



**ALL Briefing No. 43**

**Date: April 2025**

**Theme: Curriculum and Assessment Review (CAR) Interim Report**

**Background:**

*This report is general (not subject-specific) and indicates the sense of direction of the Review launched in July 2024. The report draws on evidence submitted by over 7,000 submissions. The Association for Language Learning submitted its response – informed by member consultation activities – in December 2024.*

**Key messages:**

The review panel's findings highlight that, in practice, 'high standards' currently too often means 'high standards for some' rather than 'high standards for all'. The current system is not delivering for young people with SEND, or for those from disadvantaged backgrounds, where there remains a stubborn attainment gap.

The interim report identifies four key areas needing improvement:

- Ensuring high standards for all - exploring how curriculum and assessment can be more inclusive and equitable, to ensure excellence for all.
- Addressing subject-specific challenges, and ensuring curriculum is consistently achieving depth and breadth – including an in-depth analysis of individual subjects to ensure appropriate depth and mastery of knowledge, and that subjects are cutting edge.
- Responding to social and technological change - examining how education can better prepare students to grasp the opportunities of the future, for example heightened digital skills and media literacy to address trends in digital information and the rise of AI, and scientific and cultural knowledge to meet the challenges of climate change.
- Ensuring pathways beyond GCSE work for all - examining the current pathways to ensure they work for all young people in supporting successful routes to further study or employment, especially those from less privileged backgrounds.

In line with the aim of evolution, not revolution, next steps will include:

- considering concerns that have been raised across subjects about the specificity, relevance, volume and diversity of content, and conducting closer analysis to diagnose each subject's specific issues and explore and test a range of solutions.
- considering the impact of current performance measures on young people's choices and outcomes.
- exploring level 2 and 3 pathways at Post-16, with special attention to vocational routes and support for progression.
- conducting further analysis of assessment and consider any necessary improvements.

Modern Languages or Modern Foreign Languages have some specific references:

On page 6, Executive Summary, it says:

***Challenges with specific subjects***

*Many submissions have argued for improvements in a range of curriculum subjects. Some of these are minor (for example, citations of specific dated content), and some are major (for example, suggestions of a lack of efficacy in Modern Foreign Language teaching in primary and transition to secondary).*

This is then repeated on page 28, in the main body of the report.

Furthermore, references are made to 'languages' (our emboldened text) in the section about curriculum requirements to respond to social and technological changes (p. 7 of executive summary):

***The curriculum needs to respond to social and technological change.***

*Subject specific knowledge remains the best investment we have to secure the education young people need in a world of rapid technological and social change. Being secure in foundational subjects such as maths and science will remain pivotal, now and in the future; as will young people's understanding of human culture through the humanities, **languages** and arts. However, attention is needed to address opportunities and challenges created by our fast-changing world. The rise of artificial intelligence (AI) and trends in digital information demand heightened media literacy and critical thinking, as well as digital skills. Likewise, global social and environmental challenges require attention to scientific and cultural knowledge and skills that can equip young people to meet the challenges of the future. Meanwhile, young people and their parents or carers have been clear that they would like to see more applied knowledge in certain areas, to support young people to be ready for life and work.*

The review expects to recommend a phased programme of work across the subjects listed in the national curriculum. This will allow reforms to be made incrementally in a way that does not destabilise the system.

The review is ongoing with a final report and recommendations due to be published in autumn 2025.

## **References:**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/curriculum-and-assessment-review-publishes-interim-findings>

Other resources at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/curriculum-and-assessment-review-interim-report>

Interim report

Analytical index

Polling of key stage 4 and 16 to 19 learners and parents

Conceptual position paper

This Briefing is for updating of members.

This Briefing has been prepared by volunteers from the ALL Council and is for the benefit of ALL members.

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