

To: **Education and Children's Services Policy Board**

On: **20 January 2022**

Report by: **Director of Children's Services**

Heading: **Consultation on Education Reform**

1. Summary

- 1.1. The Scottish Government is undertaking a public consultation on Education Reform, following the recommendations from the OECD report. On behalf of the Council, Children's Services have responded to the consultation, with a response being submitted on 25th November. Our response is appended to this report at Appendix One.
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2. Recommendations

- 2.1. Elected members are asked to:
- Homologate the content of the response to the Education Reform Consultation.
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3. Background

- 3.1 The Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills, Ms Somerville, announced on 22 June the intention to replace the SQA and consider a new specialist agency for both curriculum and assessment while also taking forward reform to Education Scotland, including removing the function of inspection from the agency.
- 3.2 Professor Ken Muir, University of the West of Scotland, was appointed to act as an independent advisor to the Scottish Government to consider and advise on the implementation of the reform that will consider all functions currently delivered by both the SQA and Education Scotland.

- 3.3 The consultation ran from 30 September to 26 November. The response from Renfrewshire Council will support Professor Muir in his considerations. The Scottish Government will provide an analysis of the responses in early 2022.
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Implications of this report

1. **Financial**
None
2. **HR and Organisational Development**
None.
3. **Community/Council Planning**

Our Renfrewshire is fair	- <i>enter details/ delete if not appropriate</i>
Tackling inequality, ensuring opportunities for all	- <i>enter details/ delete if not appropriate</i>
Working together to improve outcomes	- <i>enter details/ delete if not appropriate</i>
4. **Legal**
None.
5. **Property/Assets**
None.
6. **Information Technology**
None.
7. **Equality and Human Rights**
The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report because for example it is for noting only. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.
8. **Health and Safety**
None.
9. **Procurement**
None.
10. **Risk**
None.
11. **Privacy Impact**
None.

12. Cosla Policy Position
None.

13. Climate Risk
None.

List of Background Papers

None

Children's Services

JC 25/11/21

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Renfrewshire Council

Education Reform Consultation

Response

Completion date: 25/11/21

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**
- ☐ Neither Agree/Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

Response:

We believe that it is right to revisit the vision to ensure that it fully incorporates how society has evolved (digital transformation, climate change etc), particularly as we emerge from the pandemic, and takes account of the importance of health and wellbeing as a critical feature of our curriculum.

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

Response:

We fully support the ambition that underpins Curriculum for Excellence and we commend the work that has taken place to realise this ambition. The flexibility to design a curriculum that meets the needs of the learners has been an important feature as has the focus on literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing across all areas of the curriculum.

However, there are limiting factors that we believe need to be addressed to ensure that we maximise the opportunity that this review presents.

- *The volume of content in the BGE (3-15) does not support appropriate depth of learning*

We believe that a de-cluttering of the curriculum would provide the time and space to ensure meaningful and relevant learning experiences that develop essential knowledge, skills and capabilities whilst developing the necessary love of learning. Due to the significant work that has taken place, we do not believe it is necessary to start again but simply to refine the existing framework.

- *Articulation between the BGE and Senior Phase*

The potential of CfE has been undermined by the narrow focus on qualifications in a restricted timeframe (particularly S4). These restrictions have unintentionally stifled creativity in designing a curriculum that prepares pupils not only living in but being successful in the 21st century. Moreover, as schools are rightly designing curriculum pathways for all young people with the expansion of vocational courses this is not reflected in the BGE, indeed it can be argued that there is not the space for this in its current form. We are excited by the opportunity to address this through this review to ensure that structures and programmes reflect the pathways of all learners.

Any proposed changes should be carefully considered and resourced appropriately.

SECTION 2 - CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT

The OECD reports *Scotland's Curriculum for Excellence: Into the Future*¹³ and *Upper-Secondary Education Student Assessment in Scotland: A Comparative Perspective*¹⁴ make it clear that aligning curriculum, qualifications and system evaluation is essential to delivering on the commitments made in Curriculum for Excellence relating to 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
☐ **Neither**
☐ **Agree/Disagree**
☐ Disagree
Strongly Disagree

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

Response:

BGE

Schools and local authorities have worked hard to ensure that there are clear curriculum pathways in place that ensure progression and coherence. It is important to note that this has been a particularly challenging process which perhaps could be attributed to a lack of clarity surrounding Experiences and Outcomes, Significant Aspects of Learning and Benchmarks as advice and guidance from Education Scotland evolved. Furthermore, as recognised in the OECD report, there was little direct evaluation of the impact of advice and guidance across the system.

An unintended consequence of this has been a lack of what we believe, to be a robust National Standard – we must take the learning from this when considering any further revisions.

Senior Phase

Whilst the senior phase offer has broadened in terms of alternative programmes such as Foundation Apprenticeships and work-based and vocational alternatives to traditional academic programmes, they remain largely an 'add-on' activity in terms of priority (and timetables) and do not, yet, carry the same perceived value as SQA results when considering the success of an individual's achievements. It is also clear that there is an issue regarding the status of vocational and work-related courses and programmes which should be addressed systemically.

Work is required with all stakeholders to address the perception that alternative qualifications do not hold relevant value.

Overall, there is undoubtedly scope progression, however; it is difficult to agree or disagree as the issue remains with the articulation between the BGE and Senior Phase. Decluttering of the curriculum and a coherent approach to assessment across all stages has the potential to address this.

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

Response:

We share the generally held view that clearer understanding of progression could be achieved through the development of an assessment framework for the BGE which describes progression clearly across each level, and which aligns with the requirements for assessment in the senior phase.

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
- ☐ **Neither**
- ☐ **Agree/Disagree**
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

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

Response:

In theory schools have the flexibility to build a curriculum that meets the needs of their children and young people, particularly in the primary sector; however, it is important to note that there are limiting factors to this flexibility. The volume of content; the rigidity of learning across all curriculum areas until the end of S3; and the lack of articulation between BGE and Senior Phase; and the focus on qualifications from S4 has resulted in the Senior Phase, in particular, losing its power.

Arguably curriculum design is also driven by inspection process which has perhaps stifled innovation required to realise the ambition of CfE.

We need to:

- reimagine our approaches to delivering a curriculum with pedagogy and assessment as the drivers rather than the qualification structure which is still too narrowly focussed on academic success.
- take the learning from international studies where there is parity of esteem of academic and vocational pathways. This must be done in partnership with colleges, employers and universities to ensure that all qualifications are rightly recognised. In addition, there will be a need to inform and convince wider society in the value of change; and

- Revisit the complete landscape of a qualification structure to provide the time and space to deliver a curriculum that develops key 21st century skills; to build on what we have achieved, to recover what we lost in the early stages of implementation when developing the four capacities was the focus.

We need to be bold; however, there must be clarity on standards, roles and responsibilities.

We fully appreciate the challenge in striking the balance between designing a framework that is clearly understood but also allows for flexibility.

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 report¹⁵.

4.2. Don't answer

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree –
- ☐ Neither
- ☐ Agree/Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

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

Response:

Wholly dependent on the focus and function of the new agency.

Such an agency would have the potential to ensure that assessment reflects the rationale and ambition for the curriculum and ensure the articulation between learning and teaching, assessment, and qualifications.

A further advantage would be a consistency in terms of the approaches to assessment in the BGE and those used in the Senior Phase. This would also help address the issue of a narrow set of academic qualifications (as described in previous responses) driving approaches in the earlier stages.

Any change in approach will require clear communication in terms of what is changing and why, or could result in uncertainty and confusion across the system.

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

Response:

A concern would be that the organisations would change in name only therefore missing the opportunity of what is described above. There is huge potential to think and approach things differently that could improve the outcomes for all of our learners – it is important that we grasp this moment.

5.1 The full breadth of existing SQA qualifications¹⁶ 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.

Response:

National Qualifications are a significant driver of the curriculum and the organisation of Secondary schools. Schools are set up in a way that prioritises the study of individual subjects for the purposes of SQA certification. As such all other learning must fit around the SQA courses in terms of the timetable and the staffing required to deliver them. This can lead to the needs of all young people not being served.

Rather than the qualifications driving the curriculum, the qualifications offered should reflect the breadth of the curriculum and allow young people to demonstrate knowledge, competences and skills in their chosen pathway.

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.

Response:

To ensure parity of esteem across the SCQF framework or indeed a new qualifications framework, it is essential that courses and awards, where appropriate, are accepted as valid entry requirements to further and higher education courses. While there is evidence emerging that Foundation Apprenticeships and other accredited courses being accepted, this has not progressed at the pace required.

We believe that it is important that any redesign of the qualification structure is done in consultation with key stake holders with implementation timeframes agreed. Credibility and the ability for HE and FE to be able to differentiate candidates will be a critical feature of any qualification structure.

Is it time for us to reconsider the focus of a narrow subject specific approach? International research challenges this approach.

Is it time for us to review the purpose and value of S4 qualifications?

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.

Response:

There is huge potential to expand on the use of technology: however, there is not currently the infrastructure to support an equitable provision. This must be addressed at a national level before any wider roll out of digital assessment, because there must be a level playing field.

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

This is an opportunity to learn from the first phase of CfE and what we have experienced throughout the pandemic. We believe this is the time to “grasp the nettle” to ensure that assessment fully supports learning and that our qualification system is fair and enables our learners to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and capabilities.

This is the time to identify what is important and what will genuinely and meaningfully enable us to realise the ambition of CfE and importantly how we measure success. We welcome the prospect of this and believe that there is capacity in the system to achieve this if led and managed appropriately.

SECTION 3 (Roles and Responsibilities)

The rationale for reform of Scottish education is to ensure that learning communities get the best possible support to provide the highest quality of learning and teaching for our children and young people. The aim is to continue to reduce the attainment gap and reduce variability in outcomes achieved by young people in different parts of the country.

*Scotland's Curriculum for Excellence: Into the Future*¹⁷ recognises the complexity in Scottish education and highlights duplication of functions between different groups. It is claimed that this reduces clarity and consistency for practitioners and points to the need for Scotland's system leaders and stakeholders to revise the current allocation of responsibility for Curriculum for Excellence, including responsibilities for its strategic direction, its reviews and updates, and the response to needs and/or requests for support with curriculum issues.

A key challenge in improving the transparency of responsibilities and accountability mechanisms surrounding Curriculum for Excellence is in ensuring that the functions of agencies are designed in a way that maximises support for achieving excellence and equity for all children and young people from the early level upwards.

Building on a commitment to shared ownership of Curriculum for Excellence, the report therefore points to the need for improved clarity on functions and simplification of guidance for all stakeholders in order that the system is more coherent and more easily understood by all, allowing a greater focus on learning and teaching.

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.

Response:

A single national agency overseeing all aspects of CfE has the potential to address the current disconnect between assessment and qualification. This single agency will be able to do this by determining its course based on sound evidence, and building into its strategic plan a proactive, structured, regular review programme.

This national education body should work closely with local authorities in a spirit of collaboration and partnership, to ensure that the delivery of CfE can continually improve and deliver improving outcomes for all learners.

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.

Response:

National support can work well at times on specific initiatives, both in terms of the ongoing support offered through guidance documents, as well as the training offered. However, the most effective support for schools continues to come from individual local authorities and regional improvement collaboratives as these can tailor any support to be flexible and adaptable to a local context.

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.

Response:

Greater clarity is required at national level in terms of both the strategic direction of education in Scotland, and who exactly is responsible for delivering on the different aspects of the service.

The statutory responsibility for improvement rests with local authorities therefore it needs to be clear how local authorities, regional improvement collaboratives and any national agency or agencies work together to ensure continuous improvement in the outcomes for learners.

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.

Response:

The current support could be improved. While there is a wide range of content, there appears to be very little evaluation of the effectiveness of the current offer.

A deeper understanding of each local authority will better enable a new agency to tailor support and challenge that enables continuous improvement.

The removal of the Area Lead officer eroded that understanding.

The professional learning offer needs to meet the needs of individuals – there should not be a ‘one size fits all’ approach. Instead of a narrow focus on events and guidance, any national agency should provide a wide-ranging professional learning offer which can facilitate peer to peer support and challenge across different local authorities.

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.

Response:

Transparency, clarity and a genuinely collaborative approach are critical to strengthening trust in the education system. Currently there is a certain amount of opaqueness to how decisions are made – the evidence base for certain decisions is not always obvious.

There is a perception that too much of the decision making is political and not being driven by the wider system.

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.

Response:

The current system of inspection would benefit from a complete refresh in order to provide for genuine continuous improvement.

The process of grading schools and then publishing these grades does not capture the true value of the work being undertaken in individual schools – this published grading system can be demoralising for schools and school communities.

Moreover, the grading system is not applied consistently and, in our view, is not compatible with an empowered and supportive system. The existing suite of Quality Indicators needs reviewed as it does not reflect the post-COVID landscape in which schools are working. Despite efforts over the last few years the current system is perceived as adversarial and lacking in partnership.

In addition, we believe that the role of Associate Assessors needs further development as these roles are essential for having a presence on inspection that keeps a direct link between scrutiny and current practice.

Any new system of inspection should be built by fully consulting with and engaging stakeholders, ensuring that measurement tools reflect the needs of the system and are fit for purpose and be based on the principles of integrity, independence and fairness. It should be responsive to need and be flexible.

13.1 Please share any additional comments on roles and responsibilities in Scotland's education system.

Response:

The critical outcome from the current review of education must be that there is absolute clarity on roles and responsibilities, both in terms of individual agencies, local authorities, schools etc., but also in terms of how these agencies all work together to improve outcomes for individual learners. There must be a clear overarching vision, and it must be clear how each stakeholder part contributes to the whole. At present, there is a lack of clarity on the roles and responsibilities of the different players, which leads to confusion and duplication of effort.

It is our hope that any revised model is carried out in partnership with Local Authorities. There is huge potential for the new agency to work in partnership with local authorities in their role of supporting continuous year on year improvement.

SECTION 4 - REFORMING EDUCATION SCOTLAND

The Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills announced in June 2021 the intention to replace the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) and consider a new specialist agency for both curriculum and assessment while also taking forward reform of Education Scotland, including removing the function of inspection or scrutiny from the agency. This section seeks views on how best to take forward key aspects of the Cabinet Secretary's decision including:

- a. Removing Scrutiny (Inspection and review) from Education Scotland**
- b. Further reform of Education Scotland**
- c. Replacing SQA**
- d. Considering the establishment of a new Curriculum and Assessment Agency**

While it is expected to take some time to establish new or revised national agencies, it is anticipated that they will have a key role in taking forward delivery of wider OECD recommendations. This would include embedding a refreshed vision for Curriculum for Excellence, defining indicators to understand progress across the four capacities, building curricular capacity, implementing new pedagogical and assessment practices, implementing approaches for internal assessment in determining qualifications, ensuring appropriate breadth and depth of learning through the Broad General Education¹⁸ and in respect of the Senior Phase¹⁹, embedding a structured and long-term approach to implementation, effective stakeholder engagement and coherent communications.

To assist you in answering these questions, information on the current roles and functions carried out by SQA and Education Scotland are provided within the supporting documents section at <https://www.gov.scot/isbn/9781802014327/documents/>.

Removing Scrutiny (Inspection and review) from Education Scotland

External scrutiny (inspection and review) plays a fundamental role in the overall drive to continue to improve education in Scotland for all of our children, young people and adult learners. HM Inspectors carry out independent, external evaluation of standards, quality and improvement with a clear focus on impact and outcomes for learners. The scrutiny programme covers all sectors from early learning and childcare to adult learning. The evidence gathered through observing practice at first hand identifies what is working well in our education system, including examples of highly effective practice, areas which are showing improvement and areas where further development is needed.

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

We are particularly interested in hearing your views on:

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

Response:

There are opportunities to review not only what is subject to scrutiny but also how this scrutiny may be undertaken e.g. a greater involvement of stakeholders or inspecting themes across schools or Learning Communities.

Further Reform of Education Scotland

Beyond inspection Education Scotland is a broad organisation responsible for a range of important functions designed to support a number of parts of the Scottish Education system. These functions include directly supporting learning communities at local and regional levels, offering a wide range of professional learning and leadership development programmes and opportunities, Community Learning and Development (including the CLD Standards Council), supporting digital pedagogies and as the function of Registrar of Independent Schools.

15.1 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:

- a) 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)

Response:

Education Scotland should provide strategic direction and support to the delivery of the curriculum, with a focus on collaboration with local authorities.

- b) the opportunities reform could present (for example should more prominence be given to aspects of Education Scotland's role)

Response:

The opportunity is to strengthen collaboration and ensure absolute clarity on the roles and responsibilities of all of those involved in the delivery of education services. There is also the opportunity to champion an evidence-led approach to continuous improvement, and a proactive review and refresh framework. There

should also be a national assessment framework for assessment in addition to qualifications.

- c) the risks associated with any reform (for example disruption of service to education establishments and settings)

Response:

There is a genuine risk of confusion and unnecessary duplication.

- d) how any risks might be mitigated

Response:

Learning from the initial stages of CfE. Clarity is required on roles and responsibilities, and strategic direction, should avoid confusion as we transition to the new model.

- e) the timescales over which these reforms should take place.

Response:

It is not possible to answer this question without first knowing what the proposed reforms are.

It is important to note, however that we are of the strong view that Local Authority officers play a key role in driving continuous improvement.

We share the view that to effectively support schools in their improvement journey, a reformed Education Scotland need to work much more closely with their colleagues within Local Authorities.

Replacing SQA

SQA has two main roles: accreditation and awarding qualifications.

- **SQA Accreditation** accredits qualifications other than degrees and approves and quality assures awarding bodies that plan to enter people for these qualifications.
- **SQA Awarding Body** devises and develops national and vocational qualifications across schools, colleges, training providers and employers; sets standards and maintains such qualifications; validates qualifications (makes sure they are well written and meet the needs of learners and practitioners); reviews qualifications to ensure they are up to date; arranges for, assists in, and carries out, the assessment of people taking SQA qualifications; quality- assures education and training establishments which offer SQA qualifications; and issues certificates to candidates.

Within both of these roles, SQA offers a range of services for businesses and training providers, ranging from course and centre approval through customised awards, to endorsement, credit rating and licensing services.

16.1. Please share any comments or suggestions you have on this proposed reform below. Q13 relates to the roles and responsibilities section

We are particularly interested in hearing your views on:

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

Response:

There is an opportunity to create a qualifications and assessment framework that is fit for purpose in 21st century Scotland, and which reflects the ambitions of Curriculum for Excellence.

Whatever replaces the current system should be credible, robust, transparent and fair.

The relationship with Further and Higher Education is also critically important. The role of SQA awards as currency for university entrance has significant impact on the shape of the curriculum and the priority given to these courses. FE & HE should therefore be included and involved in any system re-design.

The timescale for change should balance the need for discussion, debate and careful planning with the risk of the system reverting to pre-covid reliance on one-off high-stakes exams as the 'best' solution. On balance, an ill-considered or hastily implemented alternative could be more damaging both in the short term for candidates and in the longer term as a further barrier to reform.

Considering the Establishment of a new Curriculum and Assessment Agency

The establishment of a new agency has the potential to enhance the quality of teaching and learning across the education sector. It will be important that the remit, purpose, governance and culture of the new agency match the aspirations of the system it will be designed to serve.

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

We are particularly interested in hearing your views on:

- a) the approach this reform should take (for example are there alternative models for this reform?)
- b) the opportunities these reforms could present (for example what should the role of the new agency be?)
- c) the risks associated with any reform

- d) how any risks might be mitigated
- e) the timescales over which these reforms should take place.

Response:

The value of such a body will lie in its ability to provide coherence between the curriculum itself, approaches to delivery and implementation and the means by which progress and success are measured and described – assessed.

The extent to which the inspectorate and this body share understanding of what excellence looks like in relation to the curriculum, learning & teaching, assessment and pupil outcomes will be important.

One risk, as with the replacement for the SQA, is that the system reverts to where it is currently. There is a perception that both the Inspectorate and the SQA can be inflexible in their approach. They are seen to be more focussed on their internal integrity and less mindful of their role in support of the system and as such internal resistance to change may be as much of an issue as any external challenges.

Risk mitigation lies in clarity of purpose and clarity of roles in meeting that purpose. In terms of timescales, this might be a good place to start

We believe that this is a fantastic opportunity to declutter the curricular particularly BGE (3-15.); address the misalignment between the BGE and Senior Phase; clarify roles and responsibilities; and ensure that a review process is established.

Narrow subject specific approach is limiting our ability to develop 21st century skills such as collaboration, communication, creativity and social contribution.