

# agenda

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM OCR / SPRING 2016

IN THIS ISSUE:

**SUPPORTING TEACHING**

**TO BE OR NOT TO BE;  
EXAM QUESTIONS ON SHAKESPEARE**

**MEET DR VANESSA OGDEN, HEADTEACHER  
OF MULBERRY SCHOOL FOR GIRLS**

**SPOTLIGHT ON PRISON EDUCATION**



# GEOGRAPHY IS MY WHOLE WORLD

Meet Mark Smith. He loves Geography, he loves maps and he really loves being an OCR Subject Specialist. So if you need a little help navigating the new GCSE Geography specification, he's definitely the man to guide you.

For support that goes further, call Mark or one of our other 60 Subject Specialists on **01223 553998** or visit [ocr.org.uk/subjectspecialist](https://ocr.org.uk/subjectspecialist)  
OCR is part of the Cambridge Assessment Group, a department of the University of Cambridge.

Bringing learning to life

OCR



Welcome to the Spring 2016 issue of **agenda**, OCR's termly magazine which offers a snapshot of news and views from OCR.

Many of you will be teaching new qualifications or preparing to teach new ones from next September. Wherever you are in the cycle of reform, you can read here about the essential support – in the form of resources, training and subject specialists, as well as mark schemes and sample question papers – that OCR offers to support your teaching.

We are delighted to feature in this issue an interview with Dr Vanessa Ogden, head of the high-achieving Mulberry School in Tower Hamlets, East London. Dr Ogden is a National Leader in Education and committed to teaching in inner-city schools. Her school was visited by Michelle Obama in 2015 as part of the 'Let Girls Learn' campaign.

To coincide with the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death, we look at the changing face of Shakespeare questions on exam papers. We compare what's required for our brand new English Literature GCSE and AS/A Levels, with the approach on historic exam papers dating as far back as 1858. And lastly, our experienced offender learning specialist summarises the reforms affecting prison education. Virtually every prison in the country uses OCR qualifications.

Do get in touch via [agenda@ocr.org.uk](mailto:agenda@ocr.org.uk) about anything you read here. If you would prefer to receive an online version of this publication only, please send us your email address.

**William Burton**  
Chief Executive, OCR

## CONTENTS

### NEWS



**4**

*Carpe Diem!*  
Teach Latin in 2016

### FEATURES



**8**

*To be or not to be;* exam questions on Shakespeare

### COMMENT



**14**

*Paul Steer on metrics to measure* how education performs

### NOTICEBOARD



**15**

*Diary dates with OCR*



**6**

*Disease dilemmas in A Level Geography*



**10**

*Interview with Dr Vanessa Ogden, Headteacher of Mulberry School for Girls*



**7**

*Textbooks for Technicals*



**12**

*Spotlight on prison education*





## Teaching new GCSEs and AS/A Levels

Since September 2015, schools and colleges around the country have been successfully teaching OCR's reformed GCSEs and AS/A Levels.

The feedback we have had is that science teachers and students are doing more experiments on new Science A Levels. As one Physics teacher reported: "It raises the profile of practical in A Level, makes it integral to the learning and moves away from the hoop jumping we have seen in previous years". History teachers are already taking advantage of engaging new topics such as Genghis Khan and African Kingdoms – alongside old favourites – on OCR's new History A Level, and schools are appreciating the free resources and clarity of OCR's new GCSE Maths.

## Preparing for September 2016

With help from our expert partners from across the education community, OCR has developed over 40 new qualifications for teaching from September 2016.

From a new GCSE in Food Preparation and Nutrition (with support from Heston Blumenthal) to PE qualifications that reflect the science of modern sport; from the chance to study migration on our History GCSEs to cyber security on our new Computer Studies GCSE; plus exciting and contemporary Drama, Music and Art qualifications that cover work by artists such as Mark Wheeler, Lady Gaga and Jean Paul Gaultier; there's plenty in OCR's new qualifications to engage teachers and students alike from next September.

## Supporting teaching

To help teachers of OCR's new GCSEs and AS/A Levels, we offer:

- An extensive range of free teaching and learning resources including delivery guides and schemes of work [www.ocr.org.uk/reformresources](http://www.ocr.org.uk/reformresources)
- Subject specialists, email [subject@ocr.org.uk](mailto:subject@ocr.org.uk) – eg. [maths@ocr.org.uk](mailto:maths@ocr.org.uk) or [science@ocr.org.uk](mailto:science@ocr.org.uk)
- Training events, see [www.cpdhub.ocr.org.uk](http://www.cpdhub.ocr.org.uk)
- Mark schemes and sample papers to help teachers and students prepare for exams

## In brief

### A date to relish – with Heston Blumenthal

The secret ingredient in OCR's new GCSE Food Preparation and Nutrition GCSE, Heston Blumenthal, will be helping to inspire and support food teachers preparing to introduce the new GCSE at an OCR Food Skills Feast on 18 April in London. Details of the event can be found at [www.ocr.org.uk](http://www.ocr.org.uk).

## Carpe diem! Teach Latin in 2016

OCR is the only English exam board to offer GCSE and AS/A Level Latin and new qualifications will be available to teach from September 2016. GCSE Latin is also an excellent way to boost general literacy skills and, as a language, counts as an eBacc subject.

Professor Mary Beard of Cambridge University told OCR: "Learning Latin gives you direct access to some of the most impressive, challenging and influential literature the world has produced that still underlies much of western culture. And it brings the ancient Romans to life, in everything from gladiators to steamy love poetry, bridge-building to the theory of politics."

Georgina Gill, Latin teacher at High Storrs Comprehensive School in Sheffield, is enthusiastic about Latin at her school: "Pupils at High Storrs choose Latin GCSE because it is a different subject and they enjoy learning the language through the exciting stories and history that brings to life the Roman world. One pupil told me it was a 'stand out subject' for them and the analytical skills they have developed from learning the language have helped in other subjects too."

Set prose and poetry texts in the coming years for OCR's new GCSE cover 'battles to the bedroom', from Hannibal crossing the Alps to How many kisses? by Catullus. The new GCSE will also contain the translation of simple sentences into Latin such as 'the slave is able to work in the garden'. The popular derivation questions, where students have to find English words that derive from Latin, have been retained. To find out more, email [classics@ocr.org.uk](mailto:classics@ocr.org.uk).



## A good BETT!



At BETT 2016, OCR's subject specialist, Rob Leeman, introduced Computing teachers to the new GCSE in Computer Science and to the support available from OCR.

## Disease dilemmas in A Level Geography

John Raine, Head of the Ebola Command Centre in Sierra Leone, will give this year's public lecture, sponsored by OCR, at the Geographical Association (GA) Annual Conference in April.

John has been at the frontline dealing with the Ebola epidemic. As part of the UK Joint Inter-Agency Task Force, he has been running an operations command centre in Sierra Leone responsible for identifying the sick, burying the dead, quarantining affected communities and facilitating treatment.

His lecture, 'Tackling the Ebola Crisis', will explore how a variety of agencies and strategies combined to tackle the communicative disease outbreak and then develop host nation capacity to maintain a 'resilient zero'.

**OCR's Geography Subject Specialist, Shelley Monk, suggested John because of the link with the 'Disease Dilemmas' component of OCR's new Geography A Level, for first teaching in September. This looks at major 'Geographical Debates' and equips students with the skills and understanding to be able to make sense of the topical events happening in the world around them, such as the Ebola outbreak.**

Steve Rawlinson, GA President, said: "I was delighted to invite John to give this year's public lecture as his work perfectly illustrates



my presidential theme of 'Making Geographical Connections'. From plotting the outbreaks of the disease to organising the most effective way to distribute resources, this work shows the connectivity of geography in action. I am really looking forward to welcoming him to the conference and to his lecture."

You can hear John talk about his experiences at the GA Public Lecture in Manchester on Thursday 7 April.

[www.ocr.org.uk/geography](http://www.ocr.org.uk/geography)

### In brief

#### Handy check on qualification change

The introduction of reformed GCSE and AS/A Level qualifications is staggered over a number of years and across subjects. To help teachers to make the move from unreformed or 'legacy' qualifications to the reformed ones in their subject, OCR offers a handy online checker. By typing in the details of the legacy qualification, OCR's 'Qual Change Planner' provides details of the relevant new GCSE or AS/A Level, including first teach and exam dates. Visit the 'Qual Change Planner' available at [www.ocr.org.uk](http://www.ocr.org.uk).

#### Update on Entry Level qualifications

Entry Level qualifications can provide students with valuable recognition of achievement and be useful stepping stones to achieving GCSEs. OCR is looking forward to working with stakeholders to review entry level provision in order to support progression to the reformed GCSEs.

## Keeping it Whole

As part of the Whole Education Curriculum Conference on 23 February, subject specialists from OCR provided workshops for heads of department designed to 'reignite their subject passion' and prepare them to teach reformed qualifications.

OCR Subject Specialist, Karen Latto, said: "Teachers don't have enough time to share ideas face to face. At one workshop, we shared tips about increasing pupil uptake in a smaller subject, such as Drama. And to support the new History GCSE for example, another workshop focused on teaching aspects such as interpretations and the historic environment which are new elements. The majority of us are ex-teachers and it was a pleasure to encourage these wider discussions about subjects, beyond just exams."

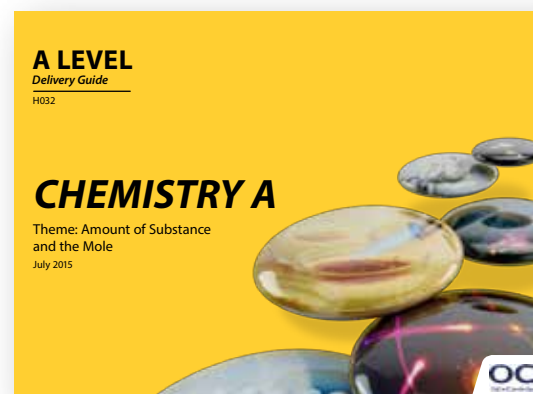
## Popular new resources

OCR offers a range of free resources to support teachers such as delivery guides, lesson elements, transition guides, topic exploration packs and scheme of work builders. There are also some brand new endorsed textbooks from major publishing partners.

The most popular free resource, downloaded by over 2,500 teachers, is 'Amount of Substance and the Mole' – a delivery guide for our AS/A Level Chemistry (spec A). The guide provides up to date knowledge on the topic as well as suggestions about overcoming common misconceptions, plus handy linked activities. 'How many atoms in my signature', for example, is a simple activity within the Mole delivery guide that helps to develop problem-solving and investigative skills early on in the course.

**Dr Janice McCreary, Head of Chemistry at Joseph Chamberlain 6th Form College, said; "The 'Amount of Substance and the Mole' delivery guide has been an incredibly useful tool for introducing the key concept of the mole. Not only did it provide a range of activities for use in the classroom, there were also plenty of ideas for resources for students to use for consolidation outside the classroom. Finally, it encouraged me to consider carefully the language that I use when talking about the mole to my classes."**

Scroll down each qualification page of the OCR website to find free teaching and learning resources.





## Textbooks for Technicals

OCR's Level 3 2016 Cambridge Technicals have been developed to make sure that students gain the right combination of knowledge, understanding and skills for the 21st century.

Cambridge  
TECHNICALS  
2016

These vocational qualifications have been designed to provide a strong base for progression to higher education, work or apprenticeships. They are included on the KS5 Performance Tables for reporting in 2018 and have UCAS tariff points.

To support the teaching of the Cambridge Technicals suite, quality textbooks in print and digital formats will be available in August from our partner,

Hodder Education, for each of the subject sectors, ensuring unit coverage across all specialist pathways. Every teacher of the 2016 Level 3 Technicals will receive a free textbook.

Lis Tribe, Group MD, Hodder Education Group, stated: "We are delighted to be working with OCR to produce print and digital resources for this innovative suite of qualifications. Our textbooks, eTextbooks and free digital support materials have been designed to reflect the flexibility of each specification offered and support the diverse range of practical and academic skills offered within each subject." To see samples and find out more, take a look at [www.hoddereducation.co.uk/cambridgetechnicals](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/cambridgetechnicals).

In addition to the Hodder Education textbooks, we are producing a range of free resources to support teachers including progress trackers, delivery and mapping guides, pathway project approaches to delivery, qualifications calculators and more. We also have a comprehensive range of free face-to-face and live online training available to help teachers get to know each specification in detail, plus resources will be available to download and also included in Hodder Education's online teaching and learning platform, Dynamic Learning.

Suzanne Hall, OCR Sector Manager, Cambridge Technicals, explained: "We're really excited about the redeveloped suite and our partnership with Hodder. Cambridge Technicals

offer industry-leading subjects with the flexibility of a range of internally assessed units and wider project-based assessment opportunities. Teachers will have the freedom to choose when to assess students depending on their learning style and ability and all sizes of qualification can be co-teachable within the delivery of a study programme."

**For further information, to book free training and see the outstanding range of support available, visit [www.ocr.org.uk/cambridgetechnicals](http://www.ocr.org.uk/cambridgetechnicals).**



## Performance Table points for Cambridge Technicals confirmed

The majority of OCR's 2016 Level 3 Cambridge Technicals vocational suite are on the 16-19 Key Stage 5 Performance Tables for 2018 in England, published in January 2016. They are on the DfE's performance table lists for both Applied General and for Tech Level qualifications.

We are confident that the remaining Level 3 Cambridge Technicals will be included on the final version of the performance tables to be published later in March. OCR's Level 2 Cambridge Technicals in IT – the Extended Certificate, and Diploma – and OCR's Cambridge Nationals Level 1/2 qualifications have also been confirmed on relevant performance tables for 2018.

OCR's 2016 Level 3 Cambridge Technicals are available in Business, Digital Media, Engineering, Health and Social Care, IT, Performing Arts, Science and Sports and Physical Activity. Charlotte Bosworth, OCR Director of Skills and Employment, said: "OCR designed the new Level 3 Cambridge Technicals around what the sector needs and to give students the skills to progress on to HE or into the workplace."

### BREAKING NEWS!

*Over 1,000 schools and colleges are now teaching Cambridge Technicals.*

## OCR digital badge to recognise enterprise



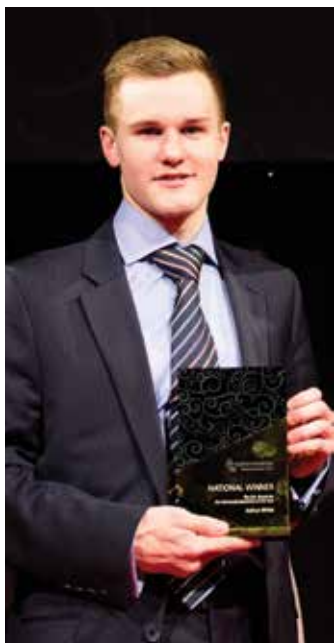
The National Enterprise Challenge is now the largest enterprise competition for schools in the UK. Over 60,000 young people have taken part since 2013. OCR has supported the Challenge from the start. For the 2016 competition, OCR will be adding extra support in the form of a 'digital badge' for KS3 and KS4 students in all participating schools.

The 'badge' gives students the chance to record and share their involvement in the Challenge as part of an online portfolio of achievements that they can build up over time. The OCR badge has been developed inhouse by OCR's digital and vocational teams as a pilot scheme to recognise and give added value to young people's achievements.

Ben Dyer, one of the founders of the National Enterprise Challenge, said: "Thanks to OCR, this is a great way of giving everyone involved in the Challenge – not just finalists – an enduring digital record of the skills and experiences they gained along the way. This will help to motivate students and to credit all their hard work."

## You're hired!

At the end of January, IBM apprentice Joshua White (pictured below), beat off tough competition to be awarded the Advanced National Apprentice of the Year.



The prestigious annual awards, run by the National Apprenticeship Service, marked the end of an extensive process to identify the best individual apprentices in the country. Josh joined the apprenticeship programme at IBM after deciding the university route was not for him and is now working at IBM's offices in Warwick as a Business Analyst. OCR provides the course and qualifications for the talented apprentices on IBM's two-year programme. All the apprentices on IBM's award-winning scheme gain nationally-recognised OCR ICT Professional Competence qualifications. The Level 3 qualifications that underpin IBM's training cover a broad

range of skills, including asset management, info management, systems architecture, software design, ICT systems and data security. They provide a firm foundation for progress across the IT sector and contribute towards full apprenticeship certification within the IT, Software, Web and Telecomms Professionals Framework.

Jez Brooks, Early Professionals Programme Manager and Apprenticeship scheme leader at IBM, said: "We are absolutely delighted for Josh, and so proud of what he has achieved. Josh is a terrific ambassador both for IBM and for apprenticeships as a career pathway. He is a great example that university isn't for everyone, and that you

can still be successful in your learning, development and career progression from the moment you begin work. The partnership which we have developed with OCR for technical and business apprenticeship development is proving hugely successful and I look forward to many more students achieving and contributing as much as Josh has."

Charlotte Bosworth, OCR Director of Skills and Employment, said: "Congratulations to Josh and to IBM for the award which recognises his outstanding work and commitment. OCR is proud to support learning on apprenticeship programmes."

[www.ocr.org.uk/apprenticeships](http://www.ocr.org.uk/apprenticeships)

## Examining in a digital age

Modern technology is improving the marking of exam papers. Technology benefits schools and students through the hi-tech standardisation processes that take place before examiners start to mark 'live' papers and the continuous monitoring of examiners that OCR does as marking is taking place. There's no risk of precious exam papers getting lost in the post either when scanned copies of student papers are instead downloaded onto an examiner's computer for 'online marking'.

However, technology also benefits examiners themselves – the vast majority of whom are teachers. There is no paperwork, transcription or rush to catch the post when papers are marked on a computer. The digital world also enables examiners to regularly connect with like-minded examiners and influential decision makers at OCR.

One of the unique benefits of technology for OCR's examiners is access to an online social network, hosted on Yammer, which provides a dedicated community for examiners and assessors to engage in conversation about assessment. The 'Examiner & Assessor' Community is a collaborative space for discussions about both subject-specific and wider assessment topics. It enables assessors to stay informed about the latest assessment developments. Members provide feedback to OCR and offer guidance and advice to fellow examiners and assessors, sharing experiences and expertise. After two years, membership stands at 5,500 and growing. One examiner recently commented: "The Community is an invaluable channel of communications enabling us to connect with fellow examiners along with hearing about developments at OCR". Based on the success of the Community, OCR recently launched a second Yammer network specifically for prospective examiners. The 'Assessing with OCR' network is designed to provide those considering becoming an examiner with further details on what it's like to become a marker, moderator or verifier. Members of this network can connect with more experienced examiners for guidance and advice.

Visit [www.ocr.org.uk/assessors](http://www.ocr.org.uk/assessors) if you are interested in becoming an examiner or to join the 'Assessing with OCR' network.



## Talking Skills

Professor Baroness Alison Wolf (pictured), author of the influential Wolf Review of Vocational Education, was guest speaker at the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Skills and Employment (APGSE) New Year Dinner in late January, supported by OCR. Charlotte Bosworth, OCR Director of Skills and Employment, and a Skills Commissioner, introduced the event. Professor Wolf discussed recent changes to skills policy and what was in store for the skills system in 2016. It was a chance for OCR to engage through a roundtable discussion with key parliamentarians (including Neil Carmichael MP, Chair of the Education Select Committee) and other stakeholders on vocational education.

# TO BE OR NOT TO BE; IS THAT THE EXAM QUESTION?

**In all new English Literature GCSEs and AS/A Levels taught in schools from September 2015, Shakespeare continues to play a central part.**

On OCR's new GCSE, the set text list includes the big hitters at this level; *Romeo and Juliet*, *Macbeth*, *The Merchant of Venice* and *Much Ado About Nothing*. For sixth form students, OCR's Shakespeare options include *Hamlet*, *Richard III*, *Measure for Measure*, *Twelfth Night*, *The Tempest* and *Coriolanus*. 2016 marks 400 years since the death of William Shakespeare. There are many exciting events for English teachers around the country, including OCR's own GCSE English conference on 6 June. The event is being held in partnership with Shakespeare's Globe and will be hosted at the unique setting of the Globe in London.

## Shakespeare questions on OCR's new English Literature GCSE and AS/A Levels

OCR Subject Specialist, **Kate Newton**, explains the approach on the new GCSE: "Students are expected to get to grips with the themes, characters and stories. They need to show wider exploration and understanding of the whole play, rather than just a few choice extracts. The extract-based question is likely to be the more popular question choice. Whichever question candidates choose, they will need to make wider reference to the play. There is nervousness amongst some teachers about how to teach a whole Shakespeare play to students of differing abilities, especially given the demise of controlled assessment and assessment based on high stakes, end of course exams. The new GCSE English Literature exams are closed text, too, so this imposes a new kind of discipline, and one we're seeking to reassure teachers and students about through publishing candidate exemplars."

To mark this special 400th anniversary, **agenda** has delved into the archives of its parent organisation, Cambridge Assessment, to look back at the changing face of Shakespeare exam questions over more than 100 years. As well as our own subject specialists, we invited English teachers to comment on how exam questions on the Bard's plays have evolved since the University of Cambridge Local Examination Syndicate's (OCR's predecessor's) first exams back in 1858.

**Alana Stewart**, ex English teacher and now OCR Subject Specialist, summarises the approach on the new AS/A Levels: "AS Level candidates will select a question on their given play. In the extended essay response, candidates are assessed on their ability to analyse how form, structure and language are used to shape meaning. Furthermore candidates are required to make judgements on the ways in which the social, cultural, political and biographical contexts surrounding the creation of the text have shaped its meanings. The A Level assessment similarly requires learners to discuss 'dramatic effects' but in addition, learners are required to engage with 'different interpretations' of the play, thereby explaining the literary significance of the text over time."

[www.ocr.org.uk/english](http://www.ocr.org.uk/english)

To get in touch with the English team at OCR, contact [english@ocr.org.uk](mailto:english@ocr.org.uk)

English teacher, **Simon Dickens**, comments on all the papers: "What strikes me is the apparent shift in what the study of literature is all about, from a fact-based education to a skills-based approach. I think the idea of recitation and script learning is a wonderful way to engage with a play, but I would question whether or not memorizing text constitutes literary understanding. Essentially, in 1858 students were taught Shakespeare: today, students are taught how to engage with literature."

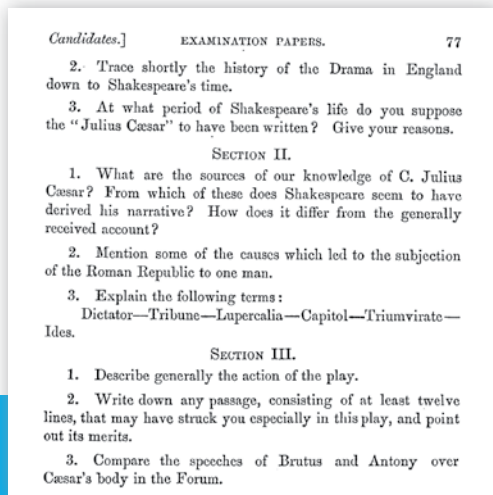
English teacher, **Chris Green**: "The requirement to decode and explain, to clarify meaning and even to 'translate', has been superseded today by an emphasis on purposeful comparative and contextual study of a text."



## 1858 Julius Caesar

Senior Level. For those 18 and under

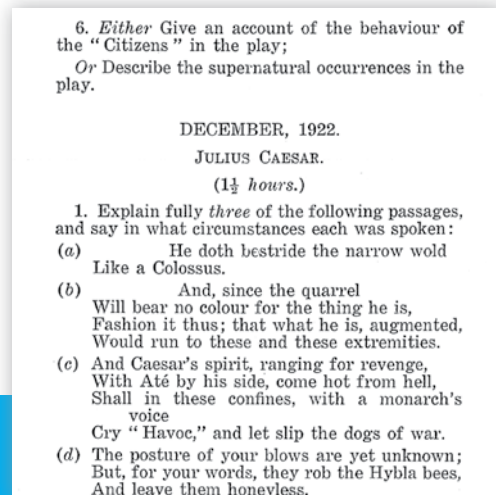
OCR Subject Specialist Alana Stewart: "Exam students in 1858 were expected to discuss the historical context of Shakespeare's life and works... via a series of short answers. The exam was not overly focussed on facilitating a sustained analytical discussion of the text that a current A Level exam demands." English teacher Chris Green: "It is interesting to see that students in 1858 – like those today – did not have access to the set texts in the examination hall."



## 1922 Julius Caesar

Junior Level. For those under 16

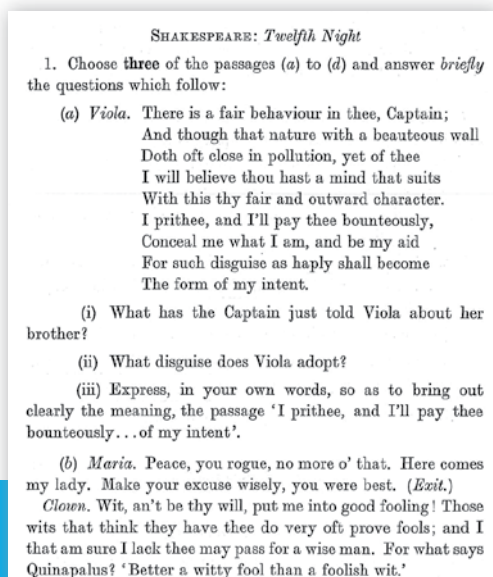
Alana: "The exam has returned to a one text focus. Initially learners were required to explain the content and meaning of three extracts from the set text and be able to place them within the play. Perhaps one of the most alien aspects of this exam is that learners were expected to be able to rewrite sections of the play, including attending to the division of line and punctuation. Furthermore learners were required to write a section of the play 'in [their] own words' to demonstrate their understanding of meaning."



## 1960 Twelfth Night

O Level

Alana: "For the 1960s, exam learners were required to demonstrate knowledge of one play via a series of extract-focused short answer questions. Interestingly the approach taken in this exam takes the form of revision prompt questions, used to solicit greater understanding of specific sections of texts; this approach is echoed today in good student editions of Shakespeare's plays."

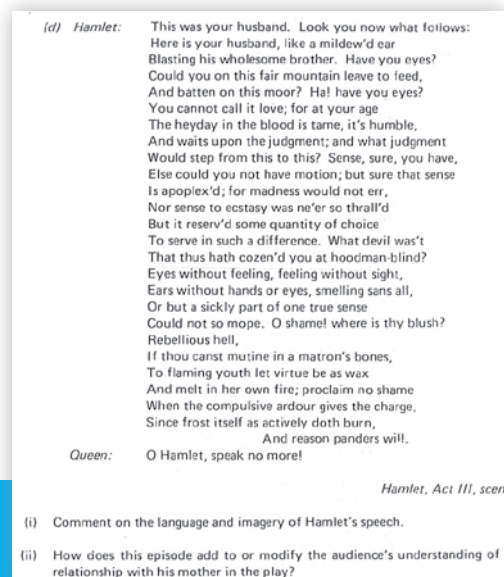


## 1986 Hamlet

A Level

Alana: "It is clear that, come the late 1980s, exam setting practices focussed more on how candidates can analyse language and character to explore meaning."

Chris: "The superficial structure of this last paper is not so very different to the two-part format of the new A Level model but there are important differences. Today candidates are expected to approach texts from a variety of critical angles and offer a range of different interpretations."



Dr Vanessa Ogden became headteacher at the 1,400-strong Mulberry School for Girls in East London in 2006. Mulberry is a high-achieving, over-subscribed and successful school for 11 to 18 year olds, which aims to develop confidence, creativity, leadership and a love of learning in its students. Mulberry School hit the headlines last year when Michele Obama visited as part of her 'Let Girls Learn' campaign.

**Dr Ogden is a National Leader in Education and, in January 2016, hosted the Leading Women's Alliance, to redress gender imbalance in headship. Here she tells *agenda* about her own career and the challenges she faces.**

#### What has been your path into your current role?

I was an early career changer after having spent 3 years in banking. I remember starting at the Institute of Education in September 1992 and feeling like the whole world woke up for me. It felt as if I had been asleep for a number of years and suddenly I was into this world of life and colour and imagination. I found myself able to do things in classrooms with young people which were highly creative with a degree of professional accountability and autonomy which was exciting to have. As a teacher, you live by the results of the progress you see of the children in front of you as you work. Nothing can beat this and it has inspired in me a lifelong passion for working together with young people and adults to create positive social change.

#### What do you like about working in the field of education?

I have worked in some of the most challenging schools in London, during the period of time before the London Challenge, when things could be extremely difficult for schools that were struggling. I worked at school improvement and gained a keen interest in how to ensure that schools could be successful and so it was with a track record of doing this I took on the headship at Mulberry 10 years ago. I have since done a number of things supporting schools in challenging circumstances to improve, having been designated as a National Leader

in Education, served as a Visiting Academic Fellow at the Institute of Education, chairing the board of the Somerset Challenge and completed a doctorate specialising in education policy and school improvement. We know that while poverty can bring with it difficult challenges for learning, what is done to address them can significantly alter a child's life chances. This has been a particular focus in my work tailoring education to the needs of gender, working to ensure that it is a better and fairer society for all, and proving that socio-economic disadvantage need not prevent students from achieving academic success. I also like working in the field of education because of the fantastic committed staff whom I work alongside to create a space where young women can flourish as individuals.

#### Who do you admire in your field?

I admire a number of women who are highly successful leaders in education amongst them Christine Whatford, Isobel Cattermole, Vanessa Wiseman, Elizabeth Sidwell and Sue John. These women are extremely generous with their time and go out of their way to support other younger women coming through. 15 years on from Marianne Coleman's research on women as headteachers, there is still only 36% female representation amongst secondary heads. The women I have mentioned have led the way for others and beaten a path of great significance but we need more women to come forward. I also

admire the young women that I work with at Mulberry School both as young leaders and students of learning. The girls I work with remind me that age is not a determinant of wisdom.

#### Was your own experience of education a positive one and what lessons did you learn from it?

I went to London schools in the main and I think this made me aware of the skills needed to succeed in such an environment, and influenced my choice to work in schools which required improvement work. I did also spend a short period of time at school in Somerset in a rural comprehensive. I learned many things from both London and Somerset about urban and rural challenge. I learned that emotional intelligence, resilience and creativity as well as the ability to find your place in the world are key to success in life.

#### What do you do when – if – you have time off?

I like to read and travel. I also enjoy going to the theatre and ballet. One of my most memorial ballet experiences is when I took a group of students to New York for a film festival and we went to see the New York City Ballet in the Lincoln Centre and the students brought a different perspective and more energy to the hall. The students then performed their own version of 'Ballo della Regina' infused with Bollywood dancing outside on the grounds of the Lincoln Centre – it was fantastic!



Photo: Simon David/DFID



### If you weren't a teacher, what would you be?

I can't think of anything that I would rather do than what I am doing. Teaching is the best job in the world. However if I were not able to do this then I would want to run the 'Let Girls Learn' campaign and extend education for girls across the globe in the way that Michelle Obama has envisioned doing for girls and young women.

### What are the greatest challenges faced by schools such as your own over the next five years?

One of the greatest challenges faced by schools like Mulberry (where the majority of pupils – 98% – are practising Muslims and where socio-economic disadvantage is high) is to ensure that my girls are not worn down and disenfranchised by negative stereotypes, Islamophobia and racism. I want my students to take their rightful place in life and for them to have a platform to make their voices heard. Education should be in the forefront of this change.

### As a headteacher, how do you know when you are doing a good job?

When my girls are successful and go out into the world and become leaders. When I see self-determining and happy students going to university, getting into rewarding apprenticeships and creating positive social change themselves, that's when I know I'm doing a good job. When staff enjoy coming to work and when as far as possible we have made the school the best that it can be. Outstanding

academic achievement is very important for future success, and Mulberry achieves fantastic results, but we also support students in developing 'Confidence, Creativity, Leadership and a life-long Love of Learning'. We believe these things will enable our pupils to lead enriched, happy and fulfilled lives, making a contribution to their own community, to British society and to global well-being.

### What achievement are you proudest of?

Changing the discourse on girls, Islam and the place for young British Muslim women in our world through Michelle Obama's visit to Mulberry in June 2015. We were shortlisted as a result of our long-standing commitment to women's education and community empowerment, and then worked hard to ensure that our school was chosen as the site for the visit.

It was an absolute priority for us to ensure that the girls were the prime focus of the visit. Mrs Obama made it clear to Mulberry girls and their peers that they are a central part of the global conversation about girls' education, encouraging all of them to use the opportunities they have been given and the various platforms they are offered to speak out.

A different story was told that day about what it means to be successful in our society as a young woman in a community that has been impacted by the effects of poverty, austerity and Islamophobia.

Our whole community felt such pride at being chosen by a woman who is the symbol of what can be done in the civil rights movement to change the world and now we can draw upon the lessons that she demonstrates to do similar.

### If you were stuck in a lift with a government minister, what three things would you ask for on behalf of your school?

To retain pupil premium because of all the things that it does for our school community.

For an enhanced school counselling offer for young people with mental health issues which is a growing problem in our society for both girls and boys.

For the government to look into the lack of diversity in admissions to Russell Group universities and for admissions officers to receive training in unconscious bias. Students from state schools and ethnic minorities who achieve the same grades as their privately educated peers are being turned away from some of our country's best HE institutions.

# PRISON EDUCATION IN THE SPOTLIGHT

**Virtually every prison in the country uses OCR qualifications – vocational or academic.**



**Robert Mills** is OCR's expert in adult and juvenile prison education. As well as visiting education departments of secure establishments around the country, he liaises with a range of educational service providers, charities and civil servants involved in all aspects of prison education and sits on the Prisoner Learner Alliance and the Association of Learning and Employment Providers (AELP) Offender Learning Group.

Since 1 March, Robert has been on secondment at the National Offender Management Service (NOMS), the executive agency of the Ministry of Justice, where he is contributing his knowledge and experience of the challenges of delivering qualifications and assessment in prisons. This is an exciting time given plans for prison reform and, in particular, for prison education. Here is Robert's outline of the key developments in the justice sector.

In February 2016, the Prime Minister, David Cameron, announced wide-ranging prison reforms. Cameron's policy changes will affect the work of governors and, in particular, the way education is delivered in prisons.

## THE FOUR KEY PRINCIPLES OF PRISON REFORM

The Prime Minister grouped them into four key areas: autonomy, accountability, addressing failure, and a combination of evidence and technology to deliver better outcomes.

**Principle One: 'Give much greater autonomy to the professionals who work in our public services, and allow new providers and new ideas to flourish.'**

This was described by the Prime Minister as 'exactly what we did in education – with academies, free schools and new freedoms for heads and teachers'. The first justice review announced by Michael Gove in July 2015 was a review into prison education – there is a clear precedent for bringing an education focus into the justice sector to propagate change.

The Prime Minister argued that there is far too much bureaucracy in our prison system. So the solution is to 'give prison governors unprecedented operational

and financial autonomy... This will be piloted in six 'reform prisons' in 2016.

So what will prison governors be able to do? The Prime Minister mentioned the following:

- They will be able to opt-out of national contracts and choose their own suppliers – the key one that was mentioned was the current Offender Learning and Skills Service (OLASS) which delivers education across all public prisons in England.
- They can transfer money from different pots to fund their own priorities.
- They are allowed to tailor their own regimes – meaning that they can decide on the amount of time spent out of cell engaged in purposeful activity.

**Principle Two: 'Hold these providers and professionals to account with real transparency over outcomes.'**

He also announced that the government would be considering measuring tools 'like payment for performance' to incentivise governors and staff.

New prison outcome measures will include:

- reoffending levels compared to a predicted rate;
- employment outcomes for prisoners;

- whether or not the offender went into permanent accommodation;
- what progress was made on basic literacy and key skills;
- the creation of prison league tables.

**Principle Three: 'Intervene decisively and dramatically to deal with persistent failure, or to fix the underlying problems people may have.'**

The Prime Minister was clear that earlier intervention was needed to divert people from prison, emphasising the need to get better at recognising how the harm caused at an early age can act as a precursor for some people falling into the youth, then adult, justice system.

There will be a sharper focus on literacy and numeracy skills, and ensuring that other qualifications are fit for purpose and based on local employer needs, maximising the opportunity of further training and/or employment on release into the community.

The Prime Minister accepted the recommendations of Dame Sally Coates' review of prison education, on letting prison governors bring in new providers and protecting prison education budgets (currently standing at £130 million per year). The Coates' review – to be published in March – will also recommend that the



## Tackling literacy and numeracy

### Functional Skills at HMP Oakwood, Milton Keynes College

Working as part of the team which delivers Functional Skills in English and Maths at the largest prison in the country, HMP Oakwood, which is part of Offender Learning at Milton Keynes College, has provided many challenges and some excellent opportunities. As with most prison education and indeed, education in general, the 'basics' of English and Maths, whilst much needed, are not the most popular subjects.

Prisoners, in common with many other students, would rather undertake more practical courses such as bricklaying or carpentry. In a bid to ensure that all prisoners have the ability to pursue their chosen course, G4S who manage the prison have taken the innovative step of making English and Maths mandatory for learners who have not achieved Level 1 qualifications in the subject. This partnership working between G4S and the education provider, Milton Keynes College is reaping benefits, because learners are increasing their skills levels and consequently, improving their future prospects.

The process starts with a robust diagnostic assessment, which includes English and Maths assessments, a free writing activity and an interview with each learner to assess their individual needs. As a consequence, learners are referred for Additional Learning Support promptly and interventions put in place to support individuals.

As part of our drive to enhance the learning experience, we have started to offer the OCR Cambridge Progression suite of qualifications as well as the full Functional Skill qualifications in English and Maths. This will enable us to tailor qualifications to learners' individual needs, and offers the best opportunity for learners to progress.

Whilst there will always be restrictions beyond our control when working in offender learning, for example learners being transferred before they complete their course, we value the opportunity to work closely with an awarding body which specialises in this area of education, and understands and has the ability to respond to the needs of our clientele.

#### Stephanie Downen

Programme Manager – Functional Skills  
Milton Keynes College

government attract more new teachers to prison by setting up a new social enterprise to recruit graduates, similar to Teach First; this will be chaired by David Laws, former Liberal Democrat MP for Yeovil and Schools Minister under the last coalition government.

#### Principle Four: 'Use the latest behavioural insights evidence and harness new technology to deliver better outcomes.'

This focused on some very specific interventions that the Prime Minister thought should be introduced. It would be hoped that the Breaking Free online drug desistance programme – which OCR supports – would be very popular for prison governors, given the current data on improving the desistance levels of service users in its pilot trial in some of the North West prisons.

#### So what does the future look like for prison education?

- Localism agenda based on regional employment opportunities using specific modelling data;
- Qualifications 'tailored' to local employment need with literacy and numeracy a priority;
- More involvement by employers in the shape of education in local prisons;

- Local education providers, especially academies and charities, encouraged to 'bid' for education contracts;
- The Education Training Foundation – greater role in staff development of teaching staff in prisons;
- Teach First will provide 'graduates' to assist in improving teaching and learning in prisons;
- The need for a comprehensive initial assessment and diagnostic tool for prisoner assessments, so levels of literacy and numeracy can be accurately measured and learners placed on to the right programmes;
- A payment by results model – similar perhaps to the Community Rehabilitation Contracts;
- A potential mix of accredited and non-accredited programmes delivered in prison.

With reform in prison education on the horizon, OCR will be contributing its expertise to the debate and supporting prisons through this period of change. To find out more, visit [www.ocr.org.uk/offenderlearning](http://www.ocr.org.uk/offenderlearning) or get in touch with [robert.mills@ocr.org.uk](mailto:robert.mills@ocr.org.uk)



# 'M' IS FOR METRIC

## PAUL STEER, OCR DIRECTOR OF POLICY AND STRATEGY, ON MEASURING HOW OUR EDUCATION SYSTEM PERFORMS



The recent Education Select Committee inquiry into the Purpose and Quality of Education asked for new metrics for measuring how our education system performs. While existing metrics are hotly contested, here are a few others to consider:

### Metric 1: Happiness

The Office for National Statistics already looks at this metric and, according to their last National Wellbeing report, 8 out of 10 children are relatively happy with their school. Conversely, an NUT report in 2015 on 'exam factories' warned of the potential negative impact of exam pressure on school pupils. All of us in the education system have a responsibility to monitor the effects of an increasingly high stakes accountability system on our young people. And what about a metric to measure teacher happiness as well?

### Metric 2: Personal wellbeing

Concepts like personal wellbeing – or 'moral seriousness' – are also potential metrics. Positive development of the child features strongly in the new Ofsted Common Inspection Framework. This includes behaviours such as: 'pride in achievement... self-confidence... self-awareness... management of feelings and behaviour... relating to others'. It's great that Ofsted already judges how schools develop 'wellbeing'. Why are inspectors so often seen as data junkies obsessed with narrow attainment measures?

### Metric 3: Full cost benefit analysis

Apprenticeships would contribute £34 billion to the UK economy in 2015 according to a 2014 SFA report on their economic impact. The ratio of benefits to costs of apprenticeships was stated as £21 for the national economy for each £1 of public money spent. Shouldn't we apply a similar formula to, say, full-time vocational courses in FE? This may not be

a flagship policy area, but it's where the big numbers of students are and doesn't always get the attention it deserves.

### Metric 4: Employability

According to the CBI's Skills Survey (2015), 'by far the most important factors employers weigh up when recruiting school and college leavers are attitudes (85%) and aptitudes (58%). These rank well ahead of formal qualifications. Perhaps employers could advise on ways of measuring the attributes of young people that our education system produces. Standard recruitment tools such as interviews and psychometric tests, not forgetting digital footprints, could be used.

### Metric 5: GCSE grade 4 as a 'good pass'

Making grade 4 the official 'good' pass for new GCSEs would automatically increase the pass rate, just as the current policy to make it grade 5 will depress it. This may display the 'soft bigotry of low expectations', but if we do end up with fewer people with good passes, it will mean more people being economically worse off. At least, that's the logic behind a 2014 DfE report on the 'Economic value of key intermediate qualifications': 'Individuals who achieve five or more good GCSEs including English and maths as their highest qualification, earn 3-13% more than similar individuals qualified to below level 2'.

### Metric 6: Creativity

The 'Bacc for the Future' campaign says the UK's creative industries are world-leading, contributing more than £76 billion to the UK economy and employing more than 1.7 million (more than 1 in 20 UK jobs). This seems like a very good reason for agreeing a way to measure schools' contribution to the delivery of creativity.

### Metric 7: Character and resilience

The Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues at the University of Birmingham claims 'character is educable and its progress can be measured holistically, not only through self-reports but also more objective research methods'. Maybe it could advise on how to measure character education across the system.

### Metric 8: Citizenship (local and global)

The new OCR GCSE in Citizenship Studies promotes active citizenship in the community, so why not put it in the EBacc? And Ofsted is tasked with inspecting how schools promote British Values. If you've forgotten, these are – according to the Home Office – 'democracy, rule of law, equality of opportunity, freedom of speech and the rights of all to live free from persecution of any kind'. These aren't exclusively British of course and the concept of the global citizen is also embedded in Cambridge International Examination's Global Perspectives IGCSE which requires candidates to 'have a sense of their own active place in the world' and 'empathise with the needs and rights of others'. A BIS report on the benefits of Higher Education went for a bigger picture claiming HE delivers 'greater social cohesion, trust and tolerance, less crime, and political stability'. These offer the potential for some very interesting metrics.

### Metric 9: World peace

Following on from global citizenship, let's end with something really ambitious. The World Education Foundation says 'Peace and Development of any kind is ultimately tied to education'. Wouldn't it be interesting to search for a measurable causal link between our education system and its contribution, or otherwise, to world peace?

## JOIN OCR AT THESE EXHIBITIONS AND CONFERENCES SPRING/SUMMER 2016

### MARCH

## 11-12

### Language World 2016

Dunchurch Park Hotel,  
Rugby

OCR will be exhibiting on stand 23 at the ALL Language World conference where the theme of this year's event is curriculum innovation.

[www.all-languages.org.uk](http://www.all-languages.org.uk)

## 16-18

### FE Week Annual Apprenticeship Conference 2016

ICC, Birmingham

Taking place during National Apprenticeship week and in partnership with the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS), the conference and exhibition will support apprenticeship providers, employers and assessment bodies. We are headline sponsors at this two day event and our experts will be on hand to answer questions.

[www.lsect.co.uk/events](http://www.lsect.co.uk/events)

## 23

### PiXL Maths Conference

Central Hall, Westminster

OCR is once again exhibiting at this event aimed at the teachers from the PiXL partnership of over 1,500 schools.

[www.pixl.org.uk](http://www.pixl.org.uk)

### APRIL

## 2

### Association of Teachers of Mathematics Annual Conference

Oxford University

Come and meet our Maths team to discuss any aspect of the new GCSE and the shape of the new Maths AS/A Levels.

[www.atm.org.uk](http://www.atm.org.uk)

## 7-9

### Geographical Association Annual Conference

University of Manchester

OCR's subject specialists will be on hand to discuss OCR's new Geography GCSEs and AS/A Levels at this key event in the Geography calendar. Don't miss hearing this year's public lecture by John Raine, 'Tackling the Ebola Crisis', sponsored by OCR.

[www.geography.org.uk](http://www.geography.org.uk)

### MAY

## 20-21

### Historical Association Annual Conference

Majestic Hotel, Harrogate

OCR is delighted to be exhibiting at the two day HA Conference in the beautiful Yorkshire spa town of Harrogate. Our team of subject specialists will provide information on our new A Level and GCSEs. We look forward to seeing you there!

[www.history.org.uk](http://www.history.org.uk)

### JUNE

## 15-16

### Sixth Form Colleges Association (SFCA) Conference

National College for  
Teaching and Leadership,  
Nottingham

The Summer Conference is one of SFCA's main events of the year and provides a platform to debate some of the big topics affecting the sector. OCR returns to exhibit at this event and sponsor the popular gala dinner. Our team looks forward to seeing you there.

[www.sixthformcolleges.org](http://www.sixthformcolleges.org)

## 23-24

### Telegraph Festival of Education

Wellington College,  
Berkshire

We can't wait to return as exhibitors in 2016. The festival brings together an impressive programme of speakers combined with a lively outdoor exhibition in the inspiring grounds of Wellington College. If you are passionate about education, join the thousands of festival-goers to explore, celebrate and learn.

[www.festivalofeducation.com](http://www.festivalofeducation.com)

### JUNE

## 24-25

### National Association of Teachers of English Annual Conference

Holiday Inn, Stratford  
Upon Avon

OCR is proud sponsor of this key event for all English education professionals.

We are delighted to announce that Jenny Grahame, of the English and Media Centre (EMC), will be delivering an OCR-sponsored talk. We have also invited Helen Rees-Bidder, Chief Examiner, to share her expertise on delivering GCSE specifications at an OCR workshop. Subject specialists will be available on our exhibition stand (6 & 7), throughout the conference.

[www.nate.org.uk](http://www.nate.org.uk)

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