



Queen
Elizabeth's
— ACADEMY —

Curriculum Policy September 2020

Office use

Published: September 2020	Next review: September 2021	Statutory/non: Non-stat	Lead: SWE QEA
Associated documents:			
Assessment policy Subject curriculum rationale Subject 5 year plans			
Links to:			



Diverse
Academies

Introduction

At Queen Elizabeth's Academy we are ambitious for our students. Our vision for students is that we want them to be able to read and understand scholarly articles, broadsheet newspapers and be able to interact in debates in the subjects that we teach by the time they leave school. This is why our key stage 3 is the full 3 years. We want students to have the basic the knowledge they need in all areas before any narrowing of the curriculum through option choices at key stage 4 and 5. The curriculum also reflects our Christian ethos and vision statement.

Christian values in the curriculum

Inspired by Luke 10: 29-37 our vision for the curriculum is that all students experience the widest range of curriculum for all of the 3 years at key stage 3. This includes a strong focus on the arts, technologies and sport as well as academic disciplines in their own right. RE is an option at KS4 and the RE short course is part of the core curriculum offer in our current year 10 building on the knowledge and wisdom taught at KS3. No qualification at KS4 is inaccessible to any student regardless of prior attainment. Our curriculum is for all. The choices we offer at KS4 are guided only to ensure they enable hope, aspiration and fulfilment for the student. We value knowledge and respect the scholars of the past to create the community of the future.

Knowledge based curriculum

At Queen Elizabeth's Academy we believe that every child has the right to a knowledge rich curriculum. Knowledge is required to understand the world about us and to think critically about things. Every subject in the school curriculum is based on a **core** of knowledge that a student needs to acquire in order to master and become fluent in the subject. We can find facts on the internet, but unless we hold information in our long-term memory, we cannot think critically about anything. We aim to equip all students with the powerful knowledge that they need to complete in the world beyond school to give students powerful knowledge. This is knowledge that they wouldn't ordinary encounter in everyday life. Possessing a growing body of knowledge across a wide range of subjects will enable students to question what they may read or hear.

How will this look?

Teachers will be subject knowledge experts and will focus on teaching the knowledge needed to become fluent in the subject matter. These knowledge points will be published in knowledge organisers like the ones in the appendix section and given to students in advance, collated in student knowledge folders. Homework will be around learning this knowledge. Students will then be quizzed regularly, during lessons, to ensure that the knowledge is transferring into long term memory.

Students will not be expected to research things themselves or explore answers to problems, they will be taught through guided instruction where the teacher tells them the information they need and then they have opportunity to apply it, guided by the teacher.

We know that knowledge needs to then be applied and the skill of expressing the knowledge appropriate to the subject needs to be practiced. Students will be expected to write extended pieces of writing where appropriate to the curriculum, to continue the extensive skills developed at primary school.

Knowledge organisers

They give students the essential content or 'core knowledge' that they need in advance for each topic they study. They give parents unprecedented access to that knowledge in a clear format which means that they can be significant partners in their child's learning. Students organise these in subjects in their knowledge folders where they also record and complete weekly homework.

The big picture

We know that curriculum decisions at subject level are important and that there is no one size fits all approach that will work. The decisions we make at whole school and department level reflect the needs of the community we serve and the changing cohorts of students on entry. Each subject team are experts in making the decisions about what we leave out and what we keep in our curriculum along with guidance and discussion at SLT level. Subject teams look at the curriculum as a 5 year plan, ensuring that the knowledge delivered builds in a logical way creating a schemata appropriate as to whether the subject is hierarchical, cumulative or a combination of both. The national curriculum for each subject area is not only covered but greatly exceeded.

Fine level sequencing

Teachers will build on 'core knowledge' teaching this first and repeatedly coming back to this to alleviate the forgetting curve, alongside teaching any threshold concept which may alter the view of any subsequent knowledge early on in a topic. All subject areas have medium term plans which carefully consider the order of the concepts taught.

Teachers will give points of reference for core knowledge, creating a hinterland of examples and context around the knowledge we see to be important for the subject, in order to help make it stick in students' memories.

Setting rationale

Students will be taught in mixed ability groups at KS3 with the exception of a targeted low literacy level group based on SATs test, reading ages or CAT scores where needed. This is to ensure the curriculum is fully accessible to students with a lower level of literacy on entry and that a targeted intervention programme can be tailored to catch students up as quickly as possible. This is reviewed regularly and is specific to each cohort of students.

Teachers will teach to the top and support everyone to achieve. We also do not use GCSE targets in KS3. We believe that all students capable of acquiring the knowledge they need and that year 7 to 9 is too early for students to feel labelled or given too low an expectation.

At KS4, in core subjects only, students are set on ability but there is always room for movement at all points during the year. No subject choices are cut off due to a pre conceived idea of ability. Low attaining students on entry at KS2 can still opt for instance to take GCSE French and we are ambitious for all our students. We have also increased the percentage of students entered for the EBACC at KS4 from 16% in 2018 to 60% or more in both our current year 10 and 11.

Literacy

At Queen Elizabeth's Academy we recognise that literacy is key to pupils accessing the curriculum and making progress in all subjects. We are working to close the vocabulary and reading gap. It is also essential for their future lives and careers.

Pupils reading ages are assessed on arrival at Queen Elizabeth's and each subsequent year. Those pupils with a standard score of 80 or lower are then further assessed to identify their particular needs. These pupils are then withdrawn either individually or in small groups for some lessons or in tutor time to work on specific areas.

Reading ages are available to all staff through MintClass and subject teachers use this data to stretch the most able readers and support the least able through modelling, worked examples and defining Tier 3 vocabulary.

Star Reader assessments take place five times per academic year and the trends communicated to all staff so that they can ensure that our students access the broad and knowledge rich curriculum that we offer at QEA.

Reading for pleasure forms part of the Tutor Programme twice each week. All Tutor Groups have planned visits to the Library each term during which time they can complete Accelerated Reader quizzes and borrow / renew books.

The SEND team address literacy issues both in terms of targets for pupils as part of their EAPs and on a lesson by lesson basis by supporting pupils in lessons.

Homework

All homework is set in advance for the half term in each subject area with regular weekly checks.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Principal and School Leadership Team (SLT) will ensure that:

- The curriculum including what we prioritise, include, leave out and why is regularly discussed and debated at every level of the school from support staff to SLT.
- Use and promote the discussion of curriculum through a shared curriculum language to enable a clear debate. (See curriculum language knowledge organiser in appendix)
- All statutory elements of the curriculum and those subjects which the school chooses to offer have aims and objectives which reflect the aims of the school and indicate how the needs of individual students will be met.
- The amount of time to enable effective teaching of the subject is adequate and in line with specification requirements where relevant.
- Where appropriate that individual needs of students are met by permanent or temporary disapplication from the National Curriculum.
- The procedure for assessment meets all legal requirements.
- Parents/ Carers receive regular information as to how much progress the student are making and what is required to help them improve.
- The LAB is fully involved in decision making processes related to the curriculum including training where needed.

Other members of staff will:

- Ensure the school curriculum is implemented in accordance with this policy.
- Understand that political issues must be presented to students in a balanced way.
- Regularly review what is taught, why and the impact this has on students.
- Ensure they understand and take part in the decisions and discussions about the curriculum, using their subject expertise, in their own department area and any aspect relating to other curriculum areas where appropriate.
- Involve the student voice when making decision about curriculum.

The LAB will ensure that:

- It considers the advice of the Principal and member of SLT when approving the policy and when setting targets.
- Progress towards targets are monitored annually.
- Parent/ Carers receive reports in the progress of their child in relation to clear expectations.

KS3 curriculum

On entry students in year 7 with additional literacy and numeracy requirements have additional small group tuition in the identified target areas of need. This is reviewed regularly and continues on into the following year(s) if required.

Core	EBACC	Open
English (4) Maths (3) PE (2) RE (1) Relationships, sex education, PSCHE (1)	History (2) Geography (1) French or Spanish (2) Science (3)	Art (1) Drama (1) Music (1) DT (2) IT (1)

KS4 curriculum

Students chose 2 optional subjects to study at GCSE (3 if students are not studying a language.) Options are guided with support from careers education and student meetings with a member of SLT and

Pathway	Core	EBACC	Open
Purple	English (5) Maths (4) Science (4) PE (3) Tutor (PSCHE) (1) RE (2)	French (2) Spanish (1) History (2)	Art (2) DT (2) ICT (1) Drama (1)
Blue	English (5) Maths (4) Science (4) PE (3) Tutor (PSCHE) (1) RE (2)	French (2) History (3)	Art (2) DT (2) ICT (1) Drama (1)
Green	English (5) Maths (5) Science (4) PE (3) Tutor (PSCHE) (1) RE (2)	History (3) French (2) or additional literacy intervention	Art (2) DT (2) ICT (1) Drama (1)

parents/carers (see options booklet).

A robust curriculum

At key stage 4 the majority of students continue to study a language to GCSE level (currently over 60%). Despite the fact that we know this may negatively affect our overall progress 8 score we believe that the benefits of learning a language are so diverse that continued study for the full 5 years was preferential. Learning a language broadens students understanding of the world and cultural diversity. An additional language means our students can compete with the best in their future careers aspirations and keeps opportunities in this curriculum area open to a wider variety of learners.

Co-curricular

All curriculum areas have consider what additional opportunities they can include to enrich the curriculum experience for students, whether this is visiting local places of worship, volunteer work or extra-curricular lunch and after school clubs.

Due to the pandemic the lunch and after school programme have been adapted to enable student access to opportunities within school in year group bubbles. We are continuing to risk assess and follow guidance and as a result external trip and speakers have been put on hold.

Appendix:

1. Sample knowledge organiser
2. Curriculum language

Gods		Stories		Vocabulary	
Zeus	Vengeful King of the Gods. Father to Hercules, Perseus, Athena	Prometheus and Pandora	The Titan, Prometheus, created man. He tricked Zeus who punished him by stealing the fire. Stole fire from Mount Olympus and was punished being chained to a mountain where a vulture would eat his liver daily. Zeus cast his revenge on man through Pandora, who married Epimetheus and released the evils within 'Pandora's box'.	Audacious	
Poseidon	God of the seas. Zeus brother. Cursed King Minos with The Minotaur	Perseus and The Medusa	Perseus's mother, Danae, was taken as wife by cruel Polydeuces. Perseus swore to deliver a Gorgon's head for the ceremony. With the assistance of Athena, he slew the Gorgon, returned to Seriphos, and rescued his mother by turning cruel Polydeuces to stone.	Betrayal	
Hera	Jealous wife of Zeus. Tricked Hercules to kill his children	Theseus and The Minotaur	Theseus could not stand his father sending sacrifices to Crete to be feasted on by the Minotaur, so he volunteered to go instead. With Ariadne's help, he navigated the Labyrinth and slew the Minotaur. On his return, he betrayed Ariadne, and forgot to change the sail of his ship, causing his father to leap from the cliff face into the sea.	Courageous	
Hephaestus	Blacksmith God. Son of Zeus. Crafted Pandora on Zeus's command.	Hercules and the 12 Labours	Cursed by Hera, Hercules kills his wife and six children. As penance, he undertakes 12 fierce, and difficult labours, demonstrating his superhuman strength, guile and bravery. Having completed the labours, he earned eternal glory and was strung among the stars by the Gods.	Deceptive	
Hades	God of the Underworld. Zeus' brother. Owner of the hell-hound Cerberus.	Daedalus and Icarus	Daedalus, designer of the Labyrinth, helped Ariadne assist Theseus navigate its design. As punishment, Minos locked Daedalus and his son inside the labyrinth. They escaped, and Daedalus constructed wings so they could escape the island of Crete, ignoring his father's advice, Icarus flew too close to the sun and perished.	Devious	
Athena	Zeus' daughter. Cursed Medusa. Friend of Prometheus. Champion of Perseus.	Themes	As well as being powerful and wise, the Gods were also mean and spiteful. Which characters were punished by the Gods. How? Why?	Devotion	
Atlas	Fought in the war against the gods. Cursed to hold up the heavens for eternity.	Wrath of the Gods	Many heroes were locked in battles against strange and dangerous monsters and quests.	Envious	
Prometheus	Stole fire from Mount Olympus. Cursed to have liver eaten by vulture daily	Heros and Monsters	Hades and Persephone ruled the underworld, which features in several stories and quests.	Hubristic	
Epimetheus	Brother of Prometheus. Owner of 'Pandora's box'. Married Pandora	Death & The Underworld	Many monsters were transformed by the Gods as part of their vengeance.	Labyrinth	
Perseus	Son of Zeus and Danae. Slayed the Medusa, assisted by Athena.	Tricks and Transformations	All great heroes need a great quest. Some are long, arduous and take many years.	Malicious	
Theseus	Son of King Aegeus of Athens. Slew The Minotaur. Betrayed Ariadne.	Battles and Quests	Myths often involve prophecies about the future. Gods often curse mortals as punishment.	Oppressive	
Hercules	Cursed by Hera. Gained immortal glory after completing 12 labours.	Prophecy and Curses	Many characters place their trust in each other only to be betrayed. Betray the Gods at your peril!	Perilous	
Minos	Cruel and powerful King of Crete. Took sacrifices from Athens to feed the Minotaur	Trust and Betrayal		Repulsive	
Ageus	King of Athens. Through himself into the 'Aegean' sea after seeing the black sail.			Tyrannical	
Eurythius	Mean and spiteful king of Argolis. Sent Hercules on his labours.			Vallant	
Polydeuces	Tyrannical king of Seriphos. Married & mistreated Danae. Turned to stone by Perseus.			Vengeful	
Pandora	Beautiful, married to Epimetheus. Opened 'Pandora's box'.			Vindictive	
Daedalus	Master architect, inventor and craftsman. Built the labyrinth.			Wrath	
Icarus	Son of Icarus. Flew too close to the sun.			Zealous	
Ariadne	Son of Minos. Fell in love with Theseus and used 'Ariadne's thread' to assist him.				
Sisyphus	King punished by the Gods to roll a boulder uphill forever.				
Medusa	Cursed by Athena. A petrifying glare and poisonous snakes for hair.				
The Minotaur	Half brother to Ariadne. Half bull half human. Inhabitant of the Labyrinth.				
Cerberus	Hades' three headed hell-hound. Guarded the gates of the underworld.				
The Sirens	Beautiful women who lured ships to crash on rocks with the power of their song.				

Curriculum terminology	Definition and examples
Indirect manifestation	Automatic recognition. Speed and fluency. The result of students acquiring sufficient knowledge to access with ease e.g. reading a broadsheet newspaper quickly and easily due to knowledge of history, political and meaning of words through multiple reference points.
Substantive concepts	Words we want students to 'just' know e.g. nation, institution, province
Threshold concept	A big idea that permanently transforms the way you view other concepts.
Core knowledge	Content we need students to remember. Fundamental to helping students grasp the key content.
Hinterland	What makes the knowledge rich and memorable. Ideas that support the understanding of the core. Contextualises the core knowledge. Examples. A narrative.
Proximal function	How will the knowledge of this lesson support the work planned in the next few lessons/ next few weeks
Ultimate function	How will this support students to have the knowledge to become adults who are able to express their views based on secure knowledge
Substantive	The knowledge given to the students. Key facts, concepts that we want our students to master.
Disciplinary	The Knowledge up for grabs. Showing the understanding of the knowledge. Judgement making. Creativity. What do we want students to know about how artists/ scientists/ engineers etc work?
Cumulative	Knowledge builds but is not reliant on students having previous studied a certain topic
Hierarchical	Can't teach students one topic until they have the knowledge of another e.g. timetables before fractions
Procedural knowledge	Knowledge that pupils need to master to fluency in order to refer to other ideas. Facts/ information that students need to know.
Declarative knowledge	Putting facts into practice. Knowing how to use the information students have.

