

Curriculum & Assessment Review and Government Response

What it means for theatres and next steps

November 2025

This analysis builds on our [statement](#) on the [Government's response](#) to the [Curriculum & Assessment Review Final Report](#). The outcome of the review is a major step toward a broader, more inclusive arts education for children and young people in England – an issue that SOLT & UK Theatre and the wider sector have long been campaigning for.

Major Wins

1. EBacc Scrapped

The Government has agreed to the sector's call to scrap the English Baccalaureate (EBacc). The EBacc is an accountability measure in England which has limited pupil choice. To learn more about the damaging impact of the EBacc on the arts, have a look at these [report cards from the Cultural Learning Alliance](#). Scrapping the EBacc will give pupils the opportunity to study a greater breadth of GCSE subjects including the arts, alongside English, Maths and Science.

2. Drama

You highlighted that Drama education is currently patchy and overly academic and your call for a stronger focus on live performance and creativity is reflected in the final report. The report recommends that the Government introduces clearer requirements for Drama modules and lessons. It also recommends that Drama is included as a discrete section within the English Programme of Study at Key Stage 3 to help secure more equitable access to Drama education,

3. Dance

We noted the need for more and better Dance education. The Government has agreed to work on this, concluding that *"Dance holds a unique position in the curriculum as both a physical activity and a creative art form...We welcome the Review's acknowledgement of the creative as well as physical aspects of dance..."*

4. Diversity of texts in the Curriculum

Many of you said there was the need for more diversity in the range of texts taught in schools, so we are pleased that this has been addressed in the Government's response which states: *"Our aim is for*

the curriculum to be both a mirror, in which every child can see themselves and their communities reflected, and a window through which every child is connected to the world beyond their existing horizons and perspectives”.

5. New Core Enrichment Entitlement

A new entitlement will ensure all children / young people have access to arts, civic engagement, nature, and sport. The Government references the work of the RSC in delivering arts programmes and commits to scaling up this type of activity to spread opportunities across schools. Ofsted will monitor this new entitlement, and parents will be able to easily compare what arts activities schools offer when choosing a school for their children.

If we are to ensure that arts are for everyone, the classroom is only the start. As we have highlighted through our [Theatre for Every Child](#) campaign, access to school trips has fallen sharply, disproportionately affecting working-class children. Schools are facing a multitude of challenges, and finances are increasingly stretched. Delivering on the promise of the new core enrichment entitlement – which must include opportunities off the school premises as well as opportunities within schools – will require sustained funding.

6. Oracy Framework to be published

The Government has recognised the importance of Drama education in improving children’s speaking and listening skills. There is a long tradition of debating societies in private schools which help pupils develop these crucial life skills. We therefore welcome the Government’s plan to introduce more opportunities for state school pupils to develop these capabilities.

Next steps and how you can help

SOLT & UK Theatre member’s insights will be crucial in ensuring that the positive recommendations from the Curriculum and Assessment Review Report, translate into concrete policy that improves access to arts subjects and routes into the theatre industry.

1. Look out for the upcoming consultation on Progress 8

The current version of Progress 8 has hampered access to arts subjects. The [new version proposed by the Department for Education](#) is much better for arts subjects, but we need to make sure we affirm that loudly and clearly as a sector. We will let you know when the consultation is live, so watch this space...

2. Share your insights on the higher education/skills system

We’ll soon ask for your insights on skills shortages and higher education, including quotes and case studies. The Government is creating V Levels to sit alongside A Levels and T Levels. These [will provide a vocational alternative to these academic and technical routes](#). You don’t need to be an expert on the



skills system; we will be looking for quotes /case studies about what is and is not working from your perspective as employers.

Who We Are

The Society of London Theatre (SOLT) & UK Theatre are the membership organisations for the leading theatre producers, managers, owners, and operators in London and across the UK. This includes commercial organisations, subsidised organisations, and not-for-profit independent charities.

Our Vision and Mission

Our Vision, and the world we want to see, is a dynamic, sustainable and world class theatre sector. Our Mission, and what we do as an organisation, is to champion theatre and support our members to thrive.

Contact Details and Further Information

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Visit our websites: [Advocacy Resources - UK Theatre](#) & [Advocacy Resources - SOLT](#)

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