

STATES OF JERSEY



MODERN LANGUAGES IN SCHOOLS (P.74/2024): AMENDMENT

Lodged au Greffe on 3rd December 2024
by the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning
Earliest date for debate: 10th December 2024

STATES GREFFE

MODERN LANGUAGES IN SCHOOLS (P.74/2024): AMENDMENT

1 PAGE 2, PARAGRAPH (b) –

For the word “States” substitute the words “mainstream provided”.

2 PAGE 2, PARAGRAPH (c) –

After the word “review” insert the words “and consultation”.

After the word “undertaken” insert the words “by the Jersey Curriculum Council”.

Before the word “students” insert the word “secondary”.

For the word “Assembly” substitute the words “the Minister”.

For the word “July” substitute the word “December”.

3 PAGE 2, PARAGRAPH (d) –

After the word “that” insert the words “a review and consultation is undertaken by the Jersey Curriculum Council for”.

For the words “from September 2026” substitute the words “and to report back to the Minister before the end of December 2025”.

4 PAGE 2, PARAGRAPH (d) –

After paragraph (d) insert the following new paragraph (e) –

“that the reviews and consultations undertaken by the Jersey Curriculum Council include assessment and costings of any staff and non-staff resource requirements and any effects on option choices in schools.”

MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING

Note: After this amendment, the proposition would read as follows –

THE STATES are asked to decide whether they are of opinion –

to request the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning to undertake any necessary actions to ensure –

- (a) that all students, both primary and secondary, should receive support from their school to access and develop their home language, in accordance with the rights afforded by Article 30 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child;

- (b) that all mainstream provided secondary schools should continue to offer a choice of at least two modern languages, other than English, one of which must be French;
- (c) that a review and consultation is undertaken by the Jersey Curriculum Council into the delivery of Portuguese language tuition in schools, with a view to extending the provision of optional Portuguese in the curriculum to all secondary students, and to report back to the Minister on this provision before the end of December 2025; and
- (d) that a review and consultation is undertaken by the Jersey Curriculum Council for the requirement for students to study at least one modern language, other than English, should be extended from key stage 3 (ages 11-13) to key stage 4 (ages 14-16), and to report back to the Minister before the end of December 2025
- (e) that the reviews and consultations undertaken by the Jersey Curriculum Council include assessment and costings of any staff and non-staff resource requirements and any effects on option choices in schools.

REPORT

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning (the Minister) is unable to accept all parts of this proposition for the reasons explained below.

In the interests of fully exploring any benefits of the proposition the Minister has lodged this amendment, which seeks to achieve better informed decision making on long term substantive changes to the Jersey Curriculum.

The Jersey Curriculum Council (JCC) and the Jersey Curriculum (JC)

The JCC is a statutory body as defined within Article 59 of the Education (Jersey) Law 1999.

The functions of the Jersey Curriculum Council shall be to –

- (a) conduct consultation on the aims, objectives, content, delivery and assessment of the Jersey Curriculum;*
- (b) keep the Jersey Curriculum under review;*
- (c) offer independent advice to and undertake research and development on behalf of the Minister in respect of the Jersey Curriculum;*
- (d) provide advice on the Jersey Curriculum to teachers, school governors, parents and other persons concerned with the provision of education; and*
- (e) disseminate information about the Jersey Curriculum.*

The Jersey Curriculum is defined in Article 16 of the same law. Within this, the Minister is able to “revise the Curriculum whenever the Minister considers it necessary or expedient to do so, however, this in only AFTER consultation with the JCC.

16 Jersey Curriculum

- (1) The Minister shall, after consultation with the Jersey Curriculum Council –*
 - (a) establish a basic curriculum for the education of children of compulsory school age, to be known as the Jersey Curriculum; and*
 - (b) revise that Curriculum whenever the Minister considers it necessary or expedient to do so.*

Paragraph (a)

Requests that all students, both primary and secondary, should receive support from their school to access and develop their home language, in accordance with the rights afforded by Article 30 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child;

The Minister can accept this part of the proposition as it does not request anything new. The current [Languages Policy for Jersey Education](#) clearly places a strong importance on the home languages of all students, relevant excerpt below:

“The home language that each child brings to school with them is a critical element of their cognitive, emotional, social, and identity development.”

As the population of Jersey continues to diversify, schools are welcoming significant numbers of students who are speakers of languages other than English. Research focused on educating language learner students points to a strong correlation between maintenance and development in home languages and mastery of the school language in their new environment. It also supports the integration of home languages into education for purposes as varied as literacy development, knowledge building, integration, and development of international mindedness. This policy emphasises the importance of building of knowledge in schools on multilingualism in development, and the development of strong parent/school/community relationships, to improve the academic outcomes for the Island's multilingual learners.

Paragraph (b)

Requests that all States secondary schools should continue to offer a choice of at least two modern languages, other than English, one of which must be French;

All States secondary schools, by definition, would include the Special Schools, Mont à l'Abbe and La Passarelle. It is not known whether it was the proposer's intention to include these schools.

The Minister proposes a small but significant amendment to this paragraph so it would only apply to the seven mainstream provided secondary schools. This will ensure that Grainville, Haute Vallee, Hautlieu, Jersey College for Girls, Le Rocquier, Les Quennevais and Victoria College are required to offer a choice of at least two modern languages, other than English with one being French.

The Minister does not consider it would be appropriate to offer two languages in special schools or to all pupils in the Additional Resource Provisions (ARPs) which are part of each of the GOJ 11-16 secondary schools, for the following reasons:

Pupils at both Mont à l'Abbé School and La Passarelle are allocated places in one of our two Special Schools according to the level and nature of their Special Educational Needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Their Record of Need (RON) will record the pupils' profound and multiple learning or physical disabilities, or one of several of the comprehensive range of risk factors considered by the La Passarelle Placement Panel. In both settings, pupils require a bespoke curriculum offer, in line with their individual needs; as such compulsory subjects, including languages options, do not form a part of this curriculum designation.

Pupils in ARPs, who are placed by the same panel as those who are placed in Special Schools, and who will share some or many of the same criteria and a Record of Need, will also require a curriculum in line with their particular level and nature of need. In some cases pupils may study a language, in others they may be undertaking a reduced number of Jersey Curriculum subjects, depending on their age, stage and the nature of their SEND profile.

Paragraph (c)

Requests that a review is undertaken into the delivery of Portuguese language tuition in schools, with a view to extending the provision of optional Portuguese in the curriculum to all students, and to report back to the Minister on this provision before the end of July 2025.

The Minister agrees a review on this topic would be of value but wants to ensure it:

- is carried out by the appropriate body, the Jersey Curriculum Council
- reports back to the Minister in accordance with the Education Law
- includes consultation as appropriate
- is limited to secondary schools
- has a more realistic and achievable timescale

The outcome of the review requested in paragraph (c) could clearly result in a significant change to the Jersey Curriculum. This rests firmly within the statutory functions of the Jersey Curriculum Council as described above in this report.

The Minister is keen that any review includes meaningful consultation with relevant stakeholders.

The proposer suggests extending the provision of optional Portuguese in the curriculum to ALL students. It is not clear if the proposer meant this review to include primary school children as well. The text in the report relating to this part of the proposition is focussed on secondary education only. The Minister does not believe it is feasible to extend the primary curriculum to another language on top of those already prioritised, French and Jerriais, therefore seeks by this amendment to limit this review to secondary schools.

If this amendment is accepted the review will be carried out by the Jersey Curriculum Council (JCC) without any additional resources. Prioritising this review, if adopted by the Assembly, will impact current JCC and JCC led officer workstreams as follows.

Since September 2024 the JCC has tasked itself and officers to focus on supporting schools in providing an ambitious programme of education for all pupils, reflecting the full Jersey Curriculum (all 17 named subject areas), and including consideration of all of the other activities, experiences and opportunities provided to pupils by schools.

Schools and teachers are currently receiving CPD in subject discipline areas as follows: core subjects (English, Mathematics and the three Sciences); foundation discipline areas: Languages; Art, Music, Design and Technology; Humanities (History, Geography, RE and World Views); Sport and PE; Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education. This breadth of CPD support, informed by and reported back to the JCC, began in July 2024, and is planned to continue throughout 2025. As such, any new workstream, would take resource away from this bespoke offer already underway and received well by schools.

In order to allow sufficient time to prioritise, consult and carry out this work, which is currently out of this scope, a deadline of December 2025 is required.

Paragraph (d)

Requests that the requirement for students to study at least one modern language, other than English, should be extended from key stage 3 (ages 11-13) to key stage 4 (ages 14-16) from September 2026.

The Proposer requests a review for paragraph (c) which is to be commended. The Minister believes it would be wholly inappropriate to move forward with an extension of mandatory language study in key stage 4 without a similar review.

The Minister's amendment to this paragraph seeks to:

- ensure a review and consultation is undertaken by the Jersey Curriculum Council
- with a report back to the Minister by December 2025

Clearly the adoption of mandatory language study in Key Stage 4 would be a significant change to the Jersey Curriculum. Therefore, it would be wholly inappropriate to consider this without the required advice and research being undertaken by the Jersey Curriculum Council. The proposer acknowledges that this may require additional teachers but at this time, neither the proposer nor the Minister have been able to quantify this. The Minister is also keen to understand any impact on students' choices from a mandatory language option at key stage 4. Jersey, like any other jurisdiction has a diverse range of students with differing levels of academic ability and vocational ambition. It will be important to assess that any changes are not to the detriment of any cohort of students.

Paragraph (e)

This amendment seeks to add paragraph (e) to ensure the reviews undertaken by the Jersey Curriculum Council carry out a full assessment and costings of any staff and non-staff resource requirements and any effects on option choices in schools.

It is vitally important that any changes are accurately costed and are feasible to resource.

Financial and staffing implications

As described above, the reviews will be carried out by reprioritisation and use of existing resources. There may be additional resources required to ensure paragraph (b) is met, but these are yet to be identified.

Children's Rights Impact Assessment

A Children's Rights Impact Assessment (CRIA) has been prepared in relation to this proposition and is available to read on the States Assembly website.

Appendix

Current government provided secondary school subject options:

[Grainville](#)

[Haute Vallee](#)

[Les Quennevais](#)

[Le Rocquier](#)

[Hautlieu](#)

[Victoria College](#)

[Jersey College for Girls](#)