

An analysis of a Survey of teachers on GCSE change and RE in light of the EBacc changes

A Second Survey – June 2011 (v2.2)

Summary and conclusions

An online survey of religious education (RE) teachers was conducted over a ten day period in May 2011. The aim was to examine the impact of the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) proposals on RE in English secondary schools.

Responses from 1,918 schools were gathered. Excluding the independent school respondents, this represents over half (53%) of all maintained secondary schools in England and as such provides a very satisfactory sample from which to generalize. For a breakdown of total numbers see Table 1.

This analysis has focused on the 1,157 sub-set of academies, community schools and grammar schools. The survey results demonstrate that in all three of these school types:

1. Statutory provision for RE was not being met at Key Stage 4 (KS4) in 24% of academies, 24% of community schools and 31% of grammar schools [Table 1].
2. Non-compliance is predicted to increase in 2011-12. This is especially true in academies where the number of such schools not complying with funding agreement contractual requirements at KS4 is expected to rise by 10% from the current 24% to 34% in 2011-12. [Tables 1 and 2].
3. Many schools also reported a drop in entries between 2010-11 and 2011-12 for both Religious Studies Short and Full Course GCSEs. Particularly concerning is that 38% of academies, 40% of community schools and 34% of grammar schools reported a drop in Full Course entries. [Table 3].
4. In those schools where entry levels had fallen, 57% of academies, 57% of community schools and 64% of grammar schools gave as the reason the impact of the introduction of the EBacc [Table 3].
5. 26% of academies, 30% of community schools and 25% of grammar schools also reported reductions for the coming year in specialist RE staff [Table 4].
6. 14.1% of academies, 13.6% of community schools and 10.4% of grammar schools reported that the statutory requirements for Key Stage 3 (KS3) will not be met in 2011-12. This is an increase from 2010-11 [Tables 5 and 6].

Methodology

This is an analysis of the data gathered from an online questionnaire examining changes in RE in English schools in light of recent policy announcements concerning the English Baccalaureate (EBacc).

The survey was launched on 22 May 2011 via a number of teacher networks supported by the National Association for Teachers of Religious Education (NATRE) and RE Today Services, and publicised via Social Media networks and via the electronic networks of other RE organisations including AREIAC, AULRE, and NASACRE. The almost overwhelming take-up and response rate, with responses exceeding 2000 within 48 hours, and 2800 within 10 days, is indicative of the level of feeling currently held by RE teachers on this issue.

The responses represented 1,918 schools once duplicates were removed. This is approximately 53% of all state maintained secondary schools – a significant and statistically valid sample. For the breakdown of school types, see Table 1.

It is reasonable to assume that the majority of responses come from schools with enthusiastic and active RE teachers. Schools without subject specialists and where little RE is taught are less likely to be represented in the sample. Therefore the overall picture and in particular the negative effects of the EBacc proposals on RE are very likely to be even more damaging than this survey reveals.

The analysis is based on self-reported data from RE teachers in schools. An on-line data gathering tool (Survey Monkey) was used.

Acknowledgement

NATRE is very grateful to Paul Hopkins of the NATRE Executive for analysing the data on its behalf.

Table 1

In the current school year [2010-11] are legal requirements with regard to RE provision for all in KS4 being met?

	Number		No		Yes		DNA		Totals	
	Value	Percent	Value	Percent	Value	Percent	Value	Percent	Value	Percent
Academy	284	68	23.9%	201	70.8%	15	5.3%	284	100.0%	
Community	777	183	23.6%	555	71.4%	39	5.0%	777	100.0%	
Grammar	96	30	31.3%	62	64.6%	4	4.2%	96	100.0%	
Independent	148	34	23.0%	99	66.9%	15	10.1%	148	100.0%	
Other	131	37	28.2%	85	64.9%	9	6.9%	131	100.0%	
VA [CofE]	88	10	11.4%	75	85.2%	3	3.4%	88	100.0%	
VA [RC]	327	10	3.1%	303	92.7%	14	4.3%	327	100.0%	
VA [Other]	40	8	20.0%	30	75.0%	2	5.0%	40	100.0%	
VC	27	4	14.8%	22	81.5%	1	3.7%	27	100.0%	
Overall	1918	384	20.0%	1432	74.7%	102	5.3%	1918	100.0%	

Given that RE is a legal requirement for all pupils up to the age of 19 – it is a concern that should be addressed that overall a fifth of pupils are not receiving this entitlement at Key Stage 4 – if VA / VC and independent schools are excluded from this then it rises to a quarter (24.3%).

Table 2

In the next school year [2011-12] will the legal requirements with regard to RE provision for all in KS4 be met?

	Number		No		Yes		DNA		Totals		Change
	Value	Percent	Value	Percent	Value	Percent	Value	Percent	Value	Percent	
Academy	284	98	34.5%	177	62.3%	9	3.2%	284	100.0%	10.6%	
Community	777	219	28.2%	530	68.2%	28	3.6%	777	100.0%	4.6%	
Grammar	96	31	32.3%	62	64.6%	3	3.1%	96	100.0%	1.0%	
Independent	148	40	27.0%	101	68.2%	7	4.7%	148	100.0%	4.1%	
Other	131	41	31.3%	83	63.4%	7	5.3%	131	100.0%	3.1%	
VA [CofE]	88	12	13.6%	74	84.1%	2	2.3%	88	100.0%	2.3%	
VA [RC]	327	15	4.6%	298	91.1%	14	4.3%	327	100.0%	1.5%	
VA [Other]	40	7	17.5%	31	77.5%	2	5.0%	40	100.0%	-2.5%	
VC	27	5	18.5%	21	77.8%	1	3.7%	27	100.0%	3.7%	
Overall	1918	468	24.4%	1377	71.8%	73	3.8%	1918	100%		

The indicative column in these figures is the last; it can be seen that in ALL school types [except for VA(Other)] for the next 12 months an **INCREASE** in non-compliance is predicted. In academies this is almost 11% where non-compliance will rise to over a third of all pupils. Where a reason was indicated for the change in provision of legal requirements the overwhelmingly most common was the introduction of the EBacc into the school's curriculum framework.

Table 3

Where there has been a drop in GCSE entries in 2011-12 what is the main reason for this?

	Number	GCSE [Full Course]								GCSE [Short Course]							
		E-Bacc		No Drop		Other		DNA		E-Bacc		No Drop		Other		DNA	
		Value	Percent	Value	Percent	Value	Percent	Value	Percent	Value	Percent	Value	Percent	Value	Percent	Value	Percent
Academy	284	62	21.8%	143	50.4%	47	16.5%	32	11.3%	15	5.3%	191	67.3%	46	16.2%	32	11.3%
Community	777	177	22.8%	374	48.1%	133	17.1%	93	12.0%	98	12.6%	459	59.1%	127	16.3%	93	12.0%
Grammar	96	21	21.9%	53	55.2%	12	12.5%	10	10.4%	8	8.3%	68	70.8%	10	10.4%	10	10.4%
Independent	148	19	12.8%	86	58.1%	22	14.9%	21	14.2%	8	5.4%	106	71.6%	13	8.8%	21	14.2%
Other	131	22	16.8%	65	49.6%	29	22.1%	15	11.5%	11	8.4%	79	60.3%	26	19.8%	15	11.5%
VA [CofE]	88	5	5.7%	60	68.2%	12	13.6%	11	12.5%	4	4.5%	64	72.7%	9	10.2%	11	12.5%
VA [RC]	327	14	4.3%	247	75.5%	22	6.7%	44	13.5%	12	3.7%	246	75.2%	27	8.3%	42	12.8%
VA [Other]	40	5	12.5%	26	65.0%	5	12.5%	4	10.0%	1	2.5%	29	72.5%	6	15.0%	4	10.0%
VC	27	3	11.1%	19	70.4%	2	7.4%	3	11.1%	2	7.4%	17	63.0%	5	18.5%	3	11.1%
Overall	1918	328	17.1%	1073	56%	284	14.8%	233	12.1%	159	8.3%	1259	65.6%	269	14.0%	231	12.0%

If we look at the reasons for drops in entries for both SHORT (SC) and FULL COURSE (FC) entries we can see that the EBacc is significantly the highest reason for the drop in Full Course entries indicating that the non-inclusion of RE in the EBacc is a significant threat to the FULL COURSE Religious Studies – the more academic – GCSE with the ensuing impact on AS/A2 and degree entries in related subjects.

Table 4

Reported RE specialist staffing reductions for 2011-12

	Number	Reporting reduction	
		Value	Percent
Academy	284	73	26%
Community	777	231	30%
Grammar	96	24	25%

Given that Tables 1 and 2 indicate an additional 4.4% of schools predict they will be non-compliant in KS4 in 2011-12, and a slightly less marked reduction can be identified at KS3 (Tables 5 and 6), a drop in demand for RE teachers is inevitable.

Table 5

In the current school year [2010-11] are legal requirements with regard to RE provision for all in KS3 being met?

	Number		No		Yes		DNA		Totals	
	Value	Percent	Value	Percent	Value	Percent	Value	Percent	Value	Percent
Academy	284	36	12.7%	239	84.2%	9	3.2%	284	100.0%	
Community	777	83	10.7%	666	85.7%	28	3.6%	777	100.0%	
Grammar	96	6	6.3%	87	90.6%	3	3.1%	96	100.0%	
Independent	148	11	7.4%	130	87.8%	7	4.7%	148	100.0%	
Other	131	13	9.9%	111	84.7%	7	5.3%	131	100.0%	
VA [CofE]	88	5	5.7%	81	92.0%	2	2.3%	88	100.0%	
VA [RC]	327	18	5.5%	295	90.2%	14	4.3%	327	100.0%	
VA [Other]	40	4	10.0%	34	85.0%	2	5.0%	40	100.0%	
VC	27	1	3.7%	25	92.6%	1	3.7%	27	100.0%	
Overall	1918	177	9.2%	1668	87.0%	73	3.8%	1918	100%	

Given that RE is a legal requirement for all pupils up to the age of 19 – it is a concern that should be addressed that overall a tenth of pupils are not receiving this entitlement at Key Stage 3 – if VA / VC and independent schools are excluded from this then it rises slightly to 10.8%

Table 6

In the next school year [2011-12] will the legal requirements with regard to RE provision for all in KS3 be met?

	Number		No		Yes		DNA		Totals		Change
	Value	Percent	Value	Percent	Value	Percent	Value	Percent	Value	Percent	
Academy	284	40	14.1%	235	82.7%	9	3.2%	284	100.0%	1.4%	
Community	777	106	13.6%	643	82.8%	28	3.6%	777	100.0%	3.0%	
Grammar	96	10	10.4%	83	86.5%	3	3.1%	96	100.0%	4.2%	
Independent	148	15	10.1%	126	85.1%	7	4.7%	148	100.0%	2.7%	
Other	131	17	13.0%	107	81.7%	7	5.3%	131	100.0%	3.1%	
VA [CofE]	88	7	8.0%	79	89.8%	2	2.3%	88	100.0%	2.3%	
VA [RC]	327	20	6.1%	293	89.6%	14	4.3%	327	100.0%	0.6%	
VA [Other]	40	3	7.5%	35	87.5%	2	5.0%	40	100.0%	-2.5%	
VC	27	2	7.4%	24	88.9%	1	3.7%	27	100.0%	3.7%	
Overall	1918	220	11.5%	1625	84.7%	73	3.8%	1918	100%		

Again the indicative column in these figures is the last; it can be seen that in ALL school types [except for VA(Other)] for the next 12 months an **INCREASE** in non-compliance is predicted. In academies this rises to over 14% where non-compliance will be highest for all school types. Where a reason was indicated for the change in provision of legal requirements the overwhelmingly most common was the introduction of the EBacc into the school's curriculum framework.

Some indicative comments

From Academies

As a result of the EBacc our school is no longer offering RE examinations at KS4 and has reduced the amount of time that year 8 will be allocated.

Currently the school has chosen to ignore the EBacc, but RE for all at KS4 has been moved aside to allow for Functional Skills. We now offer full course GCSE as an option only. This year 39 students have opted to take the subject but many of those will instead be entered for AS Philosophy and Ethics and this is why numbers are so high as we are the only subject to stream more academic students. We fear that as EBacc becomes more established the school will no longer be able to ignore it and RE will suffer.

The EBacc will kill Religious Studies if it isn't included.

The students and parents seem to believe that Geography and History have the importance as indicated by the attitude of the government. RE and Citizenship are part of a compulsory course offered, one hour per week, and no exam at the end.

I feel that RE is being marginalised in schools with less teaching time for this crucial subject. It makes me so angry that the EBAC is pushing RE out. I know of schools where there will be no RE. If pupils are now aware of religion or ethics then how can we stand a chance fighting against discrimination and stereotypes? It is an absolute disaster in an already moral-less society. Well-done, Mr Gove.

As a Church academy there is pressure to keep RE central, however as there is pressure from parents questioning the value of studying RE particularly as it is not included in the EBacc.

The damage caused to RE by its omission from the EBacc is in terms of perceived value. Its omission tells students that it is not a worthwhile course of study within Humanities. I do not believe the government has done sufficient research to say that RE is less academically valid than History or Geography.

My school, despite widespread support for RE among senior staff, has removed Full Course GCSE RE as an option for next year's Year 10. They have taken this decision purely because RE is not included in the new EBacc. RE is now way down the list of priorities for the school in terms of full course exam success because of the new system by which the school will be judged.

I have been made redundant as Head of RE because of this EBacc. Thanks Mr Gove, enjoy your salary when I no longer have one.

Within our school R.S is seen as a humanities subject. Not including it in the EBacc tells pupils this is not an 'equal' or valuable subject. Our short course results are excellent and inclusion in the EBacc will only strengthen the school's results.

This Academy enters all students on either the Full Course or Short Course depending on ability and other courses. This will not change because of our Christian ethos, however our specialist subject, Business and Enterprise, has been reduced and is now no longer compulsory because of the EBacc focus! It would appear ridiculous that a subject can be a statutory obligation but then the results not assessed. This will mean that schools with no religious ethos or focus will drop the subject in favour of other Humanities subjects in order to achieve good EBacc figures.

From Community Schools

The EBacc will have a destructive impact on offering RE in any way. We had to sacrifice RE time this year to our Year 11's to English, and only entered the 2 top sets for short course exam. The rest of year 11, that wanted to be entered had no lessons in RE from January (RE lesson went to English). There was a report recently, highlighting why the teaching of RE/Ethics is so important in our society, as some children feel it's ok to steal, cheat, lie etc... and some grow up with bigoted views.

I was making in-roads into the subject which was previous neglected and was meeting with a lot of success however all of it has been undone and the department as of next year looks the weakest it has been and all because RE is not part of the EBacc. RE was fast becoming a favourite subject in the school and now it's going to be scrapped for all top and second set year 8 and 9s. This will lead to it not being offered (short or full) in GCSE because pupils will not have the skills and knowledge needed.

The school has removed the position of Head of RS; there is now no TLR position in the RS department. There is one full time teacher of RS, and a 0.5 teacher, to teach 1,200 students. The RS department is now run by the Head of History, who has no interest in furthering the RS department, or maintaining the progress made with getting exam classes at KS4 and KS5 over the past 2 years. The EBacc has led to RS provision being removed at KS4 - all students will not be able to access any RS at all. The Headteacher does not believe it is necessary to fulfil the legal requirements for RS, as he feels that the EBacc will supersede previous requirements.

The school places high regard for RE in the curriculum and the department have usually got very good results. Up until this year RE was a very popular subject alongside History and Geography. With the introduction of EBacc our numbers have decreased - nothing else has changed except what is perceived to be more important in terms of subjects - those subjects in the EBacc are now seen as the 'gold standard' anything else outside this are 'second rate options'.

Students pick up the importance of the subjects due to the new EBacc. Therefore parents do and thus RE is considered a less desirable subject in comparison with Geog and Hist.

In a multicultural school the teaching of RE is imperative! Not including it in the EBacc reduces its importance, how can we allow this in our multicultural society?

This school is looking to drop RS entirely from yrs 10 and 11, promote the GCSE exam to year 9 in order to focus on EBacc subjects and English literature.

As a direct consequence of the omission of RE from the EBacc and the inclusion of triple science, RE has suffered. The students at this school have been withdrawn from the only lesson they were statutorily entitled to. Staff have been asked to complete the legal requirement after school / on rotation / instead of something else - PSE. This is simply not acceptable - breaking the law and failing students. RE has massive value and is a traditional academically valuable subject. This must be included if looking at the bigger picture for a "Big Society"!

The Ebacc is directly responsible for our course not running next year. Without it we would undoubtedly have had a good sized group for full course RS.

Accelerated pupils will no longer study the full GCSE due to time cuts for the RE department. Full course RE will only be available as an option subject; all pupils follow a short course put on a 1 lesson a week allocation compared to 2 before the EBacc was brought in. Concerned about future impact on A level numbers and full course RE numbers.

From Grammar Schools

I cannot emphasise enough just how bad this has been. Both myself and the student cohort have been treated abominably! The imposition of the EBacc without any consultation has been catastrophic for the RE department at my school. We have gone from a situation where there were 2 specialist RE teachers to a situation where there are none from Sept 2011. The Head of RE had 19 years experience of teaching RE and was going to be doing an MPhil in RS at Kent University but can't do it because she has no job next year and therefore cannot fund it. RE has been taken over by the PSHE department! Since when has PSHE been an academic subject? The damage is wide and far reaching and the Westminster Debate allowed the Education Minister yet another dig - History and Geography the subjects of choice - forget RE! The RE department takes the lead in delivering Holocaust Education in KS3 & KS4, mandatory since 2000 - this too is gone from Sept 2011- I find this particularly heart-breaking. We have no idea what we have done to deserve such treatment.

Religious Studies is an academic subject in the school that is able to stand as an equal alongside other academic subjects across the curriculum. It has the support of SLT but they have been reluctantly forced to advise students that RS may not be the best option to take in a University application perspective because the EBacc may become significant for this and they may be disadvantaged. Staffing and recruitment have been affected; standards of teaching remain high as does the subject's popularity.

RE has suddenly become the more 'disposable' subject - until this year it had parity with the humanities (in terms of timetabling) and all requirements were met. A level is now to be taught in far fewer hours - but the same syllabus!

All pupils are entered for a full course GCSE, with a total of 4 lessons spread over 3 years. (1 in yr 9, 1 in yr 10 and 2 yr11) Other departments get 9 lessons over the 3 years.

My school fully supports the teaching of RS/RE as an academic subject and openly supports the delivery of it. The Senior Leadership Team understand and support the concerns raised by the department and also believe that RE should be included in the EBacc. I have seen how it has affected other schools around the LA and that concerns me a great deal. KS3 provision has been halved and in some cases replaced with curriculum enrichment days - how does that deliver the legal requirement?

Whilst my school has not suffered any loss of time etc for RE at Key Stage 4 this year, I am concerned that the EBacc may lead to problems in the future and I know that RE in other schools is being reduced as a direct consequence.

There is no RS offered in Yr 10 but students now study full course in Yr9 and complete in Yr 11. Take exam in short course module at end of Yr9 then another module in Yr 11. No RS provision in Yr 10

The subject has been reduced in the last three years from two full-time to one full time member of staff; it is not offered within curriculum time at all in year 11. Full course is done with a small number in year 11 after school, which shows there is interest but not the curriculum time support.

From Independent Schools

I have had many parents asking me if I felt that because RS was no longer a humanity was it considered a 'soft subject'.

Working in an independent school I am a little shielded from the full impact of the EBacc as our school is not opting to follow it. However, our numbers have significantly dropped as this year's option numbers have come in. Current Year 10 cohort is 40, whereas upcoming numbers are 17. Geography and History are thriving and have taken on extra staff. Of course there may be other reasons for this but our parents are aware of what goes on the state system and I think this is having a knock on effect. It was raised by parents at options evening and our Deputy Head tried to alleviate worries but the comment was already made.

Although there has been no change in the way the school has treated RE this year, there is a definite change in perceptions of students thanks to the kudos being given to History and Geography and not RE as humanities. This will only get worse as time continues and GCSE RS will undoubtedly become eroded by this.

In a place with such religious diversity as Great Britain, it would be a serious error to discourage young people from the religious tolerance and understanding provided by the Religious Studies GCSE course.

It seems to me that the Sec of State does not know what the schemes of work for Philosophy and Applied Ethics contain. If he did their usefulness would speak for itself. The reply I saw from Darlington was completely at odds with reality as they said that RS did not need putting in the EBacc as it was taught by law throughout the country anyway! Can he be made to look at content? How can he think the study of WW2 is more relevant to our young people?

Religious Education is the most popular option at the school where I work, with over 60% of all sixth formers opting for it at A level. Independent schools have been able to avoid the pressure of the EBacc and have been able to keep subjects like RE that engage students and promote academic study and critical thinking. Other schools do not have the option of promoting RE in this way because the government has decided it is not a subject worth protecting. However, if students are not encouraged to take the subject at GCSE they cannot take it at A level without huge difficulties and certainly not at university. If Oxford and Cambridge take Philosophy seriously, why can't the government take it seriously at GCSE?

EBacc will significantly hamper our ability to recruit good RS teachers for the school if teaching colleges respond (as they are) to the fall in demand in the state sector by reducing their teaching programme. It does not encourage our students also to pursue this as an academic subject for the betterment of our society.

If RE is not included in the EBacc then it will be devalued as a subject and in an academic school like ours students will be less likely to opt for it. It covers a wide range of issues relevant to life in 21st century society and should therefore be promoted.

RE has become an option subject from year 8. The pupils were told before the staff. Most pupils have complained that the change has been made just 1 week before option deadline date. After most had already made their decisions.

From Voluntary Aided Schools

There have been a number of changes in the GCSE, which do not show up on this survey that have been impacted by the EBacc. There was a temporary blip in entries due to timetabling that was going to be picked up next year. 2009/2010 had 50 pupils doing full courses. This is now not possible because of the EBacc

Whilst there have been no changes this year, there will be in the future. Parents are already asking about the value of RE.

The main impact for us will take effect in 2012-2013 when the then Y11 will only have 1 lesson per week after having only one lesson per week in Y10. The full course will have to start in Y9 for all pupils and the enhancement of the curriculum for Gifted and Talented in Y11 will have to disappear

The full impact of the EBacc may not be felt in voluntary aided schools as yet. If RE is not included then 2012 onwards will feel the impact. This may take the following forms: 1) Being forced to offer short course as an alternative to full course so that students can take geog/hist. 2) Reduction in students opting for full course therefore the subject status is compromised. 3) Incentive to staff with specialists will go leading to poorer quality teaching and poorer quality ITT training. 4) A-Level uptake will be dramatically reduced as students and parents will have learnt the subject is an "add-on" lower down in the school, of no real academic value

In the long term the EBacc will have a negative effect on the number of pupils taking RS GCSE.

RE currently has two-thirds the time of equivalent subjects (History Geography). There have been attempts to remove the option to take full course. As of yet, this has not had an impact on time allocation.

If we were allowed to have the RE subject as part of the EBacc it would allow a much more free hand in delivering the EBacc content. At the moment, being a small school with limited resources, it is painting us into a very difficult and restrictive curriculum.

School is already trying to manipulate the figures i.e. dropping the most successful subject which is sociology as it isn't part of the EBacc and in terms of RS they aren't going to let the 'clever' kids study it so they can focus on EBacc subjects then make everyone else do it as it's a Catholic school! A joke!

There will be huge changes if RE is not included in the EBacc. We are already not able to meet the 5% curriculum time that the Diocese recommends we have in KS3 as we have 4 lessons a fortnight. Next year KS4 is being reduced from 5 to 4 lessons too. This will decrease the importance of the subject in the eyes of the students and this will only get worse if we are excluded from the EBacc. RE is critical to students' thinking skills and the decreasing of time and opportunity to study this subject is a real loss for our students.

The EBacc will have a massively detrimental impact on the status of RE across all our schools. I have written at length to my local MP and have urged others to do the same. Nick Gibb, from the Department for Education replied to me stating that it's excluded because it's compulsory - but so too are English, Maths and Science! With the best will in the world, pupils are primarily going to focus on the 5 subjects in the EBacc - RE will not be a priority for them so I fear results nationally will suffer. I also worry that in some schools the hours time-tabled for RE may be reduced and that there may be redundancies.

From “other” schools

R.E. is now regarded as a subject of no value. I am the Head of Department, but teach four other subjects while R.E. is taught by 16 other staff. The pupils are told to study subjects in the new English Bac. I have 12 students in my option group. Previously I had 32. No Short Course is offered.

By not including RE in the E-Bacc, our prospective number of students taking full course GCSE RE dropped from 63 to 24! Interestingly History and/or Geography gained the majority of these students!

RE definitely under threat at both Key Stages as the subject is treated as less and less of a priority.

RE at KS3 has been reduced by 50%. The introduction of the EBacc has resulted in students being reluctant to opt for the subject at both GCSE and AS/A2. If we don't get sufficient students, the AS/A2 courses will be cancelled. Once we change this, we shan't recover from it. We currently have approx 15 students in each AS/A2 class. In the past 5 years, at least one or two students have gone on to study the subject at University - either Philosophy or Theology or RS.

Numbers are significantly lower for next year in GCSE and A-level isn't running. History and Geography have quadruple numbers.

I have fought hard this year to meet statutory requirements but met with no change. I have tried to increase KS3 to 2 lessons per week (other humanities have 4) but to no avail. We are an even poorer cousin than PSE and seen as a minor inconvenience on the timetable. Omitting RS from the EBacc has created a deeper ideological issue: its value, which is often pretty low in many schools, is now at rock bottom. This does not help in trying to convince our students of the merit of our subject.

The impact of RE not being part of the Ebacc has caused serious recruitment problems onto our full course GCSE programme. Many parents were encouraging students to take a subject like History or Geography, which they liked less, simply for the fact that it was part of the EBacc. Furthermore, the EBacc has prioritised some Humanities subjects over others and I have struggled to be allowed funding to recruit a desperately needed second specialist because RE isn't part of the EBacc and therefore perceived as not being worth spending money on.

The changes proposed seriously damages the place of RE in the curriculum. It will be much more difficult to negotiate funding, staffing ratios will not be given parity of esteem with other bacc subjects. Consequently classes will be larger; there will be reduced opportunities for students to discuss the big questions. The position of RE will be further eroded under the present proposals.

Although my school is very supportive of the contribution R.E makes I am hugely aware of the rarity of my position and know of several schools in my work as an RE AST where time is being cut and where Year 7 follow a skills based curriculum with no explicit R.E and option numbers dropping.

At my school RE has joined with other subjects in Year 7 and has been cut totally in Year 11. There were 2 RE teachers - now we only need one full time, and one on one day a week.