	www.scotland.gov.uk
Scottish Qualifications Authority	www.sqa.org.uk
Education Scotland	www.educationscotland.gov.uk
Other Jurisdictions	
Isle of Man	www.sch.im
Ireland	www.education.ie
Jersey	www.gov.je/Education

17 Appendix 2 – table of qualifications

Table Three: International Curricular and Qualifications Systems

Country	Statutory School Leaving Age	Qualifications at 15/16 (end of statutory education) ¹¹					Qualifications at 18 (end of post-statutory education)					
		Content Breadth	Assessment	High-Stakes Exams	Grading	Qualification Gained	Content Breadth	Assessment	High-Stakes Exams	Grading	Qualification Gained	Progression to Third Level
Finland	16	18 compulsory elements through courses studied	Internal assessment using teacher based continuous and terminal assessment	No	Numerical System: 4-10	Basic Certificate of Education	12 compulsory elements through courses studied There is some flexibility for subject choice	Internal assessment using teacher based continuous and terminal assessment	No – Finnish Matriculation Exam	Numerical System: 4-10	Upper General Secondary Education Certificate	Applicants must take the additional Finnish Matriculation Examination
Japan	15	17 compulsory subject areas through courses studied	Internal assessment using a range of methods – usually teacher-devised testing	No – Progression to High School determined by High School Entrance Exams	No national guidelines – school determined	None	6 compulsory subject areas Limited flexibility for subject choice	Internal assessment using a range of methods – usually teacher-devised testing	No – Third Level Entrance Exams	No national guidelines – school determined	High School Leaving Certificate	Applicants must take a range of externally set exams for entry purposes
South Africa	15	8 compulsory subject areas	Internal assessment: 40% – School Based Assessment 60% – Internal Terminal Exams	No	Numerical System with corresponding percentage marks	General Education and Training Certificate	4 compulsory subjects Choice of 3 additional subjects	25% – school-based assessment 75% – External Terminal Exams	Yes	Numerical System with corresponding percentage marks	National Senior Certificate	National Senior Certificate
Ontario (Canada)	16	9 compulsory subject areas	Internal teacher assessment using a range of methods	No	Letter grades corresponding with provincial level descriptions	None	10 compulsory subjects, plus a choice of additional 13 subject courses	Internal teacher assessment using a range of methods	No	Letter grades corresponding with provincial level descriptors	Ontario Secondary School Diploma	Ontario Secondary School Diploma

¹¹ In none of the international education systems represented on this table is the statutory school leaving age over 16. As such, education until ages 15/16 is considered, for the purposes of this table, statutory.

Table Three continued: International Curricular and Qualifications Systems

Country	Statutory School Leaving Age	Qualifications at 15/16 (end of statutory education) ¹²					Qualifications at 18 (end of post-statutory education)					
		Content Breadth	Assessment	High-Stakes Exams	Grading	Qualification Gained	Content Breadth	Assessment	High-Stakes Exams	Grading	Qualification Gained	Progression to Third Level
The Netherlands	18 (Part-Time from 16)	8 compulsory subjects	Internal teacher assessment using a range of methods	No	No nationally devised system	None	7 compulsory subjects Limited flexibility for course choice	2 part examination with an externally set component	Yes	Numerical grading with corresponding descriptors	Leaving Certificate	Leaving Certificate via pre-University route
Belgium (Flemish Community)	18 (Part-Time from 16)	10 compulsory subjects	Internal teacher assessment using a range of methods	No	No nationally devised system	None	8 compulsory subjects Flexibility for course choice depending on route selected	Internal teacher assessment using a range of methods	No	Numerical grading with corresponding descriptors	Diploma of Secondary Education	Diploma of Secondary Education
Massachusetts (United States of America)	18	8 compulsory subjects, plus a range of optional subjects available	State wide provincially devised assessments in English and Mathematics, with internal assessment for other subjects	Yes (English and Math only)	Points grading and corresponding descriptors	None	8 compulsory subjects, plus a range of optional subjects available	State wide provincially devised assessments in English and Mathematics, with internal assessment for other subjects	Yes (Biology, Chemistry, Physics and Tech/Eng. Only)	Points grading and corresponding descriptors	High School Diploma (MCAS)	ACT/sATs and individual university requirements

¹² In the Netherlands full-time statutory education is up to the age of 16. Between 16 and 18 all learners must be engaged in some form (if only part-time) of training or education.

Table Four: Curricular and Qualifications Systems in N. Ireland, Scotland and Republic of Ireland

Country	Statutory School Leaving Age	Qualifications at 15/16 (end of statutory education)					Qualifications at 18 (end of post-statutory education)					
		Content Breadth	Assessment	High-Stakes Exams	Grading	Qualification Gained	Content Breadth	Assessment	High-Stakes Exams	Grading	Qualification Gained	Progression to Third Level
N. Ireland	16	9 subject areas are studied – not all these are formally examined There is some flexibility with subject choice	Combination of internal controlled assessment and external examination	Yes	Letter grading with corresponding percentage marks	General Certificate in Secondary Education	No compulsory subjects There is flexibility with subject choice	Combination of internal controlled assessment and external examination	Yes	Letter grading with corresponding percentage marks	A Levels (General Certificate in Education)	A Levels
Scotland	16	No compulsory subjects There is some flexibility with subject choice	Combination of internal controlled assessment and external examination (exams only used in National 5 qualifications)	Yes (Only at National 5)	National 1–4 uses Pass/Fail National 5 uses letter grading	Nationals 1–5	No compulsory subjects There is flexibility with subject choice	Combination of internal controlled assessment and external examination	Yes	Letter grading with corresponding percentage marks	Highers Advanced Highers	Highers Advanced Highers
Republic of Ireland	16	3 compulsory subject areas There is some flexibility with subject choice	Combination of internal controlled assessment and external examination	Yes (Only in compulsory subjects – only until 2020)	Numerical grading with corresponding percentage marks	Junior Cycle	1 compulsory subject There is flexibility with subject choice	Combination of internal controlled assessment and external examination	Yes	Letter grading with corresponding percentage marks	Leaving Certificate	Leaving Certificate

18 Appendix 3 – Glossary of Terms

Curriculum	The subjects and courses offered by a school
Qualification	The passing of an exam or an official completion of a course
Assessment	Marking, evaluating or grading
High stakes qualifications	External exams through which schools are held to account for their performance and which are critical for students to progress to the next stages of education and are recognised by employers
Guernsey Federation of Secondary Schools	A partnership between all 5 Bailiwick secondary schools (Grammar School & Sixth Form Centre, La Mare de Carteret High, Les Beaucamps High, St. Sampson's High and St. Anne's School)
Modular course/assessment	Where tests, coursework or other assessments are taken at points throughout the duration of the course which count towards the final grade
Linear course/assessment	An exam or test at the end of the course which governs the final grade
Controlled assessment	Another word for coursework which includes projects, presentations, practical experiments and performances etc.
Tiered exam papers	Exams that are tuned to the ability of the candidate so that students do not sit in front of a paper which included questions that are too easy for them, or for other students, questions which are well in excess of their ability. Typically at GCSE, tiered papers consist of Foundation papers, graded C-G and Higher papers, graded A*-E
Re-sits	The opportunity to re-take an exam or controlled assessment
Alternative qualifications	Any other course that is approved and accredited – this can be from Entry Level to Level 3.
Vocational qualifications	These qualifications are about the world of work. They are usually in a technical or practical subject and show that a student has a range of skills useful for work or a particular profession. They can also provide progression to further or higher education.
iGCSE	International GCSEs which are sat all over the world.
Qualification equivalence	Regulated qualifications have different credit values which will allow you to compare one against another
Currency of qualifications	What level of qualification is required to progress to the next stage of education, training or employment
Portability of qualifications	The recognition of the value of qualifications across the UK and worldwide
International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma	The IB Diploma is a two-year educational programme for students aged 16-19 that provides an internationally accepted qualification for entry into higher education for more see www.ibo.org/diploma
School accountability measures	Results that schools are judged on and which are reported by government e.g. 5+ GCSEs at A*-C including English and Maths
English Baccalaureate	The number of students gaining 5 A*-C grades in English, Maths, Science, Geography or History and a Modern Foreign Language. There is no additional study or project element.

Attainment 8	From 2016 Schools in England will be asked to publish league tables of students' attainment in their 8 best GCSE subjects – this must include English and Maths plus at least three others from the English Baccalaureate
Scottish Baccalaureate	The Scottish Baccalaureate in Expressive Arts, Languages, Science and Social Sciences consist of a coherent group of current Higher and Advanced Higher qualifications in science and languages respectively PLUS an interdisciplinary project – this is an Advanced Higher unit in which the student applies subject knowledge in realistic contexts.
Welsh Baccalaureate	This is available at 3 levels – Foundation, Intermediate and Advanced. It combines personal development skills with existing qualifications like A Levels, NVQs and GCSEs
Ofqual	UK Government Department that regulates qualifications, exams and tests in England and vocational qualifications in Northern Ireland.
SQA	Scottish Qualifications Authority – the accreditation and awarding body in Scotland
CCEA	Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment in Northern Ireland
Qualifications Wales	New qualifications regulatory body for Wales – due to launch in 2015.