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**Baccalaureates and curriculum frameworks  
in the English 14-19 system:  
A scoping paper for the Sixth Form Colleges Forum**

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## Contents

<b>1.</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Four approaches to curriculum &amp; qualification frameworks</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>2.1</b>	<b>Broadening general education (Type 1)</b>	<b>7</b>
	Proposals and developments from the 1960s to the Dearing Review (1996)	7
	The Dearing Review and <i>Curriculum 2000</i>	8
	The post-Tomlinson era (2005 onwards)	9
	IB Diploma Programme	9
	Cambridge Pre-U	10
	AQA Bac	10
	Summary	11
<b>2.2</b>	<b>Developing pre-vocational &amp; broad vocational awards (Type 2)</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>2.3</b>	<b>Linked proposals (Type 3)</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>2.4</b>	<b>Unified proposals (Type 4)</b>	<b>13</b>
	A British Baccalaureate & early unification proposals (early 1990s)	13
	Unified flexible frameworks in the mid-1990s	14
	Official proposals for overarching frameworks (1990s – 2003)	14
	An English Baccalaureate System – key ideas in the early 2000s	16
	The Tomlinson Diploma System Proposal (2003-2004)	17
	The Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification (2002 – present)	18
	Examples of local and sector-based initiatives (2000 – present)	19
	Surrey Graduation Certificate	19
	BSix Baccalaureate Programme	19

<b>3.</b>	<b>Reflections on baccalaureate-type frameworks</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>3.1</b>	<b>The English context and the search for reform</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>3.2</b>	<b>Purposes and values</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>3.3</b>	<b>Dimensions of design</b>	<b>23</b>
	Breadth/depth	23
	Prescription/choice	24
	Inclusivity/exclusivity	24
	Qualification/curriculum framework	25
<b>3.4</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Key questions for pilot institutions and evaluators</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>5.</b>	<b>References</b>	<b>28</b>

*Nearly everyone will agree that our school education is too specialised. But nearly everyone feels that it is outside the wit of man to alter it.*

*(C.P. Snow 1959)*

## 1. Introduction

At first sight, there would appear to be little need to discuss Baccalaureates and curriculum frameworks within the English 14-19 education system. Historically, as we shall see, any attempt to introduce a curriculum framework for 14-19 year olds has been opposed, primarily on the grounds that it would dilute A Level study and the English tradition of specialisation. The most recent proposal to introduce a national, baccalaureate-type framework was in 2004, when the Working Group on 14-19 Reform (2004a), chaired by Sir Mike Tomlinson, proposed a unified Diploma system to cover the whole 14-19 curriculum. It was rejected by the then Secretary of State, Ruth Kelly, on the same grounds as all previous proposals of this type - GCSEs and A Levels were reaffirmed as the 'cornerstones' of the 14-19 qualifications system (DfES 2005).

However, since then, calls for a more overarching or baccalaureate-type approach to 14-19 qualifications have continued to emerge and there have been a number of developments by awarding bodies, professional associations, local authorities and individual institutions. Moreover, interest in the International Baccalaureate (IB) continues to grow and, for a brief period, local authorities were exhorted to ensure that the IB was available in at least one institution in their area (Coles 2006). It is clear that the idea of a curriculum programme, such as can be provided by a baccalaureate, continues to be seen as desirable and necessary because of the inadequacy of the current single-subject qualifications. These are criticised for offering narrow study programmes and not preparing young people adequately for higher study, adult and working life (Pring *et al.* 2009).

The aim of this paper is to examine the various, recent initiatives in this area, for example the IB, the Welsh Bac, the Pre-U, Surrey Graduation Certificate, in order to understand their underlying purposes, design, implementation challenges and strengths and weaknesses in the UK context. We also locate these contemporary proposals within a broader historical account. This background analysis enables us to develop a conceptual framework that is intended to prove useful for the Sixth Form Colleges' Forum (SFCF) as it takes forward its plans to develop and pilot a 'Sixth Form Bac' (SF Bac). We will build on previous attempts to offer typologies of baccalaureate approaches (e.g. Thompson *et al.* 2003) to help to situate the SF Bac, to raise issues about the context in which it is being piloted and to assist with reflections about its purposes and design.

The paper begins by identifying four broad approaches to curriculum and qualifications frameworks, which are used as a structuring device to describe proposals and developments from the 1960s to the present. This is followed by a section that provides a conceptual framework (breadth/depth; prescription/choice; inclusivity/exclusivity; qualification/curriculum

framework) for analysing the design of the SF Bac and its location in relation to other curriculum and qualification approaches. In the light of the fact that there is no leading baccalaureate-type model in England, the respective strengths and weaknesses of the four design dimensions need to be weighed up in order to maximise both the 'use value' (perceived usefulness) and 'exchange value' (perceived currency) of the SF Bac in the sixth form college context. To help with this process the paper concludes by suggesting a number of key questions and issues that need to be considered in developing and implementing this important initiative.

## **2. Four approaches to curriculum and qualification frameworks**

Using a historical lens, it is possible to identify four major approaches to the development of a broader curriculum and qualification framework for 16-19 (later 14-19) education and training in England from the 1960s to the present:

- Type 1: broadening general/academic education
- Type 2: developing broad pre-vocational and vocational awards
- Type 3: the introduction of 'linked' components or frameworks
- Type 4: proposals for a unified system to include both general/academic and vocational learning.

Reform proposals for the general track (Type 1) can be traced back to the mid-1950s; those related to vocational qualifications (Type 2) began in earnest in the mid-1980s; linked proposals (Type 3) emerged in the late-1980s; and unified ideas (Type 4) became influential in the 1990s. In addition, over this period of nearly 60 years, there was a gradual move from a focus on the education and training of 16-19 to that of 14-19 year olds, although the concept of a 14-19 phase only emerged as official national government policy in 2002 with the publication of the 14-19 Green Paper (DfES 2002).

All four types are present to a greater or lesser extent in current qualifications arrangements. As we can see from Figure 1, what we term 'track-based' proposals and developments (Types 1 and 2) attempt to provide a more programmatic approach to either general/academic or vocational qualifications than is possible with single-subject awards. These have, in some cases, found their way into official policy in England. Unified approaches (Type 4), on the other hand, have never risen beyond the status of proposals to become part of government policy, but they have formed the basis of local experimentation or initiatives offered by professional associations or awarding bodies. Elsewhere in the UK, however, a unified approach has been adopted - in Wales with the *Welsh Bac* and, to a lesser extent, in Scotland with *Curriculum for Excellence* (Scottish Executive 2004) and the Scottish Baccalaureates (SQA 2009). Linked proposals (Type 3), which retain the qualifications tracks, but attempt to introduce vehicles to provide linkages between them (Young *et al.* 1996), have steadily grown in importance in the English system. Core or key skills can be seen as an early

example and the Diplomas can be considered as the latest high profile initiative in this area.

**Figure 1. Four types of curriculum and qualifications framework**

<b>Type of proposal</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Example</b>	<b>Date</b>
1. Broadening academic/general education	A more programmatic approach to academic/general education	Advanced supplementary (AS) qualification to provide more subject breadth	1960s onwards
2. Developing broad pre-vocational and vocational awards	A more programmatic approach to vocational awards	GNVQ with its inclusion of key skills	Mid-1980s onwards
3. Linked	Connections between academic and vocational qualifications tracks to promote progression and parity of esteem	Core skills, in both academic and vocational awards; awards which allow mixing of general and vocational study (e.g. the Diplomas)	Late-1980s onwards
4. Unified	An overarching framework for all types of qualifications and learning	Tomlinson unified diploma system from Entry to Advanced Level	1990s onwards

## 2.1 Broadening general education (Type 1)

### Proposals and developments from the 1960s to the Dearing Review (1996)

Within a matter of years after the introduction of single-subject A Levels to replace the broader Higher School Certificate in England and Wales, concerns were raised about what appeared to be an excessively specialised and academic curriculum and the relevance of A Levels to the country's future economic and social needs (Pound 2003). Largely as a result of these criticisms, over the next twenty years there were a number of government and non-government proposals for broadening advanced level general education. These included:

- the International Baccalaureate, introduced in the late 1960s (see Peterson 1973)
- the Major and Minor framework proposals, published by the Schools Council in 1966, which would allow advanced level learners to study two core A Levels supplemented by a number of elective courses
- the Qualifying (Q) and Further (F) proposals, published by the Schools Council in 1969, for five 'qualifying' examinations taken in Year 1 of the sixth form, followed by three 'further' examinations in the second year
- proposals for Normals (N) and Furthers (F), published by the Schools Council in 1973, based on a five-subject curriculum across two years with two 'Furthers' leading to matriculation for higher education. Those not intending to go into higher education could complete five Normals (see Mathieson 1992).

While the IB came into being in the late 1960s, the other three proposals, aimed at either supplementing or replacing A Levels with a broader set of subjects, faced opposition from higher education and the teacher unions, as well as from Secretaries of State for Education (Mathieson 1992) and were never implemented.

At this point, attention switched to catering for the needs of the 'new sixth formers' (Mathieson 1992), young people who would have previously left school at this stage but who were now staying on into the sixth form as a result of the raising of the school leaving age to 16. In the academic track in 1972 the Certificate of Extended Education (CEE) was proposed for the 90 per cent of 'non-traditional' students who would leave after one year in the sixth form. CEE was seen as a progression route from Certificates of Secondary Education (CSE) and was to be developed by the same awarding bodies. One local authority adviser writing at the time suggested that it would be possible for learners to take a combination of CEEs, A Levels or N or Fs (Whalley 1974). CEE suffered a similar fate to the other proposals listed above. Its main claim to fame came in the late 1970s and early 1980s when it was one of the models considered by government, who eventually favoured the introduction of an alternative award, the Certificate of Prevocational Education (CPVE) (Harland 1991). By this time, the policy preoccupation had switched to tackling youth unemployment by providing training courses, such as the Youth Training Scheme, and full-time pre-vocational provision in schools and colleges (Raggatt and Williams 1999)

The issue of broadening general education did not go away however. In 1983 the School Examination and Assessment Council (SEAC) proposed the introduction of a suite of Advanced Supplementary (AS) qualifications to be

taken alongside A Levels. The AS, developed from the subsidiary subjects in the old Higher School Certificate, was equivalent to half an A Level. It was designed to be at the same level of difficulty, but to cover a narrower range of topics. This qualification was approved by government, and the first AS awards were offered in 1987. In the event, however, very few students took the new AS, with Lord Dearing noting that for every 15 A Levels only one was taken as an AS (Dearing 1996). Moreover, those who did take these awards tended to use them for reinforcing specialisation, rather than as a contrast to their A Levels. The AS was thus regarded as a conspicuous failure in terms of broadening the advanced level curriculum (Macfarlane 1993).

At the same time as the development of this new award, the Government established a committee under Professor Higginson to look into A Level syllabuses and assessment. The committee, however, became aware of the broad level of dissatisfaction with the A Level approach to the academic curriculum. The consensus of those consulted was that the 16-19 academic curriculum should 'provide a broad experience in its own right and ought not be seen primarily as a preparation for the next stage' (Macfarlane 1993: 28). Aware that it was going beyond its brief, the Higginson Committee recommended the reshaping of A Levels so that learners could take five subjects rather than three, with less focus on content and more on conceptual understanding (DES 1988). Within hours of Professor Higginson reporting, the proposals were rejected by the then Secretary of State for Education, Kenneth Baker, and by the Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher. According to Macfarlane, however, these ideas were adopted by the Labour Party as part of its education policy for the 1992 General Election.

Amidst these failures and rejections of a more programmatic approach to advanced level study, incremental changes to A Level syllabuses, such as the introduction of new subjects, different modes of assessment and modularisation, gathered pace in the late 1980s and early 1990s (Young and Leney 1997). These 'internal' changes could be seen as a slow evolution of A Levels to make them more accessible to the increasing numbers of young people staying on in full-time education.

### **The Dearing Review and *Curriculum 2000***

The debate about broadening was taken up once again in the mid-1990s with the Dearing Review of 16-19 Qualifications. Dearing recommended keeping the three qualifications tracks – general, broad vocational and occupational – separate and distinctive. For the general track he proposed a new 'short fat' Advanced Subsidiary (AS) qualification to be taken at the end of one year of study and worth 40 per cent of a full A Level. Its purpose was not only to facilitate broadening of study, but also to provide a stepping-stone to a full A Level and a stepping off point for learners who might not be able to achieve the full award (Dearing 1996). Dearing appeared driven as much by concerns about wastage and efficiency in A Level study as by the issue of breadth. His proposals for A Level were taken forward by the new Labour Government in its document,



*Qualifying for Success* (DfEE/DENI/WO 1997), and developed into the Subsidiary AS which formed the first part of a new two-stage A Level (AS/A2).

Ministers hoped that learners would take up to five AS subjects in the first year of study, which alongside Key Skills, would provide a broader advanced level programme (Blackstone 1998). The AS that emerged as part of the Curriculum 2000 reforms, as they became known, also had more than one purpose.

Arguably, broadening programmes of study was its least influential aspect, with most learners taking four subjects in the first year not five (Hodgson and Spours 2003a). The modular design of the new AS/A2 qualification allowed learners to accumulate 50 per cent credit towards their final A Level grade through the AS component and this, together with opportunities for re-sitting AS/A2 modules, helped to significantly boost grade attainment. The main effects of Curriculum 2000 were thus to provide a slight broadening of learner programmes but significant increases in grade attainment and greater accessibility to A Level study (Hodgson and Spours 2003a). In retrospect, these reforms could be seen as principally aimed at the second rather than the first quartile of 16-19 year olds.

From 2002 with the publication of the Green Paper, *14-19 Education: Extending Opportunities, Raising Standards* (DfES 2002), the reform focus turned from 16-19 to 14-19, with proposals for broadening Key Stage 4 through the reduction of subject prescription and the introduction of Applied GCSEs and other vocational awards, such as the Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC) qualifications. In the context of this paper, we see these as attempts to broaden general education even though the mechanisms were vocational and some schools used these qualifications less as vehicles for broadening and more as components of an 'alternative curriculum' or 'pathway' for those deemed unable to follow a full GCSE programme (Higham and Yeomans 2007).

New Labour's two major curriculum and qualifications reform programmes, Curriculum 2000 for 16-19 year olds and the Key Stage 4 increased flexibility agenda for 14-16 year olds, were both partial and voluntarist. They were aimed at particular groups of students rather than all 14-19 year olds and they were not part of a prescribed or statutory framework.

## **The post-Tomlinson era (2005 onwards)**

Since the mid 2000s and the publication of the 14-19 White Paper (DfES 2005), which reaffirmed the position of GCSEs and A Levels, attempts to broaden general education have been taken over by private awarding bodies. Presently three awards dominate this area – the IB, the Cambridge International Examinations (CIE) Pre-U and the Assessment and Qualifications Alliance's AQA Bac.

### **IB Diploma Programme**

This award for students aged 16-19, which as we have seen has been around for four decades, is now offered in over 2000 schools and colleges worldwide, 189 of which are in the UK (IBO 2009). The IB Diploma comprises a common core and six subject groups. The core contains an extended essay, theory of knowledge

and community action service and is seen as 'central to the philosophy of the Diploma Programme' (IBO 2009). The six subjects, three of which are normally studied at 'higher level', with the other three at 'standard level', are chosen from six broad groupings, for example Group 3. Individuals and societies and Group 5 Mathematics and computer science. In comparison with a standard A Level programme, therefore, the IB is considerably broader, more holistic in curriculum terms and more structured. It is highly regarded, but is considered to be a tough option because of its demands in terms of breadth (Kearns 2004), particularly the requirement of two modern foreign languages (Hill 2003).

### **Cambridge Pre-U**

Introduced in September 2008, after considerable discussion with admissions tutors in universities as well as representatives from schools and colleges, this award is primarily designed to prepare young people for higher education. To gain the Pre-U students must successfully complete a minimum of three Principal Pre-U subjects, an Individual Research Report and a portfolio on Global Perspectives. There are 26 Pre-U Principal subjects to choose from, none of which are compulsory. These differ from A Levels in that they take a linear rather than modular form – assessment is at the end of two years of study and relies heavily on externally set and marked examinations. To reflect their purpose of preparation for university, the Pre-U Principal subjects are graded differently from A Levels. There are nine grades – Pass 1, 2 and 3, Merit 1, 2 and 3 and Distinction 1, 2, and 3 – with Distinction 2 being equivalent to an A\* at A Level and Distinction 1 indicating performance at a Level above that. These features of the Cambridge Pre-U mean that it potentially provides many of the requirements higher education tutors say that they wish to see in university applicants, for example depth of study and the ability to research independently (see Wilde and Wright 2007). Its grading structure is deliberately designed to differentiate performance at the upper end. The Pre-U appears to privilege depth over breadth while moving beyond a three A Level diet. However, it does not ensure subject breadth in the same way as the IB, because there is no prescription attached to the three Principal subjects studied.

### **AQA Bac**

Like the Cambridge Pre-U, this Level 3 award is focused on application for university. Pilots for an 'English Baccalaureate' as it was originally called, started in 2008 and over 100 centres were involved in 2009.

It comprises four main components:

1. Specialist depth of study – three A Levels of the student's choice.
2. Independent learning - Extended Project.
3. Personal Development – enrichment activities (two of three areas - work-related learning, community participation and personal development) totalling a minimum of 100 hours and recorded in the AQA enrichment diary.
4. Breadth – a minimum of an AS General Studies, Critical Thinking or Citizenship.

Unlike the IB and the Pre-U, the AQA Bac uses pre-existing A Levels. The award is graded at three levels – Pass (Es at A Level and Extended Project), Merit (C at A Level and Extended Project) and Distinction (As at A Level and Extended Project).

## Summary

Attempts to broaden general qualifications appear to have fallen into three phases:

- 1 The period from the 1960s to the late 1980s produced what Young and Leney refer to as 'proposals without reform' (1997: 46), focused mainly on the study of more subjects.
- 2 The decade following – mid-1990s to 2005 - was dominated by the Dearing Report (1996) and New Labour's interpretation of it – *Curriculum 2000* – with a new model A Level, Key Skills and the Advanced Certificate of Vocational Education (AVCE).
- 3 The period since 2005 has seen the rise of baccalaureate-type proposals by private awarding bodies, in part as a response to the Government's rejection of the main proposals of the Tomlinson Working Group on 14-19 Reform for an overarching diploma (2004).

All proposals since the 1960s have attempted to go beyond the normal diet of two or three A Levels in order to broaden learner programmes. The only one to become government policy however, *Curriculum 2000*, was limited in terms of increasing breadth into learner programmes. Most A Level learners now take four subjects at AS level, dropping down to three A Levels in the second year. What *Curriculum 2000* did achieve was a significant reduction in the number of students taking a two A Level programme and more accessible A Level achievement through modular assessment. The awarding body proposals, on the other hand, have been bolder. The IB still stands out as the broadest, with its six subjects and the Core. The Pre-U and the AQA Bac, on the other hand, are more specialist but do require additional achievement (e.g. an extended project/research report and other broadening experiences). All the awards currently offered to learners can be seen as exclusive because they are at Level 3 only and do not include or require vocational qualifications or units.

## 2.2 Developing pre-vocational and broad vocational awards (Type 2)

The pre-vocational and broad vocational awards developed in the 1980s and 1990s could be regarded as significant for two reasons. First, they have provided a small but significant full-time qualifications route, which, in the context of a relatively static work-based route (Hayward *et al.* 2005), plays an important role in the 14-19 phase. Second, they have developed curriculum features that have been used more widely in linked and unified proposals.

*A Basis for Choice* (FEU 1979) could be seen to mark the beginning of curriculum frameworks in the area of pre-vocational and vocational qualifications. Concerned with providing learning opportunities for those who were not seeking or able to access the labour market immediately, qualifications like the Certificate of Pre-Vocational Education (CPVE) and the CGLI Diploma of Vocational Education (DVE) began to be offered in schools and colleges in the 1980s. CPVE was a one-year course launched in 1985 by a Joint Board comprising BTEC, CGLI and RSA. It offered 'vocational taster courses', together with a core of learning, including basic skills, wider process skill such as

problem-solving and recording of achievement, and was meant to promote progression to the labour market and further vocational study (Green 1991). Theoretically at least, CPVE could provide a framework for A Level study, but it never did and quickly became associated with lower attaining learners who needed an additional year to mature and to become orientated to a vocational area (Spours 1993).

CPVE foundered and was succeeded by different products created by each of the three awarding bodies that had previously collaborated – the CGLI Diploma of Vocational Education, the BTEC First Diploma and an RSA award. These qualifications were designed around a core/options design and it is this basic feature that would be reproduced in different forms in subsequent vocational (e.g. The General National Vocational Qualification, linked (e.g. the Diploma) and unified proposals (e.g. the Tomlinson Diploma). They also provided a testing ground for core and wider skills that would play a role in curriculum thinking in the ensuing two decades.

The General National Vocational Qualification (GNVQ), launched in the early 1990s, was the national successor to these private awarding body qualifications and was intended to replace them. In the event, the BTEC First Diploma continued and GNVQ itself was eventually phased out in 2007. In terms of curriculum design, GNVQ went through several iterations, although it remained true to the core options design with its 'mandatory' and 'optional units'. Core skills, and later Key Skills, were an important feature of GNVQs, although they depressed the completion rates to such an extent that they were later de-coupled from the award (Ecclestone 2002).

These pre-vocational and broad vocational awards could be seen to be promoting a different dimension of breadth to the broadening proposals in general education. Instead of more subjects, they have offered basic and wider skills, new approaches to assessment, such as recording of achievement, and forms of vocational preparation that could be classified as 'experiential' (Crombie White *et al.* 1995).

### **2.3 Linked proposals (Type 3)**

Linked proposals could be seen as a particular response to the English tracked qualifications system (Howieson *et al.* 1997). By linked we are referring to mechanisms that provide a bridge between academic and vocational qualifications. These mechanisms appear to take three main forms:

1. A qualification or a component of a qualification (e.g. Key Skills, Extended Project, ASDAN awards), which can be taken as part of either a general or vocational programme as a way of increasing breadth and also to address the academic/vocational divide in a limited way by providing a common experience for learners on both general and vocational programmes.
2. A composite qualification that is located in the vocational track, but that can contain a minor element of general education (e.g. the 14-19 Diploma).

3. A framework which overarches both general and vocational qualifications. This third type of linked mechanism has come in two different forms.
  - a. A curriculum framework, which provides a structure within which different qualifications and additional activities are offered to all learners. TVEI Extension in the late 1980s and early 1990s could be seen as an early example and the 14-19 Entitlement, introduced in the 2005 14-19 White Paper, as a more recent version.
  - b. A qualifications framework, which aligns all types of awards, within a common national structure. The National Qualifications Framework (NQF) is the only existing example. One effect of this approach is to create equivalences between different types of qualifications, thus providing an opportunity to mix study and value different types of learning. The Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) potentially continues this linked strategy, although currently it is confined to adult and vocational qualifications only.

Linked proposals and developments recognise the problem of the academic/vocational divide, but have not provided an answer to it. To date they have not achieved a great deal either in terms of increasing breadth into learner programmes or in creating parity of esteem between general and vocational qualifications, because they leave the historic divisions between the tracks relatively untouched. However, as we will see, linked mechanisms have the capacity to play an important role in the creation and functioning of a fully unified curriculum and qualifications system.

## 2.4 Unified proposals (Type 4)

Since 1990 and the publication of *A British Baccalaureate* (Finegold *et al.* 1990), there have been more than 30 proposals from teacher professional associations, think tanks, researchers and political parties for the development of a unified curriculum and qualifications award framework (FEDA/IoE 1999).

### **A British Baccalaureate & early unification proposals (early 1990s)**

The publication of *A British Baccalaureate* (Finegold *et al.* 1990) marked the beginning of a wave of other proposals for a unified curriculum and qualifications system (e.g. Royal Society 1991, NCE 1995, NUT 1995, NAHT 1995, Jenkins and David 1996), which sought to bring academic and vocational learning into a single framework. These can broadly be divided into two types - a 'grouped/prescriptive' approach or an 'open/framework' approach. Those who argued for the former wanted learners to take a combination of subjects in the 14-19 phase to ensure breadth of study and to address the culture of dropping 'difficult' subjects such as mathematics, sciences and modern foreign languages. This approach can be seen in the proposals contained in *A British Baccalaureate* (1990) and in those from the Royal Society (1991) and National Commission on Education (1995). Those who argued for an open framework

were in favour of a more flexible curriculum and qualifications approach, but wanted to keep the elective, open and choice-based features of the English qualifications system alive. A number of proposals emerged for a unified 14+ 'framework approach' which emphasised the modular development of existing qualifications so as to provide for breadth through greater flexibility rather than through prescription (e.g. AfC *et al.* 1994).

### **Unified flexible frameworks in the mid-1990s**

In the mid-1990s, attempts were made to design a 'compromise' model between these two approaches based on a core/specialisation design (Young and Spours 1996). In addition, representatives of both the 'unifiers' and the 'frameworkers' came together in 1996/97 during the debate about the Dearing 16-19 qualifications proposals to agree on a set of principles for reform of education and training for 14-19 year olds. As a result, a joint statement from the main education professional associations was produced in 1997 (AoC *et al.* 1997). It suggested that a curriculum and qualifications framework for England should:

- commence at 14 rather than 16, as learners begin to specialise in their studies
- act as a framework for 'a curriculum entitlement' in an elective and fragmented education and training system
- reduce the division between academic (now termed 'general') and vocational learning so that all learners could develop both theoretical and applied capacities and so that vocational education and training could achieve parity of esteem
- be represented by a single and easily recognisable form of certification (e.g. a baccalaureate or diploma) which embraced both full-time and part-time learning and general and vocational achievement
- be multi-level and non age-related in order to build a ladder of achievement for all learners
- be modular in order to support breadth, depth and more flexible approaches to study.

During the 1990s there were, however, limits to both the scope and depth of the professional consensus. Most of the unified reform proposals from 14+ were 'blueprints' and did not go into a great deal of design or operational detail. Amidst the consensus on basic principles, little attention was devoted to the foundation and intermediate levels or to the curriculum for 14-16 year olds. Moreover, discussions about an approach to certificating apprenticeship remained relatively neglected bar one attempt by a group of academics to write *A British Baccalaureate* for the work-based route (Evans *et al.* 1997). This lack of detail and scope meant that there was also relatively little discussion of the reform process itself, the architecture of the system or implementation issues.

### **Official proposals for overarching frameworks (1990s – 2003)**

During the period 1991 to 2003, there were a number of 'official' proposals for 'overarching' qualification frameworks. Overarching advanced and general diplomas were briefly mentioned in the 1991 White Paper, though not acted

upon, and this policy document will be remembered more for the creation of a national triple-track system than for curriculum frameworks (Hodgson and Spours 1997).

Ideas about overarching qualifications frameworks resurfaced in the Dearing Report in 1996 with proposals for National Certificates at Intermediate and Advanced Levels and an Advanced Diploma. The Certificate at Intermediate Level were designed to contain five GCSEs or equivalent GNVQs and NVQs, including English, maths and ICT. At Advanced Level students would have to achieve two A Levels or equivalents in GNVQ or NVQ, plus the three Key Skills. The Advanced Diploma was a more ambitious curriculum framework with its focus on breadth as well as depth of study. To achieve it students would have to gain passes in two A Levels or equivalents, plus the three Key Skills and to take four of the newly proposed AS Level (Advanced Subsidiary) across four broad curriculum domains.

In 1998, QCA and its equivalents in Wales and Northern Ireland commissioned research on an Overarching Certificate at Advanced Level. The research team from the Institute of Education, University of London and the Further Education Development Agency proposed a 'Core and Specialisation' model. The Core contained Key Skills, Broadening Studies and a Connective Study (research project) counting towards a third of the award. The specialist element contained a minimum of two A Levels or equivalent (FEDA/IOE 1999). A certificate would recognise achievements, and the overarching award as a whole would be underpinned by a process called 'Management of Learning'.

This minimalist approach was, in part, the result of the ambivalence of the New Labour Government, who had proposed an overarching certificate in Opposition (Labour Party 1996), but had largely abandoned this idea in their 1997 Election Manifesto (Labour Party 1997) and put it on the backburner when developing Curriculum 2000. The minimalism of the OAC was also compounded by anxieties of representatives from the further education sector that anything demanding more than two A Levels or equivalent would be too difficult for their students to achieve.

The end of the 1990s also saw interest in the idea of a Graduation Certificate (Lucas 2003). Originating in a report published by the Social Exclusion Unit (SEU 1999), QCA was commissioned to produce a certificate, which would be obtainable by the age of 19 on 'graduation' from education and training. It reported a year later (QCA 2000), proposing a model which required 'graduates' to gain five GCSEs or equivalents, Level 2 Communication, Application of Number and Information Technology and to have a profile of 'wider achievements' (e.g. experience of work and community involvement). Unlike the Dearing proposals for Certificates and Diplomas, the Graduation Certificate was focused on achievement at Level 2, which was seen as the benchmark for employability, and on other forms of experience outside the school/college curriculum, which would prepare young people for citizenship. Again, these proposals were not acted upon by government.

The first and only time that these unified overarching frameworks appeared in a government policy document was the Matriculation Diploma, which was laid out in the 14-19 Green Paper (DfES 2002). It proposed three levels of award –



Intermediate, Advanced and Higher Diplomas - all of which required a minimum of Level 2 Key Skills in Literacy, Numeracy and ICT and evidence of achievement in wider activities (e.g. active citizenship and work-related learning). For the Intermediate Award, learners would need to achieve five GCSE A\*-C grades or equivalent; for the Advanced Award, two A Levels plus an AS Level or equivalent; and for the Higher Award, three A Levels at grades ABB or above or NVQ Level 4 equivalent, plus one contrasting AS to show breadth.

While these proposals were yet again not acted upon by the Labour Government, it is possible to see a gradual accumulation of ideas and design features from these 'official' publications which were to eventually find their way into the Tomlinson report – awards at different levels, the importance of key skills, the recognition of wider activities and the role of a research/extended project.

### **An English Baccalaureate System – key ideas in the early 2000s**

Developing in parallel with these 'official' proposals and, at times interacting with them, were a set of ideas which were developed by teacher professional associations and academics and which became known as *The English Baccalaureate System from 14+* (Hodgson and Spours 2003b, 2004, 2008).

#### **Figure 3. Design features of an English Baccalaureate System**

- *Four levels* - Entry to Advanced and which interlock (e.g. an Intermediate Level English Bac would require a majority of attainment at Level 2, but would also allow the accreditation of some Level 1 and Level 3 learning). This would encourage both breadth and progression.
- *Common Core* of knowledge and skills comprising at least English, Mathematics, ICT, a Modern Foreign Language, Citizenship and Community Action and Service, and an Extended Project.
- *Two types of Bac*, open/general and specialized/named, cutting across all forms of learning in the 14-19 phase. Specialized/named baccalaureates were only be available post-16 in order to prevent premature specialization and to allow for learner maturation. English Bacs, in their specialized/named form, would also have the capacity to be used as a learning framework for apprenticeships.
- *Credit* as the currency of the English Bac system. Learner achievement would be recorded as a combination of credits, grades and narrative.
- *A diploma transcript*, a paper or/and electronic document would be used to record achievement could be summarized at key transition points and used to promote progression.
- *Accreditation of the whole learner programme* in order to recognize the broad variety of learning activities and experiences within and beyond the classroom.
- *Utilization of existing qualifications and components*, thus building on the strengths of the current qualifications system and allowing for a gradual transition process.
- *Assessment for learning* to ensure recognition of learning in different contexts; provide a greater role for teacher professional judgment (although external examinations would remain at key points) and reduce the assessment burden of the current system.
- *Information, advice and guidance* to be built into the Bac entitlement to support effective choice and progression within and beyond the Bac system.



As Figure 3 illustrates, the main design features comprised a single award to cover all types of learning from Entry to Advanced Level, a core/specialisation design, credit as the currency of the Baccalaureate award, recognition of knowledge and skills from both school/college/workplace and beyond and an Extended Project (Hodgson and Spours 2008: 128).

### **The Tomlinson Diploma System Proposal (2003-2004)**

These ideas fed into the Tomlinson Working Group on 14-19 Reform, which was tasked by the then Secretary of State, Charles Clarke, to consider the longer-term future of 14-19 education and training (DfES 2003). During its deliberations over a period of some 18 months, the Tomlinson Committee proposed 'a new diploma framework' for all 14-19 year olds 'covering the whole of their learning programme, rather than existing individual qualifications such as GCSEs, GNVQs, A Levels and NVQs' (Working Group on 14-19 reform 2003: 4). It was suggested that young people would 'take fewer written examinations than now; and assessment by their teachers, lecturers and trainers would be given more importance' (p. 5). These radical proposals for a new diploma system that would gradually subsume all existing qualifications for 14-19 year olds from Entry to Advanced Level, and with less external assessment, were widely consulted upon and formed the basis of the diploma designs laid out in some detail in the Interim Report in February 2004 (Working Group on 14-19 Reform 2004b). This was followed by the Final Report (Working Group on 14-19 Reform 2004a), which proposed a 'Unified Framework for 14-19 Learning' comprising:

- Four inter-locking levels of diplomas - Entry, Foundation, Intermediate and Advanced;
- A core/specialisation curriculum model;
- Core learning, which would occupy about one third of the learner's programme and include: Functional mathematics, Literacy/Communication and ICT; Common Knowledge, Skills and Attributes to promote reflective, effective, social and internationally aware learners; an Extended Project; and Wider Activities underpinned by Personal Review, Planning and Guidance;
- Main Learning, taking up about two thirds of a learner's programme and made up of specially designed components based on existing qualifications;
- One 'Open Line' and 20 specialised or named Lines of Main Learning;
- Diplomas with an overall volume of 180 credits, equivalent to or above the demands of existing programmes and containing learning at two levels, to facilitate breadth and progression;
- Credit as the basic currency;
- Balanced assessment with a greater role for assessment by teachers and lecturers;
- A transcript of achievement;
- A finer grained approach to grading with an overall grade for diplomas and several grades at the upper end to distinguish between good and outstanding achievement.

In retrospect, the proposals in the Tomlinson Final Report, while based on strong arguments for reform and a convincing narrative about the needs of 14-19 year olds, look strangely imbalanced in terms of the actual Diploma design. Some

features are described in considerable detail and others, particularly Main Learning, which was intended to take up the majority of a learner programme, are largely left open to interpretation or further work. More importantly, how existing qualifications might be modified to be used within Main Learning, was not evident and it was difficult to understand exactly what learners would be doing in this part of their programme.

The Tomlinson unified proposals were not adopted by government, although the weaknesses we have outlined above, while not helping Tomlinson's case, were not the main reason. Politics intervened as the result of an approaching General Election and a subsequent change of Ministers (Hodgson and Spours 2008). In the event, some of the features of a unified baccalaureate system were adapted for the designs of the 14-19 Diplomas – the Extended Project, the idea of Principal, Generic and Addition/Specialist Learning and the language of Diplomas and Lines of Learning, which became, as we have stated earlier, a 'linked' approach within a track-based system.

The idea of a unified Baccalaureate-type system is now confined to the Welsh Baccalaureate. In England, the idea of a more unified approach to the whole 14-19 system is, once again, being championed by local areas (e.g. Surrey Graduation Certificate), by teacher unions and professional associations (e.g. SFBac) and by political parties in Opposition to the Government, such as the Liberal Democrats (2009).

### **The Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification (2003 – present)**

At the same time as the 14-19 Green Paper was being discussed in England, the Welsh Assembly Government published 'Learning Pathways 14-19' (2002), which had many of the features of the English 14-19 Green Paper but also contained ideas about a Welsh Bac Qualification. The Welsh Bac was seen as an appropriate overarching award for recognising all types of qualifications for 14-19 year olds and was piloted at Intermediate and Advanced Levels in 2003. Following a positive external evaluation (CDELL 2006), the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) proposed that it should be available at Advanced and Intermediate Level for all 16-19 year olds by September 2007. It also suggested that this should be extended to 14-16 year olds by 2009, when a Foundation Level would also be available. From September 2010, the Welsh Bac will be an entitlement for all 14-19 year olds (WAG 2006). The award was initially offered in 18 pilot schools in 2003 (WJEC 2008) but has grown very quickly in popularity. From September 2009 there have been 168 centres delivering the Welsh Bac Qualification to some 35,000 learners (Pritchard 2009).

The Welsh Bac is a unified core/specialisation model, expressed as 'Options' and 'Core Programme'. The latter comprises:

- Key Skills Qualifications at an appropriate level;
- 'Wales, Europe and the World,' study of political, social, cultural and economic issues, including a modern foreign language module;
- Work-Related Education and a period of work experience;
- Personal and Social Education, including an activity in the local community;
- An Individual Investigation.

Students are then expected to make up a whole learning programme from established, approved courses/programmes (e.g. GCSEs, AS/A Levels and NVQs). Interestingly, the 14-19 Diplomas have not been adopted in Wales, although from September 2009 elements of Diplomas (e.g. Principal Learning and the Extended Project) can also be used within the overall framework (Pritchard 2009).

## **Examples of local and sector-based initiatives (2000 to present)**

### **Surrey Graduation Certificate**

This award was developed initially in one school in Surrey (George Abbot) in 2000 as a response to the *Curriculum 2000* reforms. The opportunity to take more subjects and to mix study through Curriculum 2000 stimulated further thinking about 'a local overarching certificate alongside a broader curriculum' (Stewart 2003: 140). The main aim of the Surrey Graduation Certificate was to prepare students better for entry to higher and further education and employment, as well as to improve overall standards of achievement. Since then, the award has been taken up by a number of schools within Surrey and has been developed at Intermediate as well as Advanced Level. A local validation system has been established involving senior managers from participating institutions. The University of Surrey has supported the Surrey Graduation Certificate and has hosted graduation ceremonies. This initiative also informed work by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority on a Graduation Certificate.

The Surrey Graduation Certificate comprises:

#### Academic element

- Minimum of 18 units Advanced (L3)
- 5 'units' amounting to at least 15 hrs per week of full-time study for Intermediate (L 2)

#### Applied skills element (portfolio assessed)

- Opportunity for accreditation of all six key skills
- Communication/ Numeracy/ ICT
- Improving Own Learning integral to the portfolio
- Problem Solving/ Working With Others (all based on the national Key Skills criteria)

#### Citizenship element

- School and/or community service
- Individual achievement

### **BSix Baccalaureate Programme**

The BSix Baccalaureate Programme was developed by Hackney BSix Sixth Form College in response to students' need to prepare for progression and higher education from an area where learners had not traditionally taken this route. There was also a widespread feeling that achievement of A Levels alone was insufficient to support personal progression requirements.

The BSix Baccalaureate Programme is designed at four levels – Entry to Advanced and comprises:

1. Main Learning Programme – A Levels, BTEC, Diplomas, Foundation Learning

2. Core

- Learning and thinking skills
- Functional skills
- Individual project
- CV/UCAS form

3. Preparation for life programme (e.g. citizenship/community, student transcript)

4. Progression programme (e.g. a unit of work at the level above current programme)

5. Graduation Ceremony.

**Figure 3. A historical overview of tracked, linked and unified curriculum and qualification proposals for young people**

<b>Date</b>	<b>General/academic track proposals</b>	<b>Vocational track proposals</b>	<b>Linked proposals</b>	<b>Unified proposals</b>
1960s	International Baccalaureate (1962) Majors and minors (1966) Qualifying and furthers (Q&F) (1969)			
1970s	Normals and Furthers (1972) Certificate of Extended Education (1972)	A Basis for Choice (1979)		
1980s	Advanced Supplementary (1983) Higginson 'five lean A Levels' (1988)	CPVE (1984) BTEC (1986) CGLI DOVE (1988)	TVEI Extension (1986) 16-19 core studies (1989) Core skills (1989)	
1990s	Curriculum 2000/Qualifying for Success (1997)	GNVQ	National Qualifications Framework (1991) Dearing proposals for Key Skills (1996)	e.g. A British Baccalaureate (1990); 1991 White Paper – overarching and general diplomas; FEU (1992) Credit Frameworks; Core specialisation Model (Young and Spours 1995); Dearing National Certificate/National Diploma (1996); Overarching Certificate (1998); Graduation Certificate (1999/2000).
2000s	Applied GCSEs (2002) Pre-U (2008) AQA Bac (2008)		14-19 Diplomas (2005) Extended Project (2005) QCF (2008)	e.g. Surrey Graduation Certificate (2000); Matriculation Diplomas (2002); English Baccalaureate System (2003); Tomlinson Diploma System (2004); B.Six Bac (2008); Sixth Form Bac (2009).

### 3. Reflections on baccalaureate-type frameworks

#### 3.1 The English context and the search for reform

Over the past 60 years, as we have seen earlier, the English qualifications system has remained elective and selective. The dominant qualifications are still A Levels, with post-16 learners in the general track typically achieving three subjects. The strengths of the system are seen as choice and specialisation in preparation for a single-subject honours degree.

Reformers over the years have criticised the English system for its early specialisation and narrowness. More recently, critics from different ends of the political spectrum have turned their attention to the mechanical and instrumental learning associated with the Curriculum 2000 A Level model and the Advanced Vocational Certificate of Education (AVCE) (e.g. Pring *et al.* 2009, Richmond and Freedman 2009). Others also accuse the system of ‘dumbing down’ (e.g. Bassett *et al.* 2009, De Waal 2009) and bemoan the ‘culture of avoidance’ of difficult subjects (Richardson 2009).

Those who argue for a more unified and baccalaureate approach to upper secondary education in England point to the need to overcome the academic/vocational divide and to value a wide range of knowledge and skill that will encourage the formation of an ‘educated 19 year old’ (Pring *et al.* 2009). They also accuse an elective system of being inequitable because students from more privileged backgrounds and institutions (for example independent schools) are more likely to experience a broader curriculum. Broader qualifications are more likely to encourage an ethos of hard work and persistence, together with attainment in the skills (e.g. language, mathematics and research) required for progression to higher study and work (Hodgson and Spours 2008).

However, there has also been considerable resistance from universities and subject specialist teachers to the idea of a baccalaureate-type framework (Pound 2003). In this climate of conservatism, young people and their parents have chosen to remain loyal to what has been referred to as the Gold Standard. Reflecting and driving this atmosphere have been shades of political conservatism, which, in the case of New Labour, manifested itself in the piecemeal reform known as *Curriculum 2000* and subsequently the rejection of the unified baccalaureate proposals of the Tomlinson Working Group for 14-19 Reform. This approach to reform might be seen as what Lumby and Foskett (2007) refer to as ‘turbulence masquerading as change’. In our view, however, the situation is more one of growing complexity as reform efforts result in new qualifications being added alongside established ones. Moreover, the 14-19 curriculum in England still remains impoverished when compared internationally (e.g. Le Metais 2002).

### 3.2 Values and purposes

In response to concerns about the limitations of current 14-19 qualifications, baccalaureates have been supported by education professionals, not least of all because they are seen to represent a more holistic curriculum that embodies clearly identifiable values and purposes, something which the elective single-subject A Level curriculum cannot. The International Baccalaureate, for example, has a clear set of aims concerned with promoting internationalism, critical thinking and the 'intellectual strength to question conventional beliefs' (Hill 2003: 49). At the local and institutional levels, baccalaureate-type qualifications (e.g. Surrey Graduation Certificate) have been developed to offer a curriculum framework, greater breadth and demand of study, recognition of different types of learning and to provide a framework for preparing young people for further study and adult life.

### 3.3 Dimensions of design

In order to achieve these values and purposes, baccalaureate-type frameworks have emerged in various guises. Reflecting on the models described earlier in this paper, we suggest that there are four main design dimensions – breadth/depth, prescription/choice, inclusivity/exclusivity and qualifications/curriculum framework – that characterise these proposals and developments. Various baccalaureate/curriculum framework models lie at different points on these four continua.

#### **Dimension 1. Breadth/depth**

Breadth has been seen as the main strength of baccalaureate-type frameworks, often to the detriment of depth of study (e.g. Smithers 2004). However, as can be seen from the discussion of current and past proposals within the English system, many have attempted to balance breadth with depth of study in order to capture some of its traditional strengths.

Below we list 10 different approaches to breadth which can feature as part of baccalaureate-type frameworks:

1. Number of subjects
2. Contrasting subjects
3. Combining academic and vocational learning
4. Broadening subjects (e.g. Critical Thinking)
5. Breadth of learning within subjects (design of specification)
6. Key skills – the main three and the wider ones
7. Inter-disciplinarity/connectivity (e.g. Extended Project)
8. Varied pedagogy (e.g. lecture, group tasks, individual investigation)
9. Range of assessment modes (e.g. oral, written, performance)
10. Different learning contexts (e.g. extra curricular activities and work-related learning)

Depth of learning and achievement can be supported alongside breadth by some of the features listed above (e.g. 5, 7 and 8). In addition, depth can be encouraged by linear rather than modular assessment and by a sampling, rather than exhaustive approach to assessment and examination.

Recent innovations, such as the AQA Bac, have been based on three A Levels, to ensure depth, to which have been added some of the dimensions of breadth listed above. The Pre-U pays more attention to depth because of its use of linear syllabuses designed specifically for this award. More unified frameworks, including the Welsh Bac and local or sector developments (e.g. Surrey Graduation Certificate and the BSix Bac), include many of the dimensions of breadth listed above as well as making provision for the inclusion of vocational awards. To date, there has been no attempt at the local level to produce anything resembling the subject breadth of the IB.

## **Dimension 2. Prescription/choice**

A common perception of baccalaureate qualifications is that they have high levels of prescription (e.g. Thompson *et al.* 2003, Smithers 2004). However, the review of past and current proposals and developments in the English system suggests that there is a spectrum of prescription and choice, allied to the observations about breadth and depth discussed above. We have identified seven models of baccalaureate-type frameworks on the prescription/choice continuum:

1. Prescribed subjects
2. Subjects chosen from prescribed domains
3. Prescribed core + prescribed domains (e.g. IB)
4. Core menu + choice from prescribed domains (SF Bac)
5. Prescribed core + menu of academic subjects (e.g. AQA Bac)
6. Prescribed core + free choice of area of study/subjects (Surrey Graduation Cert & BSix Bac, Welsh Bac)
7. Core menu + free choice of area of study/subjects

As can be seen, the English (and Welsh) designs tend towards the choice-based end of the spectrum and several take a core/specialisation approach.

## **Dimension 3. Inclusivity/exclusivity**

Another criticism that is levelled at baccalaureates is that they are exclusive because of their level of prescription and that the breadth and volume of achievement required to matriculate will discriminate against certain groups of learners (e.g. Butler 2003).

Below we identify five dimensions of inclusivity/exclusivity,

1. Level (e.g. one or more, separate or inter-locking)
2. Volume and demand (e.g. the amount and depth of required study)
3. Types of learning



- academic/vocational
  - skills/knowledge/experiences
  - location- inside and outside education institutions
  - mode - full-time/part-time
4. Age range (e.g. 14+, 16-19)
  5. Assessment and accreditation (e.g. linearity/modularity; credits and transportability; internal/external; individual/collaborative; degree of compulsory attainment; rules of compensation).

Again a review of the English models reveals that they can be located on a spectrum from inclusive to exclusive. The BSix Bac, for example, with its four levels from Entry to Advanced, its recognition of both academic and vocational learning and its menu-driven approach makes it potentially much more inclusive than the Pre-U, which exists at only at Level 3, does not accredit anything other than academic learning and actively promotes a linear mode of assessment. Inclusivity has its penalties however. The greater the type of learning and learners that are brought within a framework, the more complex the design has to be in order to meet different needs. A balance may have to be struck between the degree of inclusivity and the complexity of the design. In reviewing historical and current baccalaureate-type models, those that are track-based and confined to a single level appear far simpler to understand than multi-level linked and unified models.

#### **Dimension 4. Qualification/curriculum framework**

Finally, it is important to distinguish between baccalaureate-type frameworks that are also qualifications (e.g. IB, AQA Bac) and those that exist more to provide a curriculum framework (e.g. Surrey Graduation Certificate and the BSix Bac). The former have specific demands in terms of volume, breadth/depth and level of attainment and are more likely to be national. The qualification is either achieved or not achieved and always involves varying degrees of external scrutiny. Curriculum frameworks, on the other hand, are more likely to use lighter touch accreditation processes to recognise a wide range of activities and do not use as much external scrutiny. The strength of a qualification is that it has more national currency 'exchange value' (i.e. it is more recognised by end-users), but this has to be balanced against limitations on its 'use value' (i.e. its perceived value and usefulness as a learning programme by teachers and learners) because of the specific demands of assessment and accreditation (e.g. teaching to the test). Curriculum frameworks in the post-16 English system have been the product of institutional, local and sector initiatives because they have been viewed as more flexible and responsive than official qualifications. One of the ways of attempting to combine features of qualifications and curriculum frameworks is through a quality assurance process of local/institutional moderation or validation.

### **3.4 Summary**

In reviewing the history and role of baccalaureate-type frameworks within the English system, it is evident that their influence on curriculum thinking and debate has been far greater than their impact on provision and practice. At several points from the late 1950s to the present, these ideas have surfaced and new models have emerged to meet the demands of a particular context. However, to date the number of learners who have benefited from a post-14 curriculum or baccalaureate-type framework remains relatively limited. The result of these two factors is that there is no one leading baccalaureate-type model that those developing the SF Bac can immediately draw upon. Rather there are the different models with different aims and purposes and a range of design dimensions which need to be considered in the context of the sixth form college sector and the needs of its participating institutions.

## **4. Key questions for pilot institutions and evaluators**

Given the continued dominance of A Levels in the English system and the long history of attempted but frustrated reforms, the success of the SF Bac, as a sector-based initiative, will not only be determined by its design, but also by the national, local and institutional contexts within which it is being implemented. It is clear from discussions with those interested in developing and piloting the SF Bac that they recognise the power and influence of national policy steers – funding, performance measures and the nature of current national qualifications, some of which go against the grain of larger programmes of study. In this context, institutional motivation has to be strong and the aims and purposes of the SF Bac have to be very clear in order to appeal to staff, students, parents, universities and employers.

Members of the pilot steering group see the SF Bac as a means of formalising the learning that currently takes place across all Level 2 and Level 3 programmes as well as further encouraging activities such as enrichment and tutorials. It will be important to build on the good curriculum practice that is currently taking place in sixth form colleges and is highly valued by those in the sector.

Below we provide an initial list of key questions those piloting and evaluating the SF Bac will need to consider.

### **4.1 Aims, purposes and motives**

1. What are the underlying values and purposes of the SF Bac?
2. What are the motives of the piloting institutions and how far are they shared across the sixth form college sector?
3. How far does the draft design of the SF Bac address the aims, purposes and motives of the pilot institutions?

4. What are the benefits and challenges for learners, teachers, higher education institutions and employers?

## **4.2 Design features**

5. What is the scope of the award – who is involved and at what levels?
6. Where does the SF Bac lie according to the design dimensions of breadth/depth, prescription/choice, inclusivity/exclusivity and qualification/curriculum framework?
7. How does the SF Bac relate to current qualifications and how will all its elements be recognised and/or accredited?
8. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the design?
9. What can be done to maximise both 'use value' and 'exchange value' for the SF Bac?
10. What moderation/validation processes are necessary?

## **4.3 Implementation**

11. What are the key implementation challenges?
12. How might these be addressed?
13. What role is there for social partners (e.g. universities, employers, governors and parents) in the development and recognition of the SF Bac?
14. What kind of support will be needed to ensure the successful implementation of the SF Bac?

## **4.4 Context**

15. What are the key contextual drivers and constraints (e.g. funding and inspection)?
16. How might these be addressed?
17. What kind of support will be needed to overcome key constraints?
18. What role might this new award will play at national, local and institutional levels?

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