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**Education Reform**

**Consultation on behalf of Professor Ken Muir, University of the West of Scotland and Independent Advisor to The Scottish Government**

**Respondent Information Form**

**Please Note** this form **must** be completed and returned with your response.

To find out how we handle your personal data, please see our privacy policy: <https://www.gov.scot/privacy/>

Are you responding as an individual, group or an organisation?

Individual

Group

X Organisation

If responding as an individual or group, which of the following best describes your role in the education system?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Parent / Carer  Teacher / Lecturer / Practitioner  School / Centre Leader  Local Authority / Regional Officer | Child / Young Person  Support Staff  National Agency Officer  Employer / Industry |
| Other, please state: | |

If responding as an individual or group, which of the following best describes your sector?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Early years  Secondary | Primary  Tertiary (Further / Higher Education) |

Full name or group name

Organisation name

RNIB Scotland

(if applicable)

Phone number

07702 820 007

Address

RNIB Scotland, 12-14 Hillside Crescent, Edinburgh

Postcode

EH7 5EA

Email

cate.vallis@rnib.org.uk

The Scottish Government would like your permission to publish your consultation response.

**Information for organisations:**

The option 'Publish response only (without name)’ is available for individual respondents only. If this option is selected, the organisation name will still be published.

If you choose the option 'Do not publish response', your organisation name may still be listed as having responded to the consultation in, for example, in the analysis report.

Please indicate your publishing

preference:

X Publish response with name

Publish response only (without name)

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We may wish to contact you again in the future, but we require your permission to do so. Are you content for Scottish Government to contact you again in relation to this consultation exercise?

X Yes

No

**Consultation Questions**

SECTION 1 – VISION

**As an introduction to the questions which follow in this consultation, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?**

**1.1 The vision for Curriculum for Excellence reflects what matters for the education of children and young people in Scotland.**

***Strongly Agree***

***Agree***

**X *Neither Agree/Disagree***

***Disagree***

***Strongly Disagree***

**1.2** What do you think should be retained and/or changed?

|  |
| --- |
| RNIB Scotland supports the statement that Scotland's curriculum should "help our children and young people gain the knowledge, skills and attributes needed for life in the 21st century". We agree with the four capacities - Confident Individuals, Successful Learners, Responsible Citizens and Effective Contributors - and would like to emphasise the additional support children and young people with a vision impairment require to fulfil these capacities to the same level as peers without sight loss. In particular children and young people with a vision impairment require additional support from Qualified Teachers of children and young people with a Vision Impairment (QTVIs), to fulfil the Confident Individuals capacity which states that they should "live as independently as they can". The Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC) for students with sight loss teaches skills that students without sight loss pick up through observation and both help aid the learning of independent living skills and the core curriculum. The Expanded Core Curriculum includes learning communication modes - such as Braille - orientation and mobility, social interaction skills, independent living skills, assistive technology, and sensory efficiency skills, and is vital to ensuring children and young people with sight loss can access Scotland's core curriculum, learn to the best of their ability, and leave education having fulfilled the four capacities. RNIB is currently leading the Vision Impairment Curriculum Framework Project with partners in the VI Education Sector. This aims to standardise the approach to meeting the needs of blind and partially sighted children and young people no matter where they live. The framework will be launched in March 2022 and will link VI teaching resources with a curriculum clearly setting out the additional skills children and young people with a vision impairment across the country need in an effort to eliminate any postcode lottery. We would be delighted to expand on this and how it could benefit children and young people with a vision impairment on top of this consultation response if there is any opportunity to. |

SECTION 2 - CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT

**To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?**

**2.1 Curriculum for Excellence provides a coherent progression in the journey of learners (3-18 and beyond) that gives them the best possible educational experience and enables them to realise their ambitions.**

*Strongly Agree*

*Agree*

X *Neither Agree/Disagree*

*Disagree*

*Strongly Disagree*

2.2 Please share what you believe currently contributes to a coherent progression.

|  |
| --- |
| N/A |

2.3 Please share ideas you may have to improve learner progression across stages and sectors.

|  |
| --- |
| Curriculum for Excellence should detail how the principles and learning can be adapted to fully include children and young people with disabilities, in particular sight loss. Curriculum for Excellence is designed to teach children and young people in the round and equip them not just with academic qualifications but the skills and attributes to realise their ambitions. Both are important to enable young people to live up to their full potential. The Summary Statistics for Attainment and Initial Leaver Destinations, No. 3: 2021 edition showed that just under one in four (23.8 per cent) pupils with vision impairment in Scotland left school without a qualification at National 4 or higher, compared to 1.5 per cent of pupils with no additional support needs. 60.2 per cent of those with a vision impairment gained at least one National 5 qualification, compared to 93.5 per cent of pupils with no additional support needs. Only 41.1 per cent of students with vision impairment left school with at least one higher, nearly half the percentage of pupils with no additional support needs who gained at least one higher (75.1 per cent). Whilst some pupils with a visual impairment have complex needs this does not account for the stark attainment gap these figures show.  This is a clear indication that learner progression for learners with a vision impairment must be improved. RNIB Scotland asks for increased investment in the training of additional QTVIs, for a QTVI recruitment budget to be ringfenced by the Scottish Government for use by local government, and for the attainment of children and young people with a vision impairment to be reported on annually. |

**3.1 In practice, learning communities are empowered and use the autonomy provided by Curriculum for Excellence to design a curriculum that meets the needs of their learners.**

*Strongly Agree*

*Agree*

X *Neither Agree/Disagree*

*Disagree*

*Strongly Disagree*

3.2 Please share ideas you may have on what is needed to enhance this in future.

|  |
| --- |
| N/A |

**4.1** **The creation of a Curriculum and Assessment Agency will help to address the misalignment of curriculum and assessment as outlined in the OECD report[[1]](#footnote-1).**

*Strongly Agree*

*Agree*

*Neither Agree/Disagree*

*Disagree*

*Strongly Disagree*

4.2 Please share your views of the potential advantages of establishing such an Agency.

|  |
| --- |
| N/A |

4.3 Please share your views of the potential disadvantages of establishing such an Agency.

|  |
| --- |
| N/A |

**5.1** **The full breadth of** **existing** **SQA qualifications[[2]](#footnote-2) play an important part of the curriculum offered by secondary schools.**

*Strongly Agree*

*Agree*

*Neither Agree/Disagree*

*Disagree*

*Strongly Disagree*

5.2 Please identify the main factors, if any, that support a broader range of SQA qualifications being included in the curriculum in secondary schools.

|  |
| --- |
| Blind and partially sighted children and young people must often learn Braille on top of the subjects in their curriculum. British Sign Language is available as a course at SCQF levels 3-6, and Braille should also be available at the same levels. Whilst primarily we believe this should be a course to formally recognise children and young people with a vision impairment's skills and work, we would also support it being made available to children and young people without sight loss. |

5.3 Please share any ideas you may have on what is needed to enhance the role of a broader variety of qualifications in the curriculum in secondary schools.

|  |
| --- |
| To support having a Braille qualification, specific training for teachers of Braille would need to be developed and teachers with specialised Braille would need to be recruited. |

**6.1** **Technologies are fully and appropriately utilised as a support for curriculum and assessments.**

*Strongly Agree*

*Agree*

*Neither Agree/Disagree*

*Disagree*

*Strongly Disagree*

6.2 Please share any comments you may have on the use of technologies to support curriculum and assessments, and what could be done to deliver improvements.

|  |
| --- |
| The use of technology can be of great benefit to children and young people with a vision impairment. However, it is important that only as many different types of technology as is necessary are used as students with sight loss tell us it can be difficult to switch between systems. |

**7. Please share any additional comments you have on curriculum and assessment.**

|  |
| --- |
| N/A |

SECTION 3 - ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

**To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?**

**8.1 There is clarity on where the responsibilities for the strategic direction, review and updates for Curriculum for Excellence lie.**

*Strongly Agree*

*Agree*

*Neither Agree/Disagree*

*Disagree*

*Strongly Disagree*

8.2 Please indicate where you think the responsibilities for the strategic direction, review and updates for Curriculum for Excellence should lie.

|  |
| --- |
| N/A |

**9.1 There is clarity on the roles played by national agencies and other providers for responding to needs for support with curriculum and assessment issues.**

*Strongly Agree*

*Agree*

*Neither Agree/Disagree*

*Disagree*

*Strongly Disagree*

9.2 Please share which aspects of the support currently provided by national agencies and other providers is working well.

|  |
| --- |
| N/A |

9.3 Please indicate where you think greater clarity is needed in relation to the roles played by national agencies and other providers for responding to needs / requests for support with curriculum and assessment issues.

|  |
| --- |
| N/A |

**10.1 There is clarity on where high quality support for leadership and professional learning can be accessed to support practitioners.**

*Strongly Agree*

*Agree*

*Neither Agree/Disagree*

*Disagree*

*Strongly Disagree*

10.2 Please share any comments you may have on support for leadership and professional learning.

|  |
| --- |
| N/A |

**11.1 There is sufficient trust with all stakeholders, including children, young people, parents & carers, so they are genuinely involved in decision making.**

*Strongly Agree*

*Agree*

*Neither Agree/Disagree*

*Disagree*

*Strongly Disagree*

11.2 Please share any ideas you may have on how trust and decision making can be further improved.

|  |
| --- |
| N/A |

**12.1 Independent inspection has an important role to play in scrutiny and evaluation, enhancing improvement and building capacity.**

*Strongly Agree*

*Agree*

*Neither Agree/Disagree*

*Disagree*

*Strongly Disagree*

12.2 Please give examples of how you would like to see scrutiny and evaluation being carried out in future.

|  |
| --- |
| N/A |

**13. Please share any additional comments on roles and responsibilities in Scotland’s education system.**

|  |
| --- |
| N/A |

SECTION 4 - REPLACING THE SCOTTISH QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY AND REFORMING EDUCATION SCOTLAND

**Removing Scrutiny (Inspection and review) from Education Scotland**

**14. Please share any comments or suggestions you have on this proposed reform below.**

We are particularly interested in hearing your views on:

1. the approach this reform should take (for example what form should this agency take)
2. the opportunities these reforms could present (for example the development of a new national approach to inspection including alignment with other scrutiny functions)
3. the risks associated with any reform (for example whether the independence of the inspectorate could be jeopardised by change)
4. how any risks might be mitigated
5. the timescales over which these reforms should take place.

|  |
| --- |
| N/A |

**Further Reform of Education Scotland**

**15. Please share any comments or suggestions you have on how the functions currently housed in Education Scotland could be reformed.**

We are particularly interested in hearing your views on:

1. the approach this reform should take (for example which functions should continue to sit within a reformed Education Scotland, and are there any functions which could be carried out elsewhere)
2. the opportunities reform could present (for example should more prominence be given to aspects of Education Scotland’s role)
3. the risks associated with any reform (for example disruption of service to education establishments and settings
4. how any risks might be mitigated
5. the timescales over which these reforms should take place.

|  |
| --- |
| N/A |

**Replacing SQA**

**16. Please share any comments or suggestions you have on this proposed reform below.**

We are particularly interested in hearing your views on:

1. the approach this reform should take (for example could a function be carried out elsewhere)
2. the opportunities these reforms could present (for example should more prominence be given to an aspect of SQA’s role)
3. the risks associated with any reform (for example loss of income, confusion as to system of awards in Scotland)
4. how any risks might be mitigated
5. the timescales over which these reforms should take place.

|  |
| --- |
| N/A |

**Considering the Establishment of a new Curriculum and Assessment Agency**

**17. Please share any comments or suggestions you have on this proposed reform below.**

We are particularly interested in hearing your views on:

1. the approach this reform should take (for example are there alternative models for this reform?)
2. the opportunities these reforms could present (for example what should the role of the new agency be?)
3. the risks associated with any reform
4. how any risks might be mitigated
5. the timescales over which these reforms should take place.

|  |
| --- |
| N/A |

**If you have any additional comments and suggestions relating to this consultation, please send them to** [**EducationReform@gov.scot**](mailto:EducationReform@gov.scot)

1. [Scotland’s Curriculum for Excellence: Into the Future | en | OECD](https://www.oecd.org/education/scotland-s-curriculum-for-excellence-bf624417-en.htm) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. [Explore our qualifications - SQA](https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/80336.html) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)