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"You can't grow a cow by weighing it": a comment on the proposed GCSE reforms 2012

GCSE reform

Stephen Gorard, Professor of Education Research

"There are some very worthwhile elements among the proposed changes to GCSEs in England. But none of these require the abolition of the GCSE."

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Feedback

- AM on 04 October 2012, **Tim Cromwell** wrote

  Government policies are not representative of positive change but rather of maintaing a status quo. A state where the 'right' people get to keep their power and wealth in society. I think it fair to say that at least 90% of professors benefitted from such an un-meritocratic system. So it is amusing to read the undeserved giving their tainted views on an obviously corrupt system, particularly as such authors have unfairly benefitted from such a system.

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- PM on 29 September 2012, **Emerson Jackson** wrote

  Having being in the classroom for a long time now, it good to welcome change that will embrace positive impact on current qualification system, thta is GCSE. GCSE itself is a good qualification and it provide the basis for determining a student's prior attainment for progression to Advanced level course. In general there are some problems with the qualification as the tier system is making it very hard for students to be at parity in terms of being able to cope with A level course. For example, the Higher tier paper in Maths even though not fully detailed to fully equip students for an A level Maths course it is considered much better in terms of contents than the Foundation or Intermediate paper. Personally, I feel the tier system should be abolished completely from the qualification. Schools should also encourage students wanting to progress on to A Level Science courses like Physics, Chemistry and also Mathematics to pursue the GCSE Additional Mathematics course / Free Standing Maths Qualification. This will enable them to be better prepared for A Level course. The introduction of the English Baccalaureate [EBac] is also a good idea, but flawed from the initial start as Mr. Gove has his own agenda of promoting Humanity subjects like History and Geography without taking into consideration the value of other highligh intellectual courses like Music which requires heavy practical and Theoretical skills for students to progress. If the EBac is to be a standard qualification, it must focus in terms of valuing all subject areas currently covered by the GCSE qualification. They should learn from the currently highly valued International Baccalaureate qualification which gives students a broader knowledge than even the GCE A Level qualification. There is no need to create a qualification with the aim of dividing students capability. Mr. Gove seemed not to have taken into consideration the importance of Performing Arts and Business to societal development. He must get his experts or a scope for wider consultation so as to make it possible for his intended qualification to be highly valued internationally. Finally, I would also like Mr. Gove to also give some thoughts on the value of Vocational qualifications terms of enabling the middle skills potential to grow. Lessons must be learns from countries like Germany which is the strong hold and lead in promoting vocational potential. Kids who cannot progress through the so-called GCSE or EBac route must be encouraged to pursue a vocational qualification that will enhance their individual potential and interests, but with a focus in also keeping up with their basic Maths and English Language / Communication skills.

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