

Policy Title:	Bristol Metropolitan Academy Curriculum Policy
Function:	Information and guidance
Status:	Statutory
Audience:	Councillors, Principal, Teachers, Support Staff, Students, their Parents and Carers.
Ownership / Implementation	The policy is implemented by the Assistant Principal, Curriculum Design. The Principal and the Academy council have overall responsibility for ensuring that it is implemented at Bristol Metropolitan Academy.
Issued:	Board Approved.
Implementation Date:	Sept 2013
Review Period:	Annually
Date to be Reviewed:	October 2017

1. Starting point:

The 'Good' outcome which followed the Section 5 inspection at Bristol Metropolitan Academy represented a watershed moment for the development and improvement agenda at the Academy. In the writing of the Improvement Plan that followed the inspection, the Academy undertook to pursue a 3-year course with the aim of establishing and maintaining consistently outstanding provision.

One theme established in the plan is the notion of designing a curriculum which meets the following criteria:

- to provide a diet which suits the generic and specific needs of the cohort at Bristol Met;
- to create a platform on which the aspirational targets for student performance can best be achieved;
- to position the Academy so that it can best meet national benchmarks and standards;
- to establish a broad curriculum offer, which is well-placed to adapt to any national, local or esoteric agenda;
- to formalise structures designed to support improved study skills, enrichment and independent learning;
- to ensure that the quality of teaching is on a journey of constant improvement.

2. Curriculum Design Drivers:

- The curriculum should enable all students in all years to make rapid and sustained progress between Key Stages 2 and 4, culminating in the attainment of outstanding outcomes, which rival the best in the UK.
- Students should feel inspired, challenged and engaged by the curriculum. They should be able to articulate what they are learning and why.
- Students and Programme Leaders should be co-creators of the curriculum. The curriculum should be clearly communicated and understood by students and parents; it should be coherent, appropriate, personalised, diverse and challenging.
- The curriculum should respond to the cohort profile and achievement data in all years. For example the Year 7 curriculum should build on the successful practice of primary schools and utilise these practices in order to maintain progress from Key stage 2 to 3. The options available in Key Stage 4 should allow all students to be challenged, engaged and successful.
- Students arrive with varying levels of literacy and numeracy; for some this requires early regular intervention to raise their level in order to access the curriculum, for others this requires a higher level of challenge to attain the highest levels.
- The timetable will prioritise regular literacy intervention at every level. Numeracy intervention will also happen, though currently to a lesser extent. This is currently under review to ensure progress in numeracy is commensurate with the status of the CLF as a Boolean Maths Hub.
- The curriculum will develop independent learning skills, deeper learning and engagement through a variety of measures including Timetabled Enrichment, Timetabled Prep, Homework and Intensive Study.
- The curriculum and extended day should allow students the time and space to develop their skills



in a range of subjects while ensuring depth of learning as opposed to 'skimming' over a series of topics.

3. Guiding Principles:

The principles which underpin the curriculum at Bristol Met are:

- Ensuring the students attain well in English and maths by the end of Key Stage 4. Ultimately the Academy's central aim is to support all students in attaining at least a 5 grade in GCSE and maximising their progress from starting point;
- Personalisation of the provision for individual students, breaking free as much as possible from traditional barriers linked to age or logistical convenience;
- Intervention motivated specifically by the drive to raise attainment is fine-tuned and highly-bespoke;
- Personalisation motivated by the drive to raise achievement is progressively increased;
- There is fair access to relevant and engaging courses which equip students well both now and in the next stage of their development;
- The curriculum offer is attractive and improves the Academy profile, thus securing student numbers on roll;
- The Academy constantly strives to develop courses which will be attractive to Bristol Met students and also to students based at centres which are in partnership within the CLF;
- The curriculum offer reflects the background, interests and aspirations of the cohort and context of Bristol Met.

The curriculum at Bristol Met should be designed in such a way:

- To allow increased organisational flexibility thus supporting and making possible a more personalised curriculum for students;
- To establish and facilitate the concept of the student as the 'expert', encouraging students to develop a depth of understanding in areas of strength which match and surpass the levels achieved by adults within the academy and beyond;
- To include discrete and embedded literacy and numeracy, delivered both by specialists and as elements integrated into all schemes of learning;
- To increase student motivation and engagement by enabling students to gain accreditation earlier in their school career and on an on-going basis;
- To maximise opportunities for students to achieve and attain, particularly in the core subjects of English, maths, Science;
- To enable greater collaboration with partner centres and agencies;
- To observe and develop strategies for raising attainment in English and maths that work across the CLF.



4. 11-16 Diet:

The subject curriculum is owned and designed by Programme Leaders / subject specialists. Lines of accountability are established from PLs, via the Zone Team Leaders to SLT.

When one considers the curriculum in its broader sense, the design of the timetable is but one element of the process that takes place to ensure the best learning experience for students. It is also key that the design of the curriculum content in each subject is well developed and delivered by teachers who have high levels of competence in general teaching and a sound subject knowledge.

Throughout Key Stages 3 and 4, each student has a progress target in every subject they follow. In most cases the target will represent an end-of-year milestone on the 5-year journey of making one grade better than expected progress in the measure of Progress 8. In addition, each cohort will be subject to attainments targets which are in line with the ambitions and aspirations of the Cabot Learning Federation. Dedicated teams of staff will track students' progress in each key stage continuously across the board, ensuring that all relevant strategies are applied in order for each student to progress. In Key Stage 3 this group is called the Value Added Team (VAT) and in Key Stage 4, it is the Raising Achievement Team (RAT).

The programme at Key Stage 3 includes a focus on over-arching literacy and numeracy, as well as intensive enrichment and PSHE. The programme at Key Stage 4 will contain team-building and leadership development, as well as PSHE and IAG. However, the overriding focus will be around the concept of personal solutions to raising achievement. This will either be represented by raising attainment intervention programmes or by programmes allowing students to extend and deepen their understanding of certain areas of study.

Key Stage 3

Students study the core subjects of English, maths and science.

Non-core subjects are taught under the umbrella of 'Met Learning'. These are still taught by subject specialists and are linked through literacy themes and assessment.

The prior attainment and baseline data of students who have joined the Academy since 2011 indicate that, while the cohort includes many more able students than in the past, the reading, spelling, and numerical ages are well below national averages. An important shift is needed in the design of the curriculum in recognition that a significant proportion of the cohort need to have the chance to catch up:

- **Literacy** drives the KS3 curriculum and is the overarching pedagogy in all Met Learning subjects. Literacy skills are explicitly taught in reflection lessons and practised in Met Learning lessons e.g. Term 1 Speaking and Listening, Term 2 Writing for different audiences.
- Literacy development/ intervention in KS3 will be timetabled for **every student** to allow better access / success in all areas of the curriculum.
- Subject specialists choose the curriculum content
- **Independent study** is promoted especially in Enrichment lessons and Intensive Weeks.
- **Enrichment** is timetabled as part of the Academy Day in Years 7 and 8; this allows students to work in a different way – often more independently in a broader subject area that interests them. Timetabled enrichment also stimulates heightened interest in the rich and diverse after school programme.



Key Stage 4

In recent times the curriculum model at Bristol Met has adapted to align itself with the perceived strengths of its students, offering more BTEC courses to augment traditional GCSE qualifications. The success of the outcomes of these courses, compared to the GCSE courses which preceded them, suggest that for many BMA students the BTEC model has represented a good fit for their strengths and motivations.

However, it is clear that the national picture has changed. There has been a shift towards more academic courses, both in terms of the course being offered and the manner in which schools are held to account.

The key stage 4 curriculum at BMA offers students the chance to make at least expected progress in all subjects and supports the most able in achieving the highest grades of 8 and 9. Students should have clear pathways of learning from key stage 4 to 5 and beyond, and they are supported in achieving the grades they need.

The curriculum focuses on quality of grades rather than quantity to ensure that every student has grades that reflect their best possible outcome while offering the chance for the most able to progress more rapidly or take on more challenging learning and accreditations. Students should complete their studies with the opportunity to progress to the best universities, further education or apprenticeships; the curriculum should equip them with the qualifications and skills to enter their chosen career path and ultimately improve their life chances.

- Guided Options are designed to accommodate inward mobility and EAL students;
- Guided Option choices maximise the best fit for each student and offer the best chance of success.
- Option subjects are taught for 3 lessons a week.

Curriculum Statement

Bristol Metropolitan Academy's ethos values each student, regardless of background and faith. Within subject areas, assemblies and the Academy's tutorial programme we celebrate our diversity and our students' place in society.