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## Consultation Document

### Curriculum for Wales

Consultation on proposals for revised  
curriculum and assessment arrangements  
for Wales

Phase 1: Literacy, numeracy and wider skills

Date of issue: **22 October 2013**

Action required: Responses by **17 January 2014**

# Curriculum for Wales

## Consultation on proposals for revised curriculum and assessment arrangements for Wales

Phase 1: Literacy, numeracy and wider skills

<b>Overview</b>	This consultation is about revisions to curriculum and assessment arrangements in Wales.
<b>How to respond</b>	Responses to this consultation should be e mailed/posted to the address below to arrive by <b>17 January 2014</b> at the latest.
<b>Further information and related documents</b>	<p>Large print, Braille and alternate language versions of this document are available on request.</p> <p>The consultation documents can be accessed from the Welsh Government's website at <a href="http://www.wales.gov.uk/consultations">www.wales.gov.uk/consultations</a></p>
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## **Data protection**

### **How the views and information you give us will be used**

Any response you send us will be seen in full by Welsh Government staff dealing with the issues which this consultation is about. It may also be seen by other Welsh Government staff to help them plan future consultations.

The Welsh Government intends to publish a summary of the responses to this document. We may also publish responses in full. Normally, the name and address (or part of the address) of the person or organisation who sent the response are published with the response. This helps to show that the consultation was carried out properly. If you do not want your name or address published, please tell us this in writing when you send your response. We will then blank them out.

Names or addresses we blank out might still get published later, though we do not think this would happen very often. The Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 allow the public to ask to see information held by many public bodies, including the Welsh Government. This includes information which has not been published. However, the law also allows us to withhold information in some circumstances. If anyone asks to see information we have withheld, we will have to decide whether to release it or not. If someone has asked for their name and address not to be published, that is an important fact we would take into account. However, there might sometimes be important reasons why we would have to reveal someone's name and address, even though they have asked for them not to be published. We would get in touch with the person and ask their views before we finally decided to reveal the information.

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## Ministerial foreword



The last 18 months have seen a number of very important changes to our educational landscape aimed specifically at driving up standards across our education system and reducing the impact of poverty on educational attainment. The introduction of the *National Literacy and Numeracy Framework (LNF)* and of the National Reading and

Numeracy Tests for learners in Year 2 to Year 9 are among the most significant of these changes, and indeed of any changes to our education system in Wales, since devolution. This Review of assessment and the National Curriculum in Wales was established in October 2012 to support the embedding of these changes in education in Wales.

I am passionate about driving up educational standards in Wales for all our learners, about raising levels of literacy and numeracy and in so doing, reducing the impact of poverty on educational attainment for learners from our most deprived communities. With this in mind, I welcome this review as an opportunity to look at how best we ensure that both the LNF and tests are fully integrated in the curriculum and assessment arrangements in Wales, that our priorities are aligned, and that all our teachers are empowered to become teachers of literacy and numeracy.

The proposals contained in this consultation document are based on discussions with a range of stakeholders, and on evidence of international best practice – a powerful combination. This evidence-based approach has identified a whole range of very important issues which go significantly beyond the original scope of this review and which I am very keen to explore in more detail.

In addition, the curriculum task and finish groups that have recently reported to me as part of this review raise some very important and far-reaching issues which deserve proper consideration. For example, the review of ICT in schools has recommended that computing becomes a key component of our curriculum from Foundation Phase to Key Stage 4. It is only right that we consider all their recommendations as part of our plans for the future.

Taken together, all these potential changes to the curriculum would generate significant amounts of turbulence for our practitioners at a time when we want to support their teaching of literacy and numeracy. For these reasons, I have decided to take a two-phase approach to this review. Phase 1 – and the one with which this consultation document is primarily concerned – will focus on curriculum and assessment changes that will strengthen and support the teaching of literacy and numeracy across the curriculum.

Phase 2, which will impact only once the LNF has had a chance to really embed, will give us the opportunity to do something unique for Wales: to develop a curriculum **for** Wales that gives us a clear vision for education all the way through from the Foundation Phase to Key Stage 4 and the work we are currently doing in the context of the Review of Qualifications for 14 to 19-year-olds in Wales. It is a vision that will give our children the best possible chances, whatever their backgrounds, to go out and succeed as citizens of the world.

Phase 2 will look at the big issues around curriculum design. It will explore how we can offer more flexibility to those practitioners that tell us that the Key Stage 2 curriculum is overloaded. It will look at ways in which we might bring back purpose to Key Stage 3, which some practitioners tell us has become a waiting room for GCSEs. In particular, it will consider ways in which we could give learners at Key Stage 3 the opportunity to step outside the curriculum and to pursue their own particular interests in more depth. These learners deserve a chance to apply their existing skills and to develop new ones in a context that is personal and meaningful to them. I am keen to ensure that all of this underpins my commitment to reducing the impact of poverty on educational attainment for those children living in our most deprived communities. I am also keen to ensure that the curriculum reflects the needs of business and the economy, including the critical role of science – reflecting the commitments made in *Science for Wales: A strategic agenda for science and innovation in Wales* and ensuring that ‘STEM subjects are in the vanguard of modern, challenging curricula for students in Wales’. I also want to look again at the place of languages in the curriculum and, last but not least, I want to revisit the Basic Curriculum to ensure we have a curriculum that is broad, balanced and fit for the twenty-first century.

I will announce further details of phase 2 of the review in due course. For now though, I am confident that these, our initial proposals for embedding literacy, numeracy and wider skills within a new curriculum for Wales will underpin our vision for education, and I look forward to hearing your views on them.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Huw Lewis', written in a cursive style.

Huw Lewis AM  
Minister for Education and Skills  
October 2013

# 1. Executive summary

In October 2012 the Review of assessment and the National Curriculum in Wales was established to give consideration to existing arrangements in Wales. The review was asked to consider the wider assessment arrangements which operate in schools and to make recommendations on any changes needed to ensure that the LNF and the tests form part of a coherent approach. It was also asked to consider whether the expectations for what children should know and be able to do, as set out in the current national curriculum subject orders, are sufficiently demanding and in line with the expectations of the LNF. To date the review has worked with stakeholders and experts as well as commissioning independent research to develop its proposals for change.

This document is therefore primarily concerned with proposals for change to our curriculum and assessment arrangements that will support and strengthen the learning and teaching of literacy and numeracy in schools. It will also ensure alignment between the standards of attainment contained in our Areas of Learning/programmes of study for Language, Literacy and Communication Skills and Mathematical Development (for Foundation Phase), and English, Welsh and mathematics (Key Stages 2–4) – as well as those set out in the LNF.

In gathering its evidence, the review has collected findings that have wider implications which require further consideration. In addition, the curriculum task and finish groups on arts in education, the future of computer science and ICT in schools in Wales, the Curriculum Cymreig, history and the story of Wales, schools and physical activity and Welsh second language that have recently reported to the Minister for Education and Skills raise some very important and far-reaching issues which deserve proper consideration.

Because the body of evidence generated by the initial review of stakeholders, combined with the recommendations of the various task and finish groups, goes significantly beyond the original remit of the review the decision has been taken to adopt a phased approach to the review.

Phase 1 (with which this document is primarily concerned) will focus on strengthening the teaching of literacy, numeracy and wider skills, ensuring continuity and progression from Foundation Phase to Key Stage 4.

Phase 2 will focus on curriculum design at each phase/stage of education to ensure that we have a broad and balanced curriculum which is fit for the twenty-first century. It will consider:

- the suggestion that Key Stage 2 is overcrowded
- redefining the purpose of Key Stage 3, including looking at the possibility of giving learners time to develop their own particular areas of interest around a particular theme or topic, possibly in conjunction with and supported by organisations beyond the school

- developing the concept of ‘graduation’ at the end of Key Stage 3 to mark the transition to Key Stage 4
- ensuring that the curriculum reflects the needs of business, including the critical role of science
- the place of languages in the curriculum
- specific subject and cross-curricular content
- the Basic Curriculum.

In phase 1 we are proposing to revise existing Areas of Learning/ programmes of study for Language, Literacy and Communication Skills and Mathematical Development (at Foundation Phase) and English, Welsh and mathematics (post-Foundation Phase). These revised documents will set out year-on-year expectations to complement the approach taken in the LNF and will clearly distinguish between skills and content that is specific to the subjects of English, Welsh and mathematics, as well as cross-curricular literacy and numeracy skills. This model will extend from Foundation Phase to Key Stage 4 to ensure continuity and progression towards the new GCSEs in English, Welsh and the Numeracy and Mathematics Techniques (working titles).

In addition, based on our initial evidence review and, critically, in order to ensure alignment with the skills elements of the Welsh Baccalaureate, we are proposing to introduce a statutory wider skills framework from Foundation Phase to Key Stage 4. These are skills considered to be essential for learning, for work and for life, and include:

- critical thinking and problem solving
- planning and organising
- creativity and innovation
- personal effectiveness
- digital literacy.

We are consulting on these skills ‘in principle’ in phase 1 and, subject to the outcome of this consultation, more detailed proposals will be included in phase 2.

## **Assessment**

We propose to refocus assessment arrangements to include literacy and numeracy. Specifically, we propose that arrangements for reporting progress to the Welsh Government at the end of each phase/stage of education should include a summative assessment of literacy and numeracy in the context of proposed new Areas of Learning/programmes of study for Language, Literacy and Communication Skills and Mathematical Development, and English, Welsh and mathematics, including literacy and numeracy as defined by the LNF.



## **Foundation Phase**

At the end of the Foundation Phase, in addition to our proposals for literacy and numeracy, we propose that we retain the statutory requirement to report to Welsh Government on Personal and Social Development, Well-Being and Cultural Diversity. Parents/carers and learners would also receive this information and would continue to be provided with a description of progress in other Areas of Learning.

## **Key Stage 2**

At the end of Key Stage 2, we similarly propose that reporting to parents/carers and the Welsh Government should include a summative assessment of progress in the new English, Welsh and mathematics programmes of study, which will include literacy and numeracy as defined by the LNF. Furthermore, we propose that end of stage teacher assessment data in relation to literacy and numeracy be strengthened by the introduction of cross-curricular 'rich learning tasks' (tasks that assess the range of skills set out in the LNF in the context of the breadth of subjects children are required to study).

## **Key Stage 3**

At the end of Key Stage 3, we propose that reporting to parents/carers and the Welsh Government should include a summative assessment of progress in the new English, Welsh and mathematics programmes of study, which will include literacy and numeracy as defined by the LNF. In addition, parents/carers would receive annual reports on each statutory curriculum subject and an end of stage description of progress in these areas. We propose to retain the statutory requirement to make a summative assessment of science and Welsh second language at the end of this stage and to report this to both parents/carers and to the Welsh Government. However, we propose to remove the statutory requirement to report progress in the remaining statutory subjects to Welsh Government at the end of this key stage.

## **Consultation and implementation**

Your views are sought in relation to these proposals, which are expanded on later in this document. The consultation will run from 22 October 2013 until 17 January 2014. Your comments are also sought on proposals for implementation as set out in section 5 of this document. Our intentions regarding phase 2 of the review will be published in due course.

## **2. Background to the review: phase 1 and phase 2**

This review was established in October 2012 to ensure that not only are the LNF and tests integrated in our education system in Wales, but also that our expectations of content and skills development are suitably robust and sufficiently demanding.

The LNF begins in Reception and extends to the end of Key Stage 3; the main thrust of this phase of the review is similarly aligned. Some of our proposals necessarily impact on the Foundation Phase curriculum, and while the Foundation Phase curriculum may need to evolve, we remain absolutely committed to the principles, pedagogy and practice which underpin it.

Similarly, in Key Stage 4 we have included proposals to achieve greater alignment and enhanced progression. For example, it is important that there is alignment with the recommendations being implemented in the context of the Review of Qualifications for 14 to 19-year-olds in Wales, to ensure that the qualifications available to learners in Wales are relevant and valued and provide appropriate progression routes to further learning or the world of work.

### **Timing of the review**

The first stage of the review (October 2012 to date) has included evidence gathering and consultation with key stakeholders and experts, complemented by the findings of the independent task and finish groups on arts in education, the future of computer science and ICT in schools in Wales, the Curriculum Cymreig, history and the story of Wales, schools and physical activity and Welsh second language, as well as the independent report from NFER and Arad entitled *A Rapid Evidence Assessment of the Impact of Curriculum and Assessment Arrangements within High Performing Countries* (the full report can be accessed at [www.wales.gov.uk/research](http://www.wales.gov.uk/research)). The findings of this stage of the review have implications that go significantly beyond the original scope of the review and, in order to give them proper consideration, the decision has been taken to take a two-phased approach to the review.

### **Phase 1**

Phase 1, with which this document is primarily concerned, focuses on strengthening the teaching of literacy, numeracy and wider skills and includes proposals for how this might be done. It also retains a focus on ensuring continuity and progression across key phases and stages of education, from Foundation Phase to Key Stage 4. These proposals have been developed following an analysis of the evidence collected by the review to date. It is on these proposals that we are currently seeking your views.

## Phase 2

The initial evidence-gathering exercise with stakeholders was primarily concerned with looking at how curriculum and assessment arrangements in Wales might be better configured to support and strengthen the teaching of literacy and numeracy. However, it also identified a much broader set of issues that merit further consideration. At the same time, the Welsh Government has recently received reports from independent task and finish groups that were asked to provide recommendations in the following areas:

- arts in education
- the future of computer science and ICT in schools in Wales
- the Curriculum Cymreig, history and the story of Wales
- schools and physical activity
- Welsh second language.

The recommendations of these groups are important and far-reaching, and it is clear that any decisions taken with respect to their implementation must be considered carefully in the context of wider curriculum and assessment change.

For example, in a number of instances the groups are proposing new subjects for inclusion in the curriculum, and greater depth and breadth in others. Set against this, practitioners are telling us that they feel that Key Stage 2 'is overcrowded and lacks focus' and that 'teachers feel pressure to cover the entire curriculum'. We need to strike a balance between prescriptive content and the freedom to allow and encourage practitioners to be creative, while at the same time being clear that literacy and numeracy are our priorities, especially for those children disadvantaged by impoverished language. This will be considered in the more fundamental review proposed in phase 2.

Similarly, we know that some practitioners feel that Key Stage 3 has 'lost its way' and lacks clarity of purpose – contributing perhaps to the 'drop-off' in performance on transition from primary to secondary. Indeed, some practitioners went so far as to describe this key stage as a 'waiting room' for GCSEs. Phase 2 of the review will allow us to explore how we can bring a renewed purpose to this stage of education. In the foreword to this document the Minister for Education and Skills has set out his intention to look at how we might 'give learners at Key Stage 3 the opportunity to step outside the curriculum and to pursue their own particular interests in more depth'. This might involve learners spending a period of time undertaking a focused and detailed study around a particular topic or theme – they might do this in conjunction with and supported by organisations beyond the school. We wish to explore the opportunities that exist for museums and galleries, arts organisations, sports organisations, higher education institutions and further education colleges, among others, to play a more prominent role in this phase of education to develop young people's interests and promote their enthusiasm for learning. We are also considering whether we should develop

the concept of 'graduation' at the end of Key Stage 3 to mark the transition to Key Stage 4. Phase 2 of this review will give us an opportunity to develop this thinking in more detail in collaboration with experts and stakeholders.

Phase 2 will also seek to ensure that the curriculum reflects the needs of business and the economy, including the critical role of science – reflecting the commitments made in *Science for Wales: A strategic agenda for science and innovation in Wales* and ensuring that 'STEM subjects are in the vanguard of modern, challenging curricula for students in Wales'.

We will look again at the place of languages in the curriculum, including the important recommendations from the task and finish group on Welsh second language.

Finally, phase 2 will also revisit the Basic Curriculum to ensure continuity and progression from Foundation Phase through to Key Stage 4 and the Welsh Baccalaureate – in the context of a broad and balanced curriculum that is fit for the twenty-first century.

These issues, raised both in our discussion with stakeholders and in the context of the task and finish reviews, are big and potentially far-reaching. They require us to look at what should be in the curriculum and what should not; what learners should know in the twenty-first century (specific content) and what they should be able to do (skills). They also suggest a need to consider 'freeing-up' the curriculum so that teachers can focus on literacy and numeracy and take a more creative and local approach to curriculum design, while at the same time the reviews of physical activity, of Welsh second language and of ICT in schools are all suggesting that those subjects should be highly prescriptive and at the core of the curriculum in Wales.



It is important that proper consideration is given to these important issues, and that we broaden the debate and talk to a much wider range of stakeholders, which phase 2 will allow us the space and time to do. Although we are seeking to begin this conversation in the near future, we are clear that changes to existing arrangements as a result of phase 2 of the review would not be introduced until phase 1 changes in relation to the LNF and tests have had a chance to embed. Further details on phase 2 of the review will be announced in due course.

### 3. The curriculum

#### 3.1 The current position

Education in Wales is a devolved matter. The Government of Wales Act 2006 provides for the National Assembly for Wales to pass Assembly Acts. However, we have arrived at our current curriculum and assessment arrangements via a series of periodic reviews following the Education Reform Act 1988 (ERA). The ERA introduced the Basic Curriculum (which at the time consisted of the national curriculum and religious education) and focused on providing a legislative framework to ensure the quality of learning and teaching, and consistency of opportunity and standards.

Since the Education Reform Act 1988 there have been three further curriculum reviews in Wales (not including the current review). The most recent review (2008) included a stronger emphasis on skills, cross-cutting themes, flexibility and future-proofing the curriculum to make it relevant to the twenty-first century.

National curriculum requirements September 2013		
<b>Foundation Phase</b>		
<i>National Literacy and Numeracy Framework (LNF)</i>  	<i>Skills Framework for 3 to 19-year-olds (non-statutory)</i>  	Seven Areas of Learning - Personal and Social Development, Well-Being and Cultural Diversity - Language, Literacy and Communication Skills - Mathematical Development - Welsh Language Development - Knowledge and Understanding of the World - Physical Development - Creative Development  and a framework for the Basic Curriculum (in maintained schools) for religious education (RE)
<b>Key Stage 2</b>		
<i>National Literacy and Numeracy Framework (LNF)</i>	<i>Skills Framework for 3 to 19-year-olds (non-statutory)</i>	Programmes of study for: - English, Welsh, mathematics and science (core subjects)  - Welsh second language, design and technology, ICT, history, geography, art and design, music and physical education (foundation subjects)  and frameworks for  - the Basic Curriculum, personal and social education (PSE), RE, and sex education
<b>Key Stage 3</b>		
<i>National Literacy and Numeracy Framework (LNF)</i>	<i>Skills Framework for 3 to 19-year-olds (non-statutory)</i>	Programmes of study for: - English, Welsh, mathematics and science (core subjects)  - Welsh second language, design and technology, ICT, history, geography, art and design, music, physical education and modern foreign languages (foundation subjects); and frameworks for  - the Basic Curriculum, PSE, RE, sex education, and careers and the world of work
<b>14–19</b>		
	<i>Skills Framework for 3 to 19-year-olds (non-statutory)</i> Other skills including WBQ	Programmes of study for: - English, Welsh, mathematics and science (core subjects) - PE and Welsh second language (foundation subjects).  The Basic Curriculum – PSE, RE, sex education, and careers and the world of work

## 3.2 The case for change

The proposals contained in this document are based on the findings of an initial review of stakeholder evidence undertaken by officials in discussion with a range of stakeholders, and complemented by an independent report from NFER and Arad entitled *A Rapid Evidence Assessment of the Impact of Curriculum and Assessment Arrangements within High Performing Countries*. The full report can be accessed at [www.wales.gov.uk/research](http://www.wales.gov.uk/research).

The review of stakeholder evidence included discussions with a range of stakeholders including, among others, practitioners, local authorities and academics. In order to maximise impact, discussions with schools were held on a non-attributable basis. The review also reflects the findings of the Review of Qualifications for 14 to 19-year-olds in Wales, particularly in relation to the development of skills.

The purpose of the review of stakeholder evidence was to establish what stakeholders, and in particular practitioners, consider to be good about existing curriculum and assessment arrangements, what is working, what is not working, and what might be done to improve things, all in the context of the introduction of the LNF and tests.

This gathering of stakeholder evidence consisted of two stages, the first of which focused on schools with early experience of the LNF (for example those which had been involved in developing guidance to support the LNF). Evidence gathered from these discussions was used to identify a series of emerging themes for consideration. The second stage focused on discussion with high-performing schools (for example those in Band 1 and/or those identified by Estyn as examples of good practice in relation to literacy and numeracy), and sought to identify good practice and potential ways forward in relation to the themes emerging from stage one discussions.

Both the findings from this initial review of stakeholder evidence, and the evidence of international best practice generated by the NFER and Arad report, are analysed in more detail below. It is this analysis which has informed the development of proposals for change identified in sections 3 and 4 of this consultation document.

### Analysis of stakeholder evidence

**“The LNF must be integrated within our curriculum and assessment arrangements.”**

All schools were supportive of the LNF, as we know not only from the initial review of evidence, but also from the wider public consultation exercise undertaken prior to the introduction of the LNF in 2012. During the initial phase of the review of evidence stakeholders emphasised the importance of integrating the LNF across the curriculum – and they are already revising their schemes of work to identify opportunities to enhance the cross-curricular learning and teaching of literacy and numeracy in their lessons.

At the same time we are mindful of the lack of alignment between levels of expectation set out in the LNF and those included in the current Areas of Learning for Language, Literacy and Communication Skills and Mathematical Development, and the programmes of study for English, Welsh and mathematics.

In addition, a number of stakeholders referred to what they saw as a 'disconnect' when transitioning from Foundation Phase to Key Stage 2. These stakeholders expressed concern at a perceived lack of focus on literacy and numeracy during Foundation Phase with one saying that 'the downside of the experiential approach in Foundation Phase is that some teachers stopped formally teaching literacy and numeracy'.

Other stakeholders identified a need for clarity around the teaching of literacy and numeracy skills in the context of English, Welsh and mathematics, for example at Key Stage 3. In particular they stressed that it is important not to lose sight of the need to teach those skills in their own right before they can be effectively applied across the curriculum, and that English, Welsh and mathematics departments have a key role to play here.

The proposal in section 3.3, about the development of new Areas of Learning/programmes of study for Language, Literacy and Communication Skills and Mathematical Development in Foundation Phase, and for English, Welsh and mathematics from Key Stage 2 onwards is intended to address these issues. By bringing together in one place the literacy and numeracy skills described in the LNF, as well as the skills and content included in these Areas of Learning/programmes of study, we are aligning expectation levels to match those set out in the LNF and setting out our expectations on a year-by-year basis. At the same time, these new Areas of Learning/programmes of study will clearly differentiate between what should be taught on a subject-specific basis and what should be taught across the curriculum.

**“Skills should be taught across the curriculum.”**

There was a general view among the high-performing schools with whom we spoke during the initial evidence review that the development of cross-curricular skills was essential. Some stakeholders, in particular Key Stage 3 practitioners felt that if learners entered secondary education with well-developed skills then their Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 outcomes would be significantly better than those whose skills were less well developed. While the majority felt that content becomes increasingly important as learners progress through school (and in particular at Key Stage 3 looking towards qualifications at Key Stage 4), a minority went so far as to suggest that skills development should be given priority over content during these stages of education.

The need to place more emphasis on cross-curricular skills development, in the context of a broad and balanced curriculum, was something that featured in the majority of our discussions with stakeholders and there was a general view that, to support skills teaching, we should 'develop a skill-set from Foundation Phase through to Key Stage 3'. Further discussions highlighted

the need for this skill-set to extend into Key Stage 4 to ensure alignment with the Welsh Baccalaureate. Indeed, there was a feeling that it was rather ‘odd’ to introduce these skills as a requirement in Key Stage 4, when learners could have been developing them throughout their statutory education. When the existing *Skills framework for 3 to 19-year-olds in Wales* was discussed it was felt that a key reason that this framework was not always given the attention it deserved was due at least in part to its non-statutory nature and because teachers saw it as ‘a bolt-on’. It has therefore been a challenge for the review to consider how any such focus on cross-curricular skills development should be communicated so as to ensure its consistent delivery across all schools.

The NFER and Arad report suggests that high-performing countries also place significant emphasis on wider skills (such as problem solving, higher-order thinking skills and creativity) – in other words, skills that allow learners to operate successfully in the wider world. It is fair to say that, in the main, these are the same skills that our stakeholders have referenced as being priorities for learners to develop and access the curriculum in Wales and a question for the review has therefore been about how to articulate these as priorities for learners while at the same time maintaining an emphasis on their cross-curricular delivery.

### **NFER and Arad Research report**

NFER and Arad Research conducted a rapid evidence assessment, designed to explore the impact of curriculum and assessment arrangements within five countries where students achieve highly in international surveys. The study involved systematic searching and a best-evidence approach to the selection of literature and looked in particular at evidence relating to the education systems of Canada, Finland, Korea, New Zealand and Singapore. A broad overview of the key findings in relation to the curriculum is outlined below.

- Each of the five countries addressed the same core areas of literacy/first language, mathematics/numeracy and basic science. The same is true in Wales.
- All five countries included elements of arts, humanities (or social studies), technology and physical education. The same is true in Wales.
- There was some (slight) variation in the extent to which foreign languages, civics and moral education were addressed.
- The curricula of all five countries addressed key skills and competencies, including critical and creative thinking and problem solving. The same is true in Wales, although the skills framework is not statutory.
- Digital literacy is embedded within the curriculum of each country, but is delivered across the curriculum and is not taught as a separate subject. The same is true in Wales.
- Some countries include a significant focus on entrepreneurship.
- The focus on basic skills and competencies is clearly set out within national strategies which outline the rationale and expectations. The same is true in Wales.



- Cross-curricular/interdisciplinary learning set in real-life contexts and incorporating overarching themes is inherent in the curricula in the selected high-performing countries.
- In general, the curricular requirements in each country were broadly described allowing a significant degree of school/teacher ownership of specific content.
- Each country maintained an outward orientation and undertook regular reviews, consulting a range of stakeholders. The same is true in Wales.

The report also includes recommendations on elements of practice from high-performing systems which are beyond the scope of this review, but may nonetheless have implications for implementation of any ensuing changes. These recommendations include the collecting of baseline and other data, the importance of teacher support and continuous professional development (CPD) and a range of other teacher development approaches, including direct training, peer coaching, and the development of teacher learning communities to explore and develop good practice. The report can be accessed at [www.wales.gov.uk/research](http://www.wales.gov.uk/research)

### 3.3 Proposals for change

#### Literacy and numeracy

**“The LNF must be integrated within our curriculum and assessment arrangements.”**

#### Curriculum proposal

**We are proposing that we acknowledge the critical inter-dependence of knowledge and skills across the whole curriculum, and the way in which they combine to foster understanding of content and context, and that we:**

- **develop new Areas of Learning/programmes of study for:**
  - **Language, Literacy and Communication Skills and Mathematical Development in the Foundation Phase**
  - **English, Welsh and mathematics in Key Stage 2, Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4.**

Literacy and numeracy are cross-curricular skills and must be taught across the whole range of subject content if they are to be effectively developed. However, they also need to be taught in the context of Language, Literacy and Communication Skills and Mathematical Development in Foundation Phase and English, Welsh and mathematics in Key Stages 2–4, before they can be applied across the curriculum. As a consequence there is an important connection between these Areas of Learning/subjects and the LNF. At the same time we know that we need to raise the expectations in Language, Literacy and Communication Skills and Mathematical Development in the Foundation Phase, and English, Welsh and mathematics at Key Stages 2–4

to match the levels set out in the LNF. We are therefore proposing to develop new Areas of Learning/programmes of study for Language Literacy and Communication Skills and Mathematical Development and English, Welsh and mathematics from Foundation Phase to Key Stage 4, which will include the literacy and numeracy skills described in the LNF. In developing these we will provide a greater degree of prescription and specificity to those elements of the programmes of study which are not reflected in the LNF and set out our expectations for them on a year-by-year basis, to complement the approach taken in the LNF. The new programmes of study will clearly distinguish between skills and content specific to the subjects of English, Welsh and mathematics as well as cross-curricular literacy and numeracy skills.

Feedback from practitioners has also suggested that we need to raise the importance of emerging literacy and numeracy from the very outset of the Foundation Phase at age three. They have asked for additional support and guidance to enable them to do this. We are therefore proposing to extend the LNF to support emerging literacy and numeracy between the ages of 3–5 in the Foundation Phase.

Similarly, to ensure a continuum of development from Foundation Phase all the way through to Key Stage 4 and qualifications, we are also proposing to extend the LNF to Key Stage 4 and the new GCSEs in English, Welsh, numeracy and mathematics.

This approach has a number of advantages:

- English, Welsh and mathematics teachers will be able to access all the skills and content that they are required to teach in one place, avoiding the risk that some elements of the programmes of study might be overlooked
- it reinforces the notion that literacy and numeracy should be taught by the subject teacher as well as being applied across the whole curriculum
- it allows us to make the programmes of study more demanding, in line with the LNF
- it gives a clear signal that our priorities lie both with subject knowledge and with skills
- it will support progression across all phases of learning, including the non-statutory and statutory elements of the Foundation Phase.

**Specifically, we are proposing that we:**

- **revise the Areas of Learning/programmes of study for Language, Literacy and Communication Skills and Mathematical Development in the Foundation Phase, and English, Welsh and mathematics in Key Stages 2–4. The new Areas of Learning/programmes of study will set out year-on-year expectations to complement the approach taken in the LNF. They will clearly distinguish between skills and content specific to the**

**subjects of English, Welsh and mathematics and cross-curricular literacy and numeracy skills**

- **extend the LNF to include emergent literacy and numeracy in the Foundation Phase for 3 to 4-year-olds to ensure clear and effective progression into the statutory Foundation Phase at age five.**

#### **Consultation questions**

- 1. Do you agree that the new Areas of Learning/programmes of study for Language, Literacy and Communication Skills and Mathematical Development in the Foundation Phase, and English, Welsh and mathematics in Key Stages 2–4 should be based on year-on-year expectations to complement the LNF?**
- 2. Do you agree that the LNF should be extended to include emergent literacy and numeracy in the Foundation Phase for 3 to 4-year-olds?**

#### **Wider skills**

##### **Curriculum proposal**

**We propose that:**

- **'wider skills' should become statutory elements of the Curriculum for Wales.**

In addition to strengthening the learning and teaching of literacy and numeracy in the curriculum, we are also proposing the introduction of a cross-curricular 'wider skills framework', on the basis not only of stakeholder evidence and in the context of the findings of the NFER and Arad report, but also, critically, to ensure alignment with the skills elements of the Welsh Baccalaureate.

During the course of this initial review, stakeholders have emphasised the importance of developing the wider, cross-curricular skills needed for education, for qualifications, for work and for life. This, again, is strongly echoed in the findings of the report by NFER and Arad, which states that 'most successful countries have moved towards a focus on skills alongside content. This has included placing a focus on the extent to which learners are able to solve problems, think critically and creatively, and to apply knowledge in a range of different contexts.'

While the 2008 curriculum review sought to embed some of these skills in programmes of study, as well as introducing the non-statutory *Skills framework for 3 to 19-year-olds in Wales*, it is not a coincidence that two of the four skills included in that framework (literacy and numeracy) have now been placed on a statutory footing. Our evidence would suggest that a similar approach should be taken in relation to the proposed new framework. It is the intention that these 'wider skills' should be developed across all four phases/stages of education, including Key Stage 4, providing clear routes for skills progression from Foundation Phase through to the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification (WBQ), which following acceptance of the recommendations from the independent Review of Qualifications for 14 to 19-year-olds in Wales is being revised and from September 2015 will become the main framework for qualifications for 14 to 19-year-olds in Wales.

**Specifically, we are proposing that:**

- **wider skills should become statutory elements of the curriculum from Foundation Phase to Key Stage 4.**

**We also propose that these 'wider skills' should comprise of:**

- **critical thinking and problem solving – marshalling critical and logical processes to analyse and understand situations and develop responses and solutions**
- **planning and organising – implementing solutions and executing ideas and monitoring and reflecting on results**
- **creativity and innovation – generating ideas, openness and courage to explore ideas and express opinions**
- **personal effectiveness – reflecting on and understanding oneself and others, behaving in effective and appropriate ways; being an effective learner**
- **digital literacy – 'the confident and critical use of information society technology (IST) for work, leisure, learning and communication' (taken from the European Union's Digital Agenda for Europe).**

While these skills will run through the curriculum from Foundation Phase to Key Stage 4, at the same time it is important that they are age appropriate. For example, in the Foundation Phase a learner might be expected to demonstrate their critical thinking and problem-solving skills by articulating the pros and cons of different solutions to a relatively simple problem, whereas in Key Stage 4 learners might be expected to use tools and techniques to evaluate increasingly complex models and scenarios such as SWOT analysis or computer simulations. In Key Stage 4 then, the skills identified will increasingly reflect the skills that are considered essential for further study and employability.

Subject to the outcome of this consultation, more detailed proposals about these wider skills will be developed both in the context of the revised

Welsh Baccalaureate being developed for teaching from 2015, and of phase 2 of this review.

**Consultation questions**

- 3. Do you agree in principle that 'wider skills' should become statutory elements of the national curriculum?**
- 4. Do you agree that these skills should be critical thinking and problem solving, planning and organisation, creativity and innovation, personal effectiveness and digital literacy?**

## 4. Assessment

### 4.1 The current position

Assessment in Wales is also a devolved matter and arrangements have become increasingly divergent from those in England – for example, SATs were removed from statutory assessment arrangements in Wales in 2004.

<b>Current statutory Foundation and national curriculum assessment and reporting requirements</b>						
<b>Foundation Phase</b>		<b>Key Stage 2</b>			<b>Key Stage 3</b>	
<b>Reception and Year 1</b>	<b>End of Foundation Phase</b>	<b>Annual</b>	<b>End of stage</b>	<b>Annual</b>	<b>End of stage</b>	
<b>Report to parents/ carers</b>	Brief description of progress against the seven Areas of Learning	Brief description of progress against 11 national curriculum subjects	Levels achieved against core subjects:  English  Welsh/Welsh second language  mathematics  science	Brief description of progress against all 12 national curriculum subjects	Levels achieved against all 12 national curriculum subjects.	
	Outcome achieved against: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal and Social Development, Well-Being and Cultural Diversity</li> <li>• Language, Literacy and Communication Skills</li> <li>• Mathematical Development</li> </ul>					
<b>Report to Welsh Government</b>		National Reading and Numeracy Tests	Levels achieved against core subjects:  English  Welsh/Welsh second language  mathematics  science  and  National Reading and Numeracy Tests	National Reading and Numeracy Tests	Levels achieved against all 12 national curriculum subjects:  and  National Reading and Numeracy Tests	
	Outcome achieved against: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal and Social Development, Well-Being and Cultural Diversity</li> <li>• Language, Literacy and Communication Skills</li> <li>• Mathematical Development</li> </ul> and  National Reading and Numeracy Tests					

## 4.2 The case for change

The initial review of stakeholder evidence identified a number of key issues or themes with which stakeholders were concerned. Those relevant to this phase of the review that relate to assessment arrangements include:

- we should assess those things that we value
- a consensus that assessment arrangements are confusing and that level descriptors are unhelpful
- a lack of trust in end of stage teacher assessment, exacerbated by its use for accountability and performance management purposes
- terminology across stages/phases being an issue.

These themes are discussed in more detail below.

### **“We should assess what we value.”**

Although first and foremost a curriculum planning tool, there is a great deal of enthusiasm for assessment to be made of literacy and numeracy, based on the requirements of the LNF. A clear message from our initial review with stakeholders, including a seminar that was held with Key Stage 2 practitioners, was that ‘learners should be assessed against the LNF and their ability to apply their learning across the curriculum and beyond.’ However, there is also an imperative to provide a broad and balanced curriculum and to assess key content to ensure that learners progress.

### **“Assessment arrangements are confusing.”**

The initial review of stakeholder evidence suggests strongly that the assessment landscape, even before the introduction of the LNF and tests, is confusing and arguably no longer fit for purpose. It is clear that more could be done to streamline our assessment arrangements and to align them more closely with what our curriculum identifies as its priorities.

Balanced against this, assessment needs to be appropriate to developmental stage. We do not necessarily want or need to assess the same things in the same way at age 16 that we would at age 5, for example.

### **“There is a lack of trust in teacher assessment – particularly when used for accountability purposes.”**

In a significant number of our discussions with stakeholders concern was expressed about whether or not we are using the right modes of assessment for the right purposes. Indeed, some stakeholders went further and suggested that teacher assessment as it currently stands should not be used in the context of accountability as it is not fit for purpose. Balanced against this, however, there was little appetite for the reintroduction of end of stage tests.

## **Terminology**

It is clear that the terminology used for assessment is potentially unhelpful – both to parents/carers and to teachers – particularly in the context of transition between Foundation Phase and Key Stage 2 (with assessment being described in terms of outcomes in the former and levels in the latter). For example, the Foundation Phase assessments are described in terms of ‘outcomes’ (ranked 1–6), Key Stages 2 and 3 in terms of levels (1–6 – with Level 3 being an equivalent to Foundation Phase Outcome 6, etc.), and attainment at GCSEs is indicated by grades.

## **NFER and Arad Research report**

In relation to assessment, the findings of the NFER and Arad Research rapid evidence assessment, discussed above, can be summarised as follows.

- Participation in international surveys was commonly used to ascertain national performance standards.
- All countries used a balance of test and teacher assessment information to inform learning and teaching.
- Standardised tests were generally used to support and inform teacher assessment and to maintain a shared understanding of assessment standards and criteria.
- National external assessment occurred at the end of primary and secondary (compulsory) phases in all countries except Finland. Some countries, or provinces, used additional standardised tests for system, regional and school-level monitoring.
- None of the five countries examined used annual cohort testing, as planned in Wales from 2013 onwards.



### 4.3 Proposals for change

#### Proposals for Foundation Phase, Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3: assessing literacy and numeracy

**“We should assess what we value.”**

We are clear that literacy, numeracy and reducing the impact of deprivation on educational attainment are our priorities for education in Wales. The changes we are proposing to the curriculum seek to strengthen and support the teaching of literacy and numeracy in Wales, and we are therefore proposing to refocus our assessment arrangements to align with that.

As part of the introduction of the LNF, from September 2014 schools will be required to:

- track learner progress from Foundation Phase to Key Stage 3, based on the progression/expectation statements set out in the LNF, including where appropriate Routes for Learning
- report to parents/carers on this annually, by means of a brief description of progress
- report both to parents/carers and Welsh Government on the results of the National Reading and Numeracy Tests.

In meeting these requirements they will be expected to make annual assessments of learners' progress in meeting the expectations set out in the LNF.

We intend to complement this with a requirement to undertake assessments at the end of each phase or key stage, with these assessments being more summative in nature. The outcomes of these assessments would be reported to parents/carers and Welsh Government. This move is in response to feedback from stakeholders who were overwhelmingly in favour of a shift towards assessment against the LNF.

Specifically, we are proposing the following.

#### **Assessment proposal**

- **At the end of Foundation Phase schools should report a summative assessment of progress in Language, Literacy and Communication Skills and in Mathematical Development – including literacy and numeracy as defined by the LNF.**
- **At the end of Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 schools should report a summative assessment of progress in English, Welsh and mathematics – including literacy and numeracy as defined by the LNF.**
- **These assessments should be reported to parents/carers and the Welsh Government.**

### Consultation question

5. Do you agree that at the end of each phase/stage of education schools should report progress in Language, Literacy and Communication Skills/Mathematical Development or English, Welsh and mathematics – including literacy and numeracy as defined by the LNF, to learners, parents/carers and the Welsh Government?

### **Development of summative assessment arrangements for new Areas of Learning/programmes of study for Language, Literacy and Communication Skills and Mathematical Development at Foundation Phase and English, Welsh and mathematics at Key Stage 2 and 3 – including literacy and numeracy as defined by the LNF**

To develop our proposals for **summative assessment for the new Areas of Learning/programmes of study for Language, Literacy and Communication Skills and Mathematical Development at Foundation Phase as well as English, Welsh and mathematics at Key Stages 2 and 3 – including literacy and numeracy** using the expectations set out in the LNF we are running a series of pilots in schools to determine the most appropriate methodology for assessing and reporting end year and end of phase/key stage performance against these requirements. The pilots will identify possible models or rubrics that could be used by schools to gather and assess data for each learner in relation to the LNF. The pilots will look at how schools can produce meaningful cross-curricular assessments for each learner which provide clear and comprehensive next steps for improvement and also provide robust data which can be used to assess performance at learner, school and national level. These pilots will also inform the development of the Early Years Development and Assessment Framework, to ensure a continuum of assessment from entry to Foundation Phase through to the end of Key Stage 3 and on.

The piloting of these assessment models is taking place in ‘pathfinder schools’ in response to feedback from the LNF consultation that assessment models should be based on practitioner expertise and experience. Similar work is already underway within the special schools sector and will be integrated with this programme.

The findings from the pilot studies will form the basis of guidance on assessing literacy and numeracy in the context of the LNF which will aim to:

- provide models which enable schools to assess the strengths and development needs of individuals, classes and year groups or cohorts in order to raise standards
- address how the associated workload of assessing against the LNF can be managed and minimised.

The Annex (page 37) provides examples of models for how assessment against the LNF might look in practice. They have been provided purely for

illustrative purposes – to give practitioners an idea of how, in practice, schools **might** undertake end of phase/key stage assessments of literacy and numeracy in the context of the LNF.

### **Proposals specific to Foundation Phase assessment**

#### **Assessment proposal – Foundation Phase**

##### **We propose that:**

- **schools should continue to undertake and report end of phase assessment of Personal and Social Development, Well-Being and Cultural Diversity.**

Stakeholders have told us that assessment needs to be appropriate to developmental stage. We do not necessarily want or need to assess the same things, in the same way at age 16 that we would at age 5, for example. Personal and Social Development, Well-Being and Cultural Diversity is a key element of the principles and philosophy of the Foundation Phase, and again stakeholders have been very clear that this element of end of phase assessment should not be diluted by the focus on literacy and numeracy. We therefore propose to:

- retain the requirement for schools to undertake and report end of Foundation Phase assessment of Personal and Social Development, Well-Being and Cultural Diversity.

This is also important in the context of the Foundation Phase baseline assessment. Since the withdrawal of the *Foundation Phase child development assessment profile* (CDAP) in February 2012 the Welsh Government has been scoping a successor baseline assessment for the Foundation Phase. To answer this and related requirements for a unified development across the early years and in Flying Start, the Welsh Government is developing the Early Years Development and Assessment Framework (EYDAF). The EYDAF is being designed so that the baseline assessment element, undertaken at the beginning of the Foundation Phase, will link to what will be assessed at the end of phase, in light of the outcome of this consultation.

There will of course be an ongoing need for teachers to track learner progress on a day-to-day and annual basis and to use that to inform learning and teaching. Schools will also continue to provide a brief description of progress in the remaining Areas of Learning on an annual basis.

**Consultation question**

- 6. Do you agree that schools should continue to undertake and report an end of phase assessment of Personal and Social Development, Well-Being and Cultural Diversity?**

<b>Summary of existing and proposed assessment arrangements at Foundation Phase</b>				
	<b>Current statutory assessment arrangements</b>		<b>Proposed statutory assessment arrangements</b>	
	Annual	End of phase	Annual	End of phase
Learner/parent/ carer/governors	<p>Brief description of progress against all the Areas of Learning</p> <p>Brief description of progress on literacy and numeracy</p> <p>Scores and relative performance against the National Reading and Numeracy Tests (from Year 2 onwards)</p>	<p>Brief description of progress against all the Areas of Learning</p> <p>Scores and relative performance against the National Reading and Numeracy Tests (from Year 2 onwards)</p> <p>Teaching assessment against:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal and Social Development, Well-Being and Cultural Diversity</li> <li>• Language, Literacy and Communication Skills;</li> <li>• Mathematical Development</li> </ul>	<p>Brief description of progress AOLs, including literacy and numeracy as defined by the LNF</p> <p>Scores and relative performance against the National Reading and Numeracy Tests (from Year 2 onwards)</p>	<p>End of phase summative assessment in Language, Literacy and Communication Skills, Mathematical Development and Personal and Social Development, Well-Being and Cultural Diversity</p> <p>Brief description of progress in other Areas of Learning. Scores and relative performance against the National Reading and Numeracy Tests (from Year 2 onwards)</p>
Data collected by Welsh Government	Scores and relative performance against the National Reading and Numeracy Tests	Scores and relative performance against the National Reading and Numeracy Tests (from Year	Scores and relative performance against the National Reading and Numeracy Tests	On entry Foundation Phase assessment  End of phase

	(from Year 2 onwards)	2 onwards)  Teaching assessment against: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal and Social Development, Well-Being and Cultural Diversity</li> <li>• Language, Literacy and Communication Skills</li> <li>• Mathematical Development</li> </ul>	(from Year 2 onwards)	summative assessment in Language, Literacy and Communication Skills, Mathematical Development and Personal and Social Development, Well-Being and Cultural Diversity  Scores and relative performance against the National Reading and Numeracy Tests (from Year 2 onwards)
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## **Proposals specific to Key Stage 2 assessment – End of stage assessment: rich learning tasks**

**Teacher assessment – “There is a lack of trust in teacher assessment when used for accountability purposes.”**

### **Assessment proposal – Key Stage 2**

**We propose that:**

- **teacher assessment of end of Key Stage 2 should be strengthened by the introduction of rich learning tasks.**

We remain of the view that teacher assessment is key to informing learning and teaching – a view supported not only by the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) report (see page 32) but also by the Daugherty review<sup>1</sup> – as well as being a characteristic of the high-performing jurisdictions reviewed by NFER. However, we know from the initial review of stakeholders that the reliability of teacher assessments generally is much debated, and that at the end of Key Stage 2 it is a particular issue in terms of its value as data to support transition, as well as in the context of local accountability.

Teacher assessment across all phases/stages is discussed in more detail at the end of this section. The following proposal relates specifically to the challenges of teacher assessment identified by stakeholders in relation to Key Stage 2.

**In the light of stakeholder evidence as well as evidence included in the ACER report, we are proposing that we strengthen the end of Key Stage 2 teacher assessment with the:**

- **introduction of cross-curricular ‘rich learning tasks’ at the end of Key Stage 2.**

A rich learning task involves an open-ended exploration of a topic. Rich learning tasks would be specific activities that students undertake that have real-world value and use, and through which students are able to display their grasp and use of important ideas and skills. The rich learning task would encourage flexible thinking and reasoning, be problem-based and connected to the world beyond the classroom.

For example, a rich learning task in Year 6 might be arranging a travel excursion specifically for their class or for a specific group of people. In selecting the venue learners would need to identify a range of issues including suitability, transport options, accessibility and cultural and historical

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<sup>1</sup>*Learning Pathways Through Statutory Assessment: Key Stages 2 and 3 Daugherty Assessment Review Group – Final Report – May 2004, published May 2004.*

significance. Learners would be asked to present costings and give a reason for their choice of venue.

These tasks would enable teachers to assess the range of skills set out in the LNF (and in future, potentially, the wider skills framework) in the context of the breadth of curriculum subjects that children are required to study. The tasks would be assessed by teachers, but would be drawn up at a national level, and would be complemented by a suggested assessment scheme. They would be used by teachers and by consortia as an additional piece of evidence to support assessment of learners' performance in English, Welsh and mathematics, including literacy and numeracy, in order to reach a summative judgement on attainment at the end of Key Stage 2. They would be robustly moderated, possibly by means of sampling in order both to support teachers and to introduce an additional element of rigour into the system. This would introduce an element of consistency across Wales which is arguably currently lacking.

If introduced, the rich learning tasks could be supported by rich learning materials. These could be designed to be used in everyday learning and teaching. The materials could be incorporated into future learning plans or schemes of work.

Our intention is to pilot the new arrangements with schools prior to introduction – models for how this might work in practice will be explored in the context of the pilots.

**Consultation question**

**7. Do you agree that rich learning tasks should be included as part of an overall end of Key Stage 2 assessment model?**



<b>Summary of existing and proposed assessment arrangements at Key Stage 2</b>				
<b>Key Stage 2</b>				
	<b>Current statutory assessment arrangements</b>		<b>Proposed statutory assessment arrangements</b>	
	Annual	End of stage	Annual	End of stage
Learner/parent/carer/governors	<p>Brief description of progress against 11 subjects</p> <p>Scores and relative performance against the National Reading and Numeracy Tests</p> <p>Brief description of progress on literacy and numeracy</p>	<p>Brief description of progress against 11 subjects</p> <p>Scores and relative performance against the National Reading and Numeracy Tests</p> <p>Summative assessment against:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>English, Welsh, Welsh second language, mathematics and science</li> </ul>	<p>Brief description of progress in literacy and numeracy</p> <p>Scores and relative performance against the National Reading and Numeracy Tests</p> <p>Brief description of performance in national curriculum subjects</p>	<p>End of stage summative assessment in English, Welsh, Welsh second language and mathematics. Brief description of progress in other subjects</p> <p>Scores and relative performance against the National Reading and Numeracy Tests. Cross-curricular 'rich tasks'</p>
Data collected by Welsh Government	Scores and relative performance against the National Reading	Level descriptors – English, Welsh, mathematics and	Scores and relative performance against the National Reading	End of stage summative assessment in new

	and Numeracy Tests	science (Welsh second language optional)  Scores and relative performance against the National Reading and Numeracy Tests	and Numeracy Tests	English, Welsh and mathematics (including literacy and numeracy) (Welsh second language optional)  Scores and relative performance against the National Reading and Numeracy Tests
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## Proposals specific to Key Stage 3 assessment

### Assessment proposal – Key Stage 3

We propose that:

- we should retain the requirement for schools to report to Welsh Government on progress in the new English, Welsh and mathematics and existing science and Welsh second language programmes of study
- we should remove the requirement for schools to report to Welsh Government on the remaining foundation subjects.

We are committed to streamlining and simplifying assessment arrangements where possible. While we recognise that reporting to parents/carers and learners on the progress that they have made in all subjects at Key Stage 3 is important for informing choice for GCSE, there is less of a case that all of this should be reported to Welsh Government, as schools are ultimately held to account by their Key Stage 4 outcomes.

Given that English, Welsh, mathematics, science and Welsh second language are statutory requirements at Key Stage 4, we are proposing to:

- retain the requirement for schools to report to Welsh Government on progress in these subjects

and

- remove the requirement, and hence significantly reduce the reporting burden, to report to us on the remaining subjects of design and technology, ICT, history, geography, art and design, music, PE and modern foreign languages.

### Consultation question

**8. Do you agree with the proposals that at Key Stage 3 we retain the requirement to report to the Welsh Government an end of Key Stage 3 summative assessment of progress in the new English, Welsh and mathematics programmes of study, science and Welsh second language and remove the requirement to report to Welsh Government an end of Key Stage 3 assessment of progress in other statutory foundation subjects?**

## The reliability of teacher assessment

An evaluation of current teacher assessment arrangements has been undertaken by ACER. The ACER report notes that Wales has the principal elements of a good-quality assessment system in place but that if the present system is to realise its potential it needs further time and investment of funding and effort to embed. The key recommendations include making provision within the system to measure the reliability of teacher judgements, building stakeholder confidence in the validity of the system, driving better understanding of policy and improved implementation at teacher, school and cluster level, and using national moderation, a national training programme and a revision of level descriptors to help improve the system's operability.

The findings of the ACER review are consistent with other sources of information, for example Estyn's 2010 thematic review of teacher assessment<sup>2</sup>. Both these reports point out the need for improvement in the understanding and the operation of the teacher assessment system, at local and regional level, and the importance of external input to that system. Both also discuss local government's role in teacher assessment, Estyn identifying the positive impact of local authorities where they are closely involved while ACER notes that local authorities' role seemed to be insufficiently clear and prioritised.

To help address the issues around the reliability and validity of teacher assessment we are considering the reintroduction of a programme of external moderation, strengthened by the increased involvement of local authorities through the four regional consortia in the development and delivery of the programme.

The proposed local authority/consortia involvement in the moderation and quality assurance of teacher assessment would operate at three levels. At the first level, local authorities/consortia would work within and through cluster groups, with a focus on ensuring that schools within the consortia meet all statutory requirements, supported by amendments to the statutory duties around teacher assessment to strengthen the input of cluster moderation to decisions at school level. This would then be supplemented at regional level by consortia-led moderation of randomly sampled collections of learners' work, with the aim of driving up system performance, underpinned by new statutory duties upon local authorities to improve standards of, and uphold confidence in, teacher assessment in their areas. Finally, continuous improvement would be promoted by the use of annual reporting on teacher assessment at local authority/consortia level for public information and accountability purposes.

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<sup>2</sup> *Evaluation of the arrangements to assure the consistency of teacher assessment in the core subjects at key stage 2 and key stage 3* (Estyn, 2010)  
[www.estyn.gov.uk/english/docViewer/1173.9/evaluation-of-the-arrangements-to-assure-the-consistency-of-teacher-assessment-in-the-core-subjects-at-ks2-and-ks3-march-2010/?navmap=30,163](http://www.estyn.gov.uk/english/docViewer/1173.9/evaluation-of-the-arrangements-to-assure-the-consistency-of-teacher-assessment-in-the-core-subjects-at-ks2-and-ks3-march-2010/?navmap=30,163),

To address the issues identified in the context of stakeholders' understanding of their roles in the process, this assessment system would be supported by a comprehensive end-to-end process, setting out in detail exactly what is required of schools and local authorities/consortia with regard to standardisation, assessment and moderation, covering both expectations and process. This would be supplemented by guidance for each step, with ICT used to make the presentation as accessible as possible. Further details on this will be provided in due course..

<b>Summary of existing and proposed assessment arrangements at Key Stage 3</b>				
	<b>Current statutory assessment arrangements</b>		<b>Proposed statutory assessment arrangements</b>	
	Annual	End of stage	Annual	End of stage
Learner/ parent/carer/ governors	<p>Brief description of progress against 12 subjects</p> <p>Scores and relative performance against the National Reading and Numeracy Tests</p> <p>Assessment against the LNF (from September 2014)</p>	<p>Brief description of progress against 12 subjects</p> <p>Scores and relative performance against the National Reading and Numeracy Tests</p> <p>Teaching assessment against:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>English, Welsh, mathematics and science (core subjects)</li> <li>Welsh second language, design and technology, ICT, history, geography, art and design, music, PE and modern foreign languages (foundation subjects)</li> </ul>	<p>Brief description of progress in literacy and numeracy</p> <p>Scores and relative performance against the National Reading and Numeracy Tests</p> <p>Brief description of progress in the 12 national curriculum subjects</p>	<p>End of stage summative assessment in English, Welsh and mathematics (including literacy and numeracy), science and Welsh second language</p> <p>Brief description of progress in remaining statutory national curriculum subjects</p> <p>Scores and relative performance against the National Reading and Numeracy Tests</p>
Reporting to Welsh Government		Scores and relative performance against the National Reading and Numeracy Tests	Scores and relative performance against the National Reading and Numeracy Tests	End of stage summative assessment in English, Welsh and mathematics (including literacy and

		<p>Teaching assessment against:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• English, Welsh, mathematics and science (core subjects)</li> <li>• Welsh second language, design and technology, ICT, history, geography, art and design, music, PE and modern foreign languages (foundation subjects)</li> </ul>		<p>numeracy), science and Welsh second language</p> <p>Scores and relative performance against the National Reading and Numeracy Tests</p>
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## 5. Proposals for implementation

The table below sets out our outline plans for implementation of phase 1 of this review. The final timetable will, of course, be subject to review depending on consultation findings on each of the individual proposals. The timetable is intended to be realistic and recognises what stakeholders have been telling us about the need for phased implementation. We would welcome your thoughts on these proposals.

### Timetable for implementation

<b>Proposal</b>	<b>2013–14</b>	<b>2014–15 (September)</b>	<b>2015–16</b>
<b>Extended Areas of Learning/programmes of study for Language, Literacy and Communication Skills/ Mathematical Development and English, Welsh and mathematics</b>	Develop and consult	Non-statutory introduction	Statutory introduction
<b>Wider skills (implementation for consideration in phase 2)</b>			
<b>Summative assessment against the LNF</b>	Develop and consult	Non-statutory introduction	Statutory introduction (first summative assessments summer 2016)
<b>Rich tasks</b>	Develop, pilot and consult	Non-statutory introduction	Statutory introduction
<b>Consultation question</b>			
<p><b>9. Subject to the outcome of this consultation, do you agree with the proposed timetable for introduction for changes to curriculum and assessment arrangements in Wales?</b></p>			



## **Annex: Possible models for assessment of literacy and numeracy**

This rubric is an example only, intended to give an overview of how assessment of the LNF at end of a key stage could work in principle. It is intended to suggest one possible model for providing an end of key stage assessment on the LNF as it currently stands. It does not reflect the proposal to extend the existing programmes of study described in section 3.2 of this document.

Example of end of key stage literacy portfolio							
Aspects		Learner A	Commentary	Learner B	Commentary	Learner C	Commentary
Oracy	1. Speaking	Yellow	Teacher agreed overall rating – will probably be amber	Green	Teacher agreed overall rating – will probably be green	Blue	Teacher agreed overall rating – will probably be blue
	2. Listening	Green		Green		Green	
	3. Collaboration and discussion	Yellow		Green		Blue	
Reading	4. Reading strategies	Red	Teacher agreed overall rating – will probably be red	Yellow	Teacher agreed overall rating – will probably be green	Blue	Teacher agreed overall rating – will probably be blue
	5. Comprehension	Yellow		Green		Green	
	6. Response and analysis	Red		Green		Blue	
Writing	7. Meaning, purposes, readers	Yellow	All these elements would be subject to external moderation – this portfolio of work will include several pieces (probably from 6–10) across the whole range of subjects and will therefore probably indicate a red assessment	Green	All these elements would be subject to external moderation – this portfolio of work will include several pieces (probably from 6–10) across the whole range of subjects and will probably indicate a green assessment	Blue	All these elements would be subject to external moderation – this portfolio of work will include several pieces (probably from 6–10) across the whole range of subjects and will probably indicate a blue assessment
	8. Structure and organisation	Yellow		Green		Blue	
	9. Language	Red		Red		Green	
	10. Handwriting, grammar, punctuation, spelling	Green		Yellow		Blue	
End colour			Red		Green		Blue

## Key

Red	Learner has not yet achieved this expectation.
Amber	Learner has in some cases demonstrated they have achieved this expectation but not consistently and may require support.
Green	Learner has demonstrated that they have achieved and consolidated this expectation.
Blue	Learner has achieved this expectation and is working on expectations from a higher year group.

## How this rubric could be used to agree an end of Key Stage 3 rating for each learner

### Stage 1: Assessment in each subject area of each learner against every expectation of the LNF

Teachers would use a more detailed rubric (not provided) which identifies for their subject area whether learners have gained the skills described in the expectation statements of the LNF and at what level. This would be done throughout the school year as learners demonstrate and consolidate skills. Schools will use curriculum mapping in order to plan which expectation statement of the LNF will be covered and developed in which subject area so it may not be necessary for every subject to provide a judgement on each expectation statement.

### Stage 2: Reach an agreed cross-curricular assessment at aspect level

Teachers would meet and use their subject-specific expectation level assessments to agree a rating for each **aspect** of the LNF for each learner (literacy and numeracy may be addressed within different meetings). This would represent the view of all relevant teachers about the level achieved for each aspect across the curriculum subjects. Further guidance would be provided on how teachers should reach this agreed judgement. .

### **Stage 3**

Using these agreed judgements for each aspect teachers would apply the rubrics set out above to agree an overall single rating for each learner for both literacy and numeracy. Guidance would be provided to enable teachers to reach this overall judgement.

### **Stage 4**

The end agreed judgement will be used to arrive at an overall assessment for that learner. This could include using grades:

- red = C
- amber = B
- green = A
- blue = A+

or year group expectations as described in the LNF, e.g. for a Year 6 learner:

- red = working at Year 4 level or below
- amber = working at Year 5 level
- green = working at Year 6 level
- blue = working at Year 7 level or above.