

2014/29

27 May 2014

Pocket Watch – Consulting times

Introduction

Next week, the Queen will announce the listing of Bills for the final session of this Parliament. While there may be little in there to excite the world of education, potential legislation on zero-hours contracts apart, we are in the middle of some important consultations which may have more immediate impact. Some, such as those on the Child Poverty Strategy which closed last week and on further regulations to the Teachers' Pensions Scheme which closes in July are quite wide-ranging; others such as those on Core Maths and GCSE grading are more specific. Here's a run-down of the key ones at present.

Key Consultations in date order

- *Consultation on the introduction of separate graded judgements on early school years and the sixth form from September 2014.* (Ofsted.) Closing date: 13 May. A short but important consultation which would bring to the fore the effectiveness of provision in two crucial areas. Inspectors would use the standard four criteria of pupil achievement, the quality of teaching, behaviour and safety, and leadership and management but would conclude with a distinct grade for respective provision
- *Exams for 15-19 year olds in England.* (Education Committee.) Closing date for submissions: 21 May. Not a consultation as such but a follow-up inquiry by the Education Committee into how the exam reforms let alone the system itself is shaping up under the latest reforms. Interest may lie in the witness sessions with Ofqual and Michael Gove
- *Consultation on Reforming GCSEs in Modern Foreign and Ancient Languages.* (Ofqual.) Closing date: 23 May. New GCSEs in Languages are due to be introduced from 2016 and this consultation seeks views on assessment and tiering principles. Assessment is a particularly pertinent issue for Languages where a range of skills is assessed. The proposal is that reading and writing will be assessed by written exams but speaking and listening by audio and set task formats and, unlike English Lang, able to contribute to the overall grade
- *Consultation on technical guidance for Core Maths.* (DfE.) Closing date: 26 May. Core Maths is a new L3 qualification aimed at the 40% of 16 yr olds who achieve a grade C or above in GCSE maths but who don't progress further with it. The Government is keen to reverse this trend and is making a L3 maths qualification part of its new Tech Bacc measure. The aim is to have the qualification ready for first assessment in 2017 and this consultation seeks views on the design principles Awarding Organisations should use in developing the qualification
- *Consultation on Draft Order and Regulations for KS4 English and maths.* (DfE.) Closing date: 13 June. This consultation is more of a technical procedure to ensure that programmes of study for KS4 English and maths (science follows a year later) can be implemented for Yr10 pupils from Sept 2015 and all KS4 pupils from the year after
- *Consultation on Setting Grade Standards of new GCSEs.* (Ofqual.) Closing date: 30 June. This is an important consultation for many schools as it will help set the grading scale for the new GCSEs which start to come in from Sept 2015. Ofqual has already done a lot of background work on this and this consultation now opens this work out for views on the main anchor points, top/middle/bottom, of the new scale as well as the approach to be used for standards setting and the creation of the new national reference test



Steve Besley

Head of Policy (UK and International)

Pocket Watches are intended to provide quick, informal updates on national developments. Information is correct at the time of writing and is offered in good faith. No liability is accepted for decisions made on the basis of information given.

Consulting times May 2014