

# Response ID ANON-B1Q8-JJDB-P

Submitted to Curriculum and Assessment Review  
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Foreword from the Review Chair

Background to the Review

Why does the Review matter?

What is in scope of the Review?

About this call for evidence

Who is this call for evidence for?

Section 1: About you

1 Are you responding as an individual or on behalf of an organisation?

Organisation

Section 1: About you

3 If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, which of the below best describes which part of the sector your organisation represents?  
[If more than one applies, please select the one that you think is most important to understanding your consultation response.]

Professional association

Please describe:

4 What is the name of your organisation?

Organisation name:

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists

5 What is your role within the organisation?

Job role:

Policy and Advocacy Manager. Expert members from our sector, including educators, and staff responsible for our careers pathways and End Point Assessment Organisation status have fed into the response.

Section 1: About you

6 What is your name?

Name:

Dr Rob Lennox

7 What is your email address?[Please note: If you are willing to be contacted about your submission, please provide your email address. You do not have to give your email address, and your views will be considered whether or not you provide this.]

Email address:

rob.lennox@archaeologists.net

8 Are you happy to be contacted directly about your response?[Please note: The Review may wish to contact you directly about your responses to help our understanding of the issues. If we do, we will use the email address you have given above.]

Yes

9 Would you like us to keep your responses confidential?

No

Reason for confidentiality:

## Definitions

### Section 2: General views on curriculum, assessment, and qualifications pathways

10 What aspects of the current a) curriculum, b) assessment system and c) qualification pathways are working well to support and recognise educational progress for children and young people?

What is working well?:

The word archaeology does not appear in the current National Curriculum. Since the A-level in archaeology was scrapped nearly two decades ago, archaeological educational charities, community groups, and commercial contractors seeking to deliver public educational benefits have had to utilise creative ways to attract school engagement, using heritage as a vehicle for holistic, inclusive learning, largely not targeted to specific subject areas.

The main point of relevance for archaeology-specific content in the curriculum is the KS2 History topic 'Stone Age to Iron Age' which provides a breadth of material for teachers to use archaeological knowledge, techniques, and approaches to provide stimulating learning opportunities – especially via field trips.

Our member organisations are able to use 'Stone Age to Iron Age' as the entry point for the delivery of outreach sessions for schools. Such sessions have an enormous potential range of subject learning outcomes and are able to deliver science and literacy outcomes creatively, and engagingly.

We would welcome support within the curriculum to better enable teachers to access these sessions across all key stages. We would also welcome flexibility to enable archaeological sessions to be targeted to deliver a wide range of subject-relevant learning outcomes. For example, a school visit to an archaeological site can be easily targeted towards English Language or other subject learning outcomes as it can history – e.g. to inspire a 'newspaper article' related to a heritage site or its stories.

For example, a recent award winning community archaeology project – Dig the Castle, in Great Torrington, Devon, provided outreach to schools across all key stages, and was able to design activities relating to subjects as wide ranging as physics (undertaking geophysical survey on site), English, and art photography, as well as history. However, these opportunities are not easy to secure for archaeological educators outside of KS2 History 'Stone Age to Iron Age'.

11 What aspects of the current a) curriculum, b) assessment system and c) qualification pathways should be targeted for improvements to better support and recognise educational progress for children and young people?

What should be improved?:

As stated above, archaeology is not a subject that appears extensively on the current curriculum. We believe that the lack of coverage of at least key archaeological principles, methods, and approaches is a missed opportunity, especially at KS3 and KS4. We recommend the development of archaeology-based content within the history curriculum that would add diverse hands-on and visual, subject matter to the course, and providing an opportunity to demonstrate STEM techniques within a practical setting, in which there are viable careers to pursue. These additions could be targeted to deliver the Review's goal of embedding digital, oracy, and life skills in learning.

We would additionally advocate for the Curriculum to adopt a broad requirement to provide pupils with adequate access to culture and heritage – under which archaeology would fall. It should be an imperative for pupils to learn about their connection to their local place, and community heritage. There would be prime opportunities to use this access to culture and heritage to promote inclusion and equality outcomes, as access to culture is something which decreases relative to economic and social status. Almost without exception, every school in the country will have heritage stories on their doorstep, with likely opportunities to connect pupils with local communities and a sense of place in their local areas.

Archaeology, in particular, is an almost uniquely evocative way to experience culture and heritage via various creative stimuli for learning. As the study of the physical remains of the past, it is an interdisciplinary subject that centres on practical processes of investigation, as well as a wide array of wider critical and creative skills. There are opportunities in the teaching of archaeology to inspire visual learners through handling, or observing physical objects, as well as opportunities to address questions about the human condition, cultural and environmental changes that arise out of analysing societal developments over millennia.

Greater coverage of archaeological principles, methods, and approaches in the curriculum could add 'hands-on' elements to KS3 and KS4 history curriculum, increase pupil awareness of different techniques and practical applications of STEM subjects (e.g. ancient DNA analysis, radiocarbon dating, and multispectral analysis), as well as quantitative and qualitative analysis methods from SHAPE subjects (e.g. statistical analysis, object drawing and analysis of buildings). Archaeology's value to enabling multi-disciplinary and long-term views on key issues like social inequality, migration, climate change and environmental sustainability is also high. We also, critically, need better support and training for teachers to enable them to have the knowledge that archaeology can provide these things to their teaching.

Archaeology is also a subject that is attractive to young people with a diverse range of neurodivergent traits. University statistics also show that students with lower A-Level grades often outperform expectations studying archaeology. This is considered within our sector's analysis to be a likely consequence of the physical, visual, and hands-on learning methods associated with the subject.

We would also welcome greater flexibility and support for archaeological educational charities, community groups, and commercial contractors seeking to deliver public educational benefits to have access to schools groups, and for resources to ensure that sessions can be targeted to learning outcomes, while also exposing students to archaeology – a viable career option that they otherwise may not encounter in the curriculum.

### Section 3: Social justice and inclusion

12 In the current curriculum, assessment system and qualification pathways, are there any barriers to improving attainment, progress, access or participation (class ceilings) for learners experiencing socioeconomic disadvantage?

Barriers for socioeconomically disadvantaged:

Yes, there is significant inequality of opportunity to experience enriching cultural and heritage education for learners coming from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. Schools serving communities with higher levels of deprivation are less likely to have access to cultural enrichment opportunities at home with parents, and are less likely to attend schools with the resources to deliver field trips.

There is also a degree of geographical pot luck as to whether external opportunities, such as after school Young Archaeologists' Clubs are available in a given area. Additionally, students from higher socioeconomic groups are more likely to have access to culture via their families. The same disparity of opportunity is also true of White British families when compared with BAME families. The Curriculum should mitigate, rather than exacerbate these inequalities.

Ultimately this means that disadvantaged pupils are less likely to have access to culture and heritage, and are more likely to be less culturally engaged than more advantaged peers. We strongly support an element of a 'right to culture' or similar to be embedded within the Curriculum.

13 In the current curriculum, assessment system and qualification pathways are there any barriers to improving attainment, progress, access or participation which may disproportionately impact pupils based on other characteristics (e.g. disability, sexual orientation, gender, race, religion or belief etc.)

Barriers based on protected characteristics:

As stated elsewhere in our response, archaeology is a subject that is attractive to young people from with a diverse range of neurodivergent traits. These students, and other learners with lower A-Level grades are consistently shown in University statistics to outperform expectations when studying archaeology. Both of these observations are considered within our sector's analysis to be a likely consequence of the physical, visual, and hands-on learning methods associated with the subject. At University, 2020 figures show 26.8% of students taking archaeology courses had a declared disability. This compares to just 14.6% of students taking all subjects. Although the professional sector still needs to work to develop its accessibility offer for disabled workers, with only 11% of the workforce reporting a disability, compared to 13% nationally, it is clear that there is a high potential for certain disabled individuals to seek employment in the archaeology sector.

We would also welcome greater flexibility and support in the curriculum for the provision of hands-on, visual, and practical learning. Archaeological educational charities, community groups, and commercial contractors can deliver these approaches if they have access to schools groups, and if teachers are directed towards these opportunities.

14 In the current curriculum, assessment system and qualification pathways, are there any barriers in continuing to improve attainment, progress, access or participation for learners with SEND?

Barriers based on SEND:

15 In the current curriculum, assessment system and qualification pathways, are there any enablers that support attainment, progress, access or participation for the groups listed above? [e.g. socioeconomically disadvantaged young people, pupils with SEND, pupils who are otherwise vulnerable, and young people with protected characteristics]

Enablers:

#### Section 4: Ensuring an excellent foundation in maths and English

16 To what extent does the content of the national curriculum at primary level (key stages 1 and 2) enable pupils to gain an excellent foundation in a) English and b) maths? Are there ways in which the content could change to better support this aim? [Please note, we invite views specifically on transitions between key stages in section 9.]

English and maths - primary content:

17 To what extent do the English and maths primary assessments\* support pupils to gain an excellent foundation in these key subjects? Are there any changes you would suggest that would support this aim? \*These include SATs at the end of key stage 2, the phonics screening check and the multiplication tables check.

English and maths - primary assessment:

18 To what extent does the content of the a) English and b) maths national curriculum at secondary level (key stages 3 and 4) equip pupils with the knowledge and skills they need for life and further study? Are there ways in which the content could change to better support this aim?

English and maths - secondary content:

19 To what extent do the current maths and English qualifications at a) pre-16 and b) 16-19 support pupils and learners to gain, and adequately demonstrate that they have achieved, the skills and knowledge they need? Are there any changes you would suggest that would support these outcomes?

English and maths - qualifications:

20 How can we better support learners who do not achieve level 2 in English and maths by 16 to learn what they need to thrive as citizens in work and life? In particular, do we have the right qualifications at level 2 for these 16-19 learners (including the maths and English study requirement)?

Support for learners who do not achieve level 2 by 16:

21 Are there any particular challenges with regard to the English and maths a) curricula and b) assessment for learners in need of additional support (e.g. learners with SEND, socioeconomic disadvantage, English as an additional language (EAL))? Are there any changes you would suggest to overcome these challenges?

Challenges with curricula and assessment - changes to overcome these:

## Section 5: Curriculum and qualification content

22 Are there particular curriculum or qualifications subjects\* where: a) there is too much content; not enough content; or content is missing; b) the content is out-of-date; c) the content is unhelpfully sequenced (for example to support good curriculum design or pedagogy);d) there is a need for greater flexibility (for example to provide the space for teachers to develop and adapt content)?Please provide detail on specific key stages where appropriate.\*This includes both qualifications where the government sets content nationally, and anywhere the content is currently set by awarding organisations.

Subject content:

We recognise that a narrow curriculum allows for increased depth of knowledge. However, we want the curriculum to give students the opportunity to see and identify the widest possible range of subjects to give opportunities to experience potential career options. A challenge for a subject like archaeology, which is no longer on the curriculum explicitly, is that there are few opportunity for many students to even gain a basic awareness of the discipline.

We would therefore welcome opportunities to design breadth into learning content that build in these wider experiences or awareness for students. As stated above, we believe that the lack of coverage of at least key archaeological principles, methods, and approaches is a missed opportunity, especially at KS3 and KS4. We recommend the development of archaeology-based topics in support of the Review's goal of embedding digital, oracy, and life skills in learning.

More broadly, as stated above, we would welcome if this archaeological content was understood as part of a wider imperative to connect students with culture and heritage – alongside museums and other local heritage which have a similar potential to provide cultural enrichment.

At present, students who enter higher education to study archaeology degrees often cite external (non-curriculum) factors as reasons why they want to study archaeology. These may include a teacher with specific personal knowledge of archaeology, or an opportunity for an external activity such as a field trip, family visit, or local Young Archaeologists' Club.

The curriculum could also do more to ensure that opportunities to identify and understand different careers were woven into relevant subjects. For example, that information about archaeology as a discipline is included in the history curriculum, with key information about what the career entails and a brief diversion into the key methods associated with this discipline. KS5 should contain content designed to open pathways to both vocational (e.g. apprenticeship or employer training schemes) and higher education training in subjects like archaeology which are not explicitly continuations of curriculum subjects.

Archaeology directly accounts for over 7000 FTE job roles in the UK. Wider jobs in 'heritage' account for as many as one in every 139 jobs in England (523,000) according to CEBR research in 2024, yet there is very little preparation for this industry available for students in school.

23 Are there particular changes that could be made to ensure the curriculum (including qualification content) is more diverse and representative of society?

Changes to ensure curriculum is more diverse and representative of society:

24 To what extent does the current curriculum (including qualification content) support students to positively engage with, be knowledgeable about, and respect, others? Are there elements that could be improved?

Respect for others:

25 In which ways does the current primary curriculum support pupils to have the skills and knowledge they need for life and further study, and what could we change to better support this?

Primary - skills and knowledge needed for life and further study:

As stated above, we believe that archaeology is an almost uniquely evocative vehicle for the development of skills of inquiry, curiosity, critical thinking, and cultural and environmental awareness. The opportunity to use culture, heritage, and archaeology to inspire learning – and especially visual learners through things like object handling, are extremely potent in the primary curriculum.

26 In which ways do the current secondary curriculum and qualification pathways support pupils to have the skills and knowledge they need for future study, life and work, and what could we change to better support this?

Secondary - skills and knowledge for life and further study:

As we have said in other places in this document, we support an approach to identifying multi-outcome activities which support or enhance pupils' life skills and further study opportunities. For example, externally delivered sessions should be measured to deliver as many different benefits as possible for pupils – including both subject-specific and wider study, and life outcomes.

For example, a school field trip to the 'Dig the Castle' project in Great Torrington in Devon was able to deliver learning outcomes for all key stages of the small local school, including team-working skills, problem solving, critical thinking, recognition of cultural diversity, and awareness of climate change. Activities were also able to be tailored for KS4 students across a range of subjects, such as physics (undertaking geophysical survey), biology (working with bones), various humanities subjects such as history and psychology, and media studies. This is all despite archaeology not being explicitly on the curriculum.

One issue which is regularly raised to us by employers is that teachers are largely unaware of career options in a great many fields. In the archaeology sector, Headland Archaeology have created resources for teachers that can give an insight into the different real-world career options for those interested in archaeology, including a recent podcast series.

However, reliance on industry to create these opportunities limits effectiveness, and help within the curriculum to encourage teachers to use, or signpost such resources could be beneficial, especially for subjects like archaeology which are not explicitly part of the taught curriculum.

27 In which ways do the current qualification pathways and content at 16-19 support pupils to have the skills and knowledge they need for future study, life and work, and what could we change to better support this?

16-19 - skills and knowledge for life and further study:

We would welcome better signposting for vocational qualifications such as L3 apprenticeships

## Section 6: A broad and balanced curriculum

28 To what extent does the current primary curriculum support pupils to study a broad and balanced curriculum? Should anything change to better support this?

primary - broad and balanced:

29 To what extent do the current secondary curriculum and, qualifications pathways support pupils to study a broad and balanced curriculum? Should anything change to better support this?

secondary - broad and balanced:

30 To what extent do the current qualifications pathways at 16-19 support learners to study a broad curriculum which gives them the right knowledge and skills to progress? Should anything change to better support this?

16-19 - broad and balanced:

31 To what extent do the current curriculum (at primary and secondary) and qualifications pathways (at secondary and 16-19) ensure that pupils and learners are able to develop creative skills and have access to creative subjects?

support for creative skills and access to creative subjects:

We welcome the current Government's stance to row back from rhetoric that has targeted arts and humanities teaching as low value. We support the value of these subjects both for their ability to instil target outcomes of this Review, such as oracy, and life skills, as well as wider literacy, and creative thinking, but also for the intrinsic value of a cultural education.

Archaeology is a subject that offers a unique blend of science and humanities, dealing with the often highly scientific investigation of the physical remains of the past, offering the ability to teach about practical applications of digital and STEM skills in the real world (e.g. ancient DNA, geophysical survey, osteoarchaeology, biorachaeology, and many more techniques).

Archaeology also allows for complex critical and creative thinking, to interpret gaps in knowledge and craft evidence-based stories about the past, and important societal subjects like population growth/decline, cultural change, migration, and climate change.

## Section 6: A broad and balanced curriculum

32 Do you have any explanations for the trends outlined in the analysis and/or suggestions to address any that might be of concern?

Explanations of trends or suggestions to address:

## Section 6: A broad and balanced curriculum

33 To what extent and how do pupils benefit from being able to take vocational or applied qualifications in secondary schools alongside more academically focused GCSEs?

secondary - benefit from vocational qualifications:

A great extent. Including a vocational and applied qualification offer in secondary schools gives pupils greater choice, but the nature of the learning and assessment in vocational qualifications also means that the offer will benefit students who have different learning styles and who perform better in an applied context. We see this with the well-established BTEC qualifications and with T levels, where assessment is often based on a scenario/task. Put simply, vocational qualifications give students with different talents an opportunity to perform and succeed.

Vocational qualifications can assess similar skills (as those found in academically focused assessment, for example, evaluating information) but in a way that benefits those who work better with practical tasks and scenario-based questions.

Greater choice can also lead to better engagement with students, and some vocational qualifications are more attractive to some students as they will have subject information that is more appealing. For example, the BTEC level 3 in Sport is a hugely popular choice with learners as the subject is engaging to many of them.

Including vocational and applied qualifications in the curriculum offer is vital in recognising talent and achievement for those who don't excel in academically focused assessment; it also offers a greater choice for all pupils, hence widens their options for further study and potential career paths.

34 To what extent does the current pre-16 vocational offer equip pupils with the necessary knowledge and skills and prepare them for further study options, including 16-19 technical pathways and/or A levels? Could the pre-16 vocational offer be improved?

vocational offer - equip for further study and improvement suggestions:

## Section 7: Assessment and accountability

35 Is the volume of statutory assessment at key stage 1 and 2 right for the purposes set out above?

volume of assessment at key stage 1 and 2:

36 Are there any changes that could be made to improve efficacy without having a negative impact on pupils' learning or the wider education system?

key stage 1 and 2 assessment improvements:

37 Are there other changes to the statutory assessment system at key stages 1 and 2 that could be made to improve pupils' experience of assessment, without having a negative impact on either pupils' learning or the wider education system?

key stage 1 and 2 assessment improvements to experience:

38 What can we do to ensure the assessment system at key stages 1 and 2 works well for all learners, including learners in need of additional support in their education (for example SEND, disadvantage, EAL)?

key stage 1 and 2 assessment works for ALL learners:

## Section 7: Assessment and accountability

39 Is the volume of assessment required for GCSEs right for the purposes set out above? Are there any changes that could be made without having a negative impact on either pupils' learning or the wider education system?

volume of assessment at GCSEs:

40 What more can we do to ensure that: a) the assessment requirements for GCSEs capture and support the development of knowledge and skills of every young person; and b) young people's wellbeing is effectively considered when assessments are developed, giving pupils the best chance to show what they can do to support their progression?

GCSE assessments - support development of knowledge and skills and considers wellbeing:

41 Are there particular GCSE subjects where changes could be made to the qualification content and/or assessment that would be beneficial for pupils' learning?

changes to GCSE qualification content or assessment:

## Section 7: Assessment and accountability

42 Are there ways in which we could support improvement in pupil progress and outcomes at key stage 3?

support pupil progress and outcomes at key stage 3:

43 Are there ways in which we could support pupils who do not meet the expected standard at key stage 2?

support pupils who do not meet expected standard at key stage 2:

### Section 7: Assessment and accountability

44 To what extent, and in what ways, does the accountability system influence curriculum and assessment decisions in schools and colleges?

accountability system influence curriculum and assessment decisions:

45 How well does the current accountability system support and recognise progress for all pupils and learners? What works well and what could be improved?

accountability system support and recognise progress for ALL pupils:

46 Should there be any changes to the current accountability system in order to better support progress and incentivise inclusion for young people with SEND and/or from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds? If so, what should those changes be?

accountability system changes to support SEND or socio-economically disadvantaged:

### Section 8: Qualification pathways 16-19

47 To what extent does the range of programmes and qualifications on offer at each level meet the needs and aspirations of learners? a) Level 3 b) Level 2 c) Level 1 and entry level

extent to which programmes and qualifications meet needs and aspirations of learners:

48 Are there particular changes that could be made to the following programmes and qualifications, and/or their assessment that would be beneficial to learners: a) AS/A level qualifications b) T Level and T Level Foundation Year programmes c) Other applied or vocational qualifications at level 3 d) Other applied or vocational qualifications at level 2 and below

changes to programmes and qualifications:

49 How can we improve learners' understanding of how the different programmes and qualifications on offer will prepare them for university, employment (including apprenticeships) and/or further technical study?

improve understanding on how programmes and qualifications will prepare them for future:

50 To what extent is there enough scope and flexibility in the system to support learners who may need to change course?

scope and flexibility to support learners changing course:

51 Are there additional skills, subjects, or experiences that all learners should develop or study during 16-19 education, regardless of their chosen programmes and qualifications, to support them to be prepared for life and work?

skills, subjects or experiences that all learners should develop or study during 16-19:

### Section 9: Other issues on which we would welcome views

52 How can the curriculum, assessment and wraparound support better enable transitions between key stages to ensure continuous learning and support attainment?

wraparound support enabling transitions between key stages:

### Section 9: Other issues on which we would welcome views

53 How could technology be used to improve how we deliver the curriculum, assessment and qualifications in England?

how can technology be used to improve delivery of curriculum, assessment and qualifications :

### Section 9: Other issues on which we would welcome views

54 Do you have any further views on anything else associated with the Curriculum and Assessment Review not covered in the questions throughout the call for evidence?

Any further views: