

Elizabeth Truss MP  
Department for Education  
Sanctuary Buildings  
Great Smith Street  
London  
SW1P 3BT

8 August 2013

Dear Minister

**Re: National Curriculum review process**

I am writing as Chair of SCORE to express the final view from SCORE on the key stage 1-3 National Curriculum review process. The formal SCORE response to the National Curriculum consultation accompanies this letter.

SCORE has been pleased to support the aims of the National Curriculum Review, and was hopeful that the review process would result in a National Curriculum that reflected the Expert Panel's principles, outlined in their Framework, of freedom, responsibility and fairness, to raise standards for all children. A curriculum that would frame the core knowledge needed for personal development and progression, in a rigorous and coherent way.

There have been some improvements in this direction; SCORE is pleased that 'working scientifically' has been emphasised in the drafts, and that practical work is given its appropriate place as a central part of learning science.

However, on numerous occasions since 2011 SCORE has provided carefully considered, detailed advice to the Department for Education, both formally and informally, regarding the process by which this review has been conducted. Unfortunately, SCORE's concerns have not been addressed, resulting in a flawed process that has had a detrimental impact on the final draft programmes of study.

The following are issues that have been raised by SCORE, which the Department has not addressed:

- There has been a lack of clarity in the rationale for the choice of content in the drafts;
- Plans to review the key stage 4 and 5 qualifications (and the key stage 4 curriculum) and the relationship between these review processes and those for key stage 1-3 have been ambiguous;
- Although we understand that there has been dialogue between the drafters of the various programmes of study, the time available for discussion was insufficient to allow proper consideration of progression between key stages and links between subjects;

- The process has suffered throughout because it consisted of intense and piecemeal bursts of activity which prevented reflection, research and deep consideration. This has led to inconsistency and incoherence in the final draft programmes of study.

SCORE has been committed at every step to engaging effectively and openly in this review process. It is with regret that the Committee must make these statements in accompanying the final SCORE response to the review.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Julia Buckingham". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a long horizontal line.

Professor Julia Buckingham

SCORE Chair