

The attached diagram (**Annex 1**) outlines the proposed development structure for all Areas of Learning and Experience (AoLEs) within the new curriculum for Wales. We would like to emphasise that this is an AoLE design model – **we do not envisage that the final online version of the curriculum will necessarily reflect this way of presenting the structure.** Further details about each aspect of the model are outlined below.

### **A statement detailing how the AoLE supports the four purposes**

As the model shows, each AoLE will include a statement outlining how it supports the four purposes of the new curriculum. As articulated in *Successful Futures*, each AoLE should make distinct and strong contributions to developing the four purposes of the curriculum. Therefore, this statement provides a justification of how the AoLE contributes to the four purposes and why the AoLE is important. The statement also provides an introduction and a ‘way in’ to the AoLE and the related What Matters statements.

**You will find a draft statement in the latest Humanities proposals.**

### **The What Matters statements and rationales**

Each AoLE will have as many What Matters (headline) statements as necessary. They are used as a means of organising learning in order that learners have the appropriate knowledge, skills and experiences. When considered together, the What Matters span the breadth of the AoLE. They draw on key disciplinary knowledge and skills, make links with the four purposes of the new curriculum and therefore outline the essential aspects of learning within the AoLE.

A key criterion that the AoLE groups have met in developing each What Matters statement is that it must support at least one of the four purposes. In addition, the following criteria, outlined by Barbara Wintersgill as the key characteristics for her ‘Big Ideas for Religious Education’, have been adopted:

*Big Ideas are:*

i. *criteria for the selection and prioritising of subject knowledge in the curriculum.* If Big Ideas summarise what students’ understanding should be, the content selected must enable students to achieve that understanding.

ii. *transferable to events outside the classroom.* An essential indicator of understanding is the ability to transfer learning to new settings. Religions and non-religious worldviews can only be properly understood when students recognise them as important elements of 21st century life.

iii. *memorable.* If Big Ideas are to have this life-long impact they must be summarised in headlines that are short enough to be remembered but focused enough to act as reminders of their full significance.

iv. *capable of differentiation so that they may become the basis of progression.* Big Ideas can be expressed at increasing levels of complexity and sophistication to describe the understanding expected of different age groups.

*They should also:*

v. *have long term relevance.* Big Ideas reflect situations for the foreseeable future so that students will take from their school days understanding of religious and non-religious beliefs,

practices and values that will help them understand their personal quest for meaning and the world in which they live.

vi. *make sense of what might otherwise be confusing information/experiences and isolated facts.* An important contributor to understanding is the ability to ‘join up the dots’, to see how the many different beliefs, practices and values of religions and non-religious worldviews relate to each other. Big Ideas help make these connections.

vii. *act as lenses which, when used to ‘view’ content, help to clarify it.* When used as a ‘lens’ through which to view a mass of possible content, Big Ideas illuminate what is relevant to RE and hide what is not.

viii. *taken together, express the core or central concerns of the subject.* The essential test of subject knowledge is that as well as meeting the above criteria it reflects what is central to the subject, not what is peripheral.<sup>1</sup>

Each What Matters statement developed by the AoLE groups must meet these criteria as well as support the four purposes.

Each What Matters statement has an accompanying rationale that further explores what is captured in the statement and provides a justification as to why it is one of the aspects that matters most within the AoLE. The rationales must provide opportunities to ‘trigger’ connections between the four purposes, the What Matters statements and rationales themselves and the necessary knowledge, skills and experiences needed to achieve the What Matters.

**You will find draft statements and rationales in the Humanities proposals.**

**Knowledge, skills and experiences identified as key to achieving each of the What Matters**

Recommendation 4 of *Successful Futures* states that each AoLE should provide rich contexts for developing the four curriculum purposes, **be internally coherent, employ distinctive ways of thinking, and have an identifiable core of disciplinary or instrumental knowledge**. Whilst the structure as a whole supports the four purposes and internal coherence, under each What Matters statement, the key knowledge, skills and experiences recommended as *essential to achieving* it will be articulated.

This element of the AoLE structure provides further detail to support the development of school level curriculum and to help learners progress towards achieving the What Matters statement. In order to achieve these aims, we see two sections to it:

- An indication of ‘content’ that is essential to be covered at some point on the continuum to reach the What Matters statement.
- An outline of progression that articulates the general nature of change across the continuum of learning to achieve the What Matters statement.

In articulating these elements, **for each What Matters statement** we draw on the following:

- Key knowledge, skills & experiences that reflect relevant disciplines and domains within the scope of the AoLE (this includes disciplinary and instrumental knowledge)
- Sequencing where appropriate
- Cross-Curriculum Responsibilities & Wider Skills

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<sup>1</sup> Wintersgill, Barbara (ed.), *Big Ideas for Religious Education* (2017), p. 11.

- Welsh dimension and international perspective where appropriate

Links to other What Matters statements within the AoLE as well as other AoLEs will also be made where appropriate.

### An outline of 'content'

In order to select appropriate 'content' (knowledge, skills and/or experiences), the AoLE representatives have worked to the following principles. They must:

- Provide the content needed to enable the outline of progression described below and to support learners in achieving the What Matters statement and the relevant four purposes.
- Be deemed as essential to the What Matters statement, reflecting relevant subjects, disciplines or domains within the scope of the AoLE, and/or to prepare learners for their future roles in education, work and society.
- Be broad enough to be meaningful across the continuum of learning (and not tied to specific Progression Steps) or sequenced alongside the Progression Steps if appropriate.

Attention is drawn to these elements as a link between the What Matters statement and the related progression outline (described below), as support for practitioners in planning school level curriculum. The 'content' must provide both sufficient support and allow the appropriate autonomy; allowing schools and clusters to **plan their curriculum** between progression steps and ultimately towards achieving each of the What Matters.

**AoLE groups are currently developing this section of the curriculum.**

### An outline of progression

The work completed to date by the AoLE groups in relation to the progression frameworks is essential to forming the basis for this aspect of the structure. For each What Matters statement, we propose that a broad description of progression is articulated, drawing on key knowledge (disciplinary and instrumental), skills and experiences and the general nature of change across school years considered essential to achieving the statement. The narratives will be developed in line with and at each of the Progression Steps (and expectations broadly at 5, 8, 11, 14 and 16) allowing clarity in relation to what individual learners should be working towards throughout the continuum of learning. This will form the basis for practitioners' planning in order to support each individual learner in their journey along the continuum and for professional dialogue between practitioners within and between schools. This will also reflect the aim outlined in *Successful Futures* that sound foundations in learning are the best basis for progression as well as supporting learners to progress along the continuum at their own pace.

Where appropriate, references will be made to literacy, numeracy, digital competence, the wider skills and the Welsh dimension and international perspective as *Successful Futures* outlines that they should be embedded in the AoLEs as well as addressed in the Achievement Outcomes.

**You will find draft progression frameworks in the Humanities proposals. Please be aware that the frameworks reflect the work undertaken so far in relation to progression and will form the basis for this element of the curriculum as well as the Achievement Outcomes described below. The progression frameworks themselves are not a curriculum element in their own right.**

## Progression Steps and Achievement Outcomes

This element of the curriculum structure is being developed by the AoLE groups, and is their main focus over the coming months. The progression frameworks are the basis for this work. As outlined in *Successful Futures*:

- Progression Steps will be described at five points in the learning continuum, relating broadly to expectations at ages 5, 8, 11, 14 and 16.
- Progression Steps will take the form of a range of Achievement Outcomes.
- By signalling an emphasis on achievement in a broad sense, these outcomes broaden the scope of what we value in children and young people's learning.
- Achievement Outcomes will be described from the learner's point of view, using terms like 'I have...' for experiences and 'I can...' for outcomes.
- Achievement Outcomes will include:
  - Knowledge, Skills & Experiences
  - Cross-Curriculum Responsibilities and wider skills
  - Welsh dimension/ international perspective where appropriate
- Achievement Outcomes will contribute to achieving the four purposes.

The Achievement Outcomes articulated for each Progression Step will also contribute to achieving the What Matters and reflect the outline of progression provided in relation to the relevant key knowledge, skills and experiences recommended as essential to reach the relevant statement. They will be broad in nature. However, we must ensure that the Achievement Outcomes include enough detail and clarity to ensure consistency in understanding and avoid variability in enactment and possibly a need for further guidance and detail to be published at a later date.

## Guiding Principles

The draft AoLE model also makes reference to guiding principles for each AoLE. These principles will support practitioners in delivering the What Matters. They are not the starting point for school level curriculum planning – the four purposes and the What Matters statements are; however these principles will be drawn upon to inform the design work. They may relate to:

- signature pedagogies
- assessment
- exemplification.

The aspects of learning deemed essential to achieving the What Matters statements will be included in the main structure of the AoLE. This includes, where appropriate, the cross-curriculum elements outlined below. Further suggestions about what 'may' or 'could' be developed through the related AoLE will be included in the guiding principles. These include:

- Possible opportunities for learners' Welsh language skills to be developed.
- Further opportunities to develop cross-curriculum elements through the AoLE:
  - Literacy, numeracy and digital competence
  - Wider skills
  - Welsh dimension and international perspective
  - Enrichment and experiences
  - Careers and the world of work.

## **Cross-Curriculum Elements**

AoLE groups are working to the principle that the aspects of the cross-curriculum elements essential to achieving a What Matters statement will be incorporated in the knowledge, skills and experiences section of the AoLE structure. Additional opportunities to embed aspects of the cross-curriculum elements through the AoLEs will also be identified in the guiding principles to support curriculum planning at school level. This approach has been adopted for all of the cross-curriculum elements outlined in the model.