



National Association
of Language Advisers

Department for Education

Sanctuary Buildings
Great Smith Street
London
SW1P 3BT

Dear Professor Becky Francis,

Re: Curriculum and Assessment Review – Future of the EBacc Accountability Measure and Impact on Language Uptake

I am writing in response to the ongoing Curriculum and Assessment Review consultation to express concern regarding the potential removal of the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) as an accountability measure for secondary schools.

As you will be aware, the EBacc has played a significant role in incentivising schools to encourage the uptake of modern foreign languages at GCSE level, contributing positively to the national objective of improving language learning across the UK. The presence of languages within the EBacc framework provides schools with a tangible reason to maintain or even expand language provision, which has historically been vulnerable to curriculum narrowing and budgetary pressures.

Given the importance of this measure, I would be grateful if you could clarify the following:

1. Whether the Department is currently considering the removal of the EBacc as an accountability measure as part of the current review process.
2. If so, has an impact assessment been conducted—or is one planned—to evaluate the potential effects of such a change on the uptake of languages at GCSE level and, more broadly, on language learning throughout the secondary phase? This would be essential in ensuring that existing disparities in access to language education (as highlighted in *Languages Trends 2025* and *NALA 2020*) are not exacerbated. The removal of compulsory Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) at GCSE in 2004 led to a significant decline in Key Stage 4 language uptake, which has likely influenced both the development of language education and the recruitment of specialist teachers.

Ensuring that decisions of this magnitude are made on the basis of robust evidence and with due consideration of long-term educational outcomes is critical. A reduction in language uptake would have significant implications not only for pupils' future opportunities, but also for the UK's cultural and economic positioning in an increasingly interconnected world.

I would welcome any information you are able to provide on this matter and look forward to your response.

Yours faithfully,

Yvonne Kennedy

Bev Whiteside

NALA President

NALA Chair

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