

Awareness, Mystery and Value 2019 - New RE syllabus for Somerset Schools

During the Summer term of 2019 Somerset SACRE will be formally launching a revised Religious Education Syllabus for implementation in the Autumn term 2019.

While schools have overwhelmingly welcomed the introduction of the new assessment objectives, we know that the retention of the old statutory units of study has created a problem for schools. Put simply, the old units of study are not fulfilling the assessment objectives. While we did undertake an audit of the units of study during the last review, we acknowledge that their use creates an imbalance in the achievement of the objectives: some areas of the assessment objectives are covered extensively, while others are barely touched. This undermines the principles of the syllabus.

Schools have also complained that the new exemplars follow the old units of study instead of explicitly meeting the requirement of the new assessment objectives.

The problem is not with any of the changes introduced at the syllabus review, but with what we did not change - the old units of study.

While this difficulty is present for all our schools, it is compounded for church schools by the introduction of Understanding Christianity, a resource of classroom materials to teach about Christianity. The requirement to follow both the assessment objectives and units of study; and to also use the Understanding Christianity resource, has proven unnecessarily difficult for schools. One of guiding principles for the syllabus review was not to burden schools with more work.

SACRE has therefore agreed that from summer 2019 we:

1. **Remove the old units of work from the syllabus completely.**
2. Ensure that future planning will be based around the statutory "Essential Core" beliefs of the assessment document. This means that the **exemplars will be re-written and trialed to ensure they meet the assessment objectives.**
3. We will also produce **non-statutory programmes of study** which are based on the assessment objectives, which will inform *non-statutory* long term plans.
4. The **balance of religions** that must be taught at each Key Stage will remain **unchanged**, along with the use of Attainment targets 1&2.

Once this is done we will produce and share examples of pupil work, which can be used by schools during moderation. We know that sharing with staff **and** pupils 'what a good one looks like' can be invaluable in having higher expectations.

Given the extensive use of the Understanding Christianity resource, we will produce a document which identifies the links with the AMV assessment objectives.

Schools are invited to participate in the trialing and development of the new exemplar lessons.