

# Historical Association

## Survey of History in Schools in England 2014

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### 1. Summary

#### 1.1 History departments' responses to the new National Curriculum

##### 1.1.1 The influence of the new National Curriculum for history on Key Stage 3 provision

While the new National Curriculum will certainly influence the majority of maintained schools, the extent of that influence will be considerably weaker in academies than in those schools overseen by local authorities, which calls into question the very notion of a *national* entitlement. While 90% of respondents from comprehensive schools expect that their Key Stage 3 history curriculum from September 2014 will be 'closely compliant' with or 'broadly in line' with the new National Curriculum, only 50% of free schools and academy respondents expect to follow its requirements in this way. While the new curriculum will certainly influence the curriculum decisions of most of the remaining respondents (with only just over 10% asserting that their curriculum would be entirely independent of it), around 40% of the history departments within free schools and academies intend to 'respond flexibly in relation to the National Curriculum' in drawing up their own schemes of work.

##### 1.1.2 The anticipated impact of changes to GCSE on Key Stage 3 provision

Because of this variety in the ways in which schools are responding to the new National Curriculum, the extent of the changes that it will prompt is quite variable, but only 30% of respondents anticipate 'extensive' or 'considerable change'. In contrast, 50% of respondents expect that the new GCSE specifications (once they have been developed in response to the new national criteria published this year) will lead to 'profound' or 'considerable' change in what they teach at Key Stage 3. It seems clear that the pressure of high stakes assessment means that the nature of the new GCSEs courses, still in the early stages of development, will have more influence on the history curriculum in the early years of secondary education than the official National Curriculum for those year groups.

##### 1.1.3 History departments' plans for assessing and reporting students' progress

The survey reveals considerable uncertainty and variety between schools in their responses to the abolition of the 'level descriptors' set out in previous versions of the National Curriculum. Overall around a third of respondents indicated (in June or July 2014) that they were still unsure about how to proceed, which is a matter of some concern given that the new curriculum is intended to be applied from September 2014. Of those able to suggest what they would do, responses varied quite evenly between those who intend to continue applying the level descriptors as set out in 2008; those who intend to adapt those 2008 levels in some way; those who will look to GCSE grade systems to devise a related scale and those intending to develop their own measures of progression. While this variety might be interpreted as schools' exploitation of the freedom they now have to plan most effectively for their own students, the uncertainty revealed makes clear how much more development work is still needed in many school contexts.

## **1.2. The organisation and structure of Key Stage 3 history teaching**

### **1.2.1 The length of the Key Stage 3 curriculum**

Unfortunately, the proportion of respondents reporting that their Key Stage 3 curriculum lasts only two years rather than three is slightly higher at 23% than it was last year (18%), with most change observable in new academies, (from just over 20% of such schools reporting a two-year Key Stage 3 in 2013 to just over 28% this year). A two-year key stage 3 curriculum continues to be most common (as a percentage of responses from schools in that category) in the older style academies.

### **1.2.2 The organisation of history within the Key Stage 3 curriculum**

Although the provision of discrete history lessons at Key Stage 3 remains most likely in independent and grammar schools, there has been an encouraging trend visible over the last four years of the study towards more teaching of history as a separate subject. The proportion of schools teaching in that way has risen from 77% in 2011 to 85% in 2014. There seems to have been a particularly marked increase in the proportion of old style academies offering history as a discrete subject, which is particularly welcome. It is worth noting that history is more likely to be taught as a discrete subject in Year 7 in those schools which allocate the traditional three years to the Key Stage 3 curriculum.

### **1.2.3 The time allocated to history at Key Stage 3**

The overall figures suggest that the amount of time allocated to history in Year 7 has at least held stable or perhaps even improved very slightly over in the past few years (although there are variations across different types of school). Although those schools with a two-year Key Stage 3 tend to provide more curriculum time for history each week than schools with a three-year Key Stage 3, this additional weekly allocation is *not* sufficient to compensate for the time lost to compulsory study for all young people: those students studying history for 75 minutes a week over two years, for example, still receive nearly 20 fewer hours of history teaching (17% less time) than those studying history for an hour a week over three years.

## **1.3 GCSE history**

### **1.3.1 The length and nature of GCSE history courses**

In the vast majority of cases (94%) where schools teach a standard three-year Key Stage 3 and then have two years available for Key Stage 4, history is offered as a two-year GCSE course. A very small proportion of schools (4%) – mostly new academies – offer a one-year GCSE programme.

IGCSE accounts for a small, but significant proportion of the history entries at this level, especially within the grammar and independent sectors. Of the 31 respondents who reported offering IGCSE 17 are independent schools.

### **1.3.2 Patterns of uptake at GCSE**

As last year, it appears that schools with a shortened or condensed Key Stage 3 are less likely to see large numbers of students opting to study GCSE history. Although the figures for 2014 are more positive than they were a year ago, with only about 33% of schools with a condensed two-year Key Stage 3 reporting that less than a third of the cohort opt for history (in comparison with around 50% of respondents claiming in 2013 that fewer than a third opted for history), these proportions still compare unfavourably with the uptake of schools offering a three-year Key Stage 3. More than 80% of respondents from such schools report that over a third of students are studying history at GCSE.

### **1.3.3 The extent of non-specialist teaching at GCSE**

It is encouraging to report that the vast majority of GCSE history teaching is being undertaken by specialists, with 87% of respondents reporting that all their GCSE classes have specialist teachers, an improvement on the proportion for the past two years (81% in 2013 and 85% in 2012). A particular improvement is evident in relation to the old-style academies, with all 20 respondents from such academies reporting that all their GCSE classes had specialist history teachers (which last year was true for only 64% of the old style academy respondents). It remains a concern, however, that 3% of respondents report that in their schools over half their GCSE history classes are taught by teachers who are not subject specialists.

### **1.3.4 The degree of freedom that students can exercise in relation to GCSE choices**

The E-Bacc measure of schools' performance means that many schools now actively encourage those students thought capable of achieving the appropriate number and range of A\*-C grades to take history or geography GCSE as one of their options. While more than half of schools allow all students to make a completely free choice about history; just over two fifths of them (42.1%) exercise some kind of compulsion in relation to the humanities subjects, although in most of these cases, students have the opportunity to select between history and geography or even to opt for both. Grammar and independent schools are more likely than other types of schools to insist that all students take either history or geography at Key Stage 3.

### **1.3.5 The extent to which certain students are steered away from GCSE history**

As in previous years, we are concerned that the fact that schools actively encourage certain students to take history should not distract attention from the parallel fact that many also actively steer students *away* from GCSE history. At 44.7%, the proportion of respondents who report some kind of active deterrent or outright prohibition is higher than in last year's survey (38.9%) and this proportion is now almost three times higher than it was when we first asked this question in 2011.

The most frequent reasons given for turning students away from the subject at GCSE, as was the case last year, were expressed either in terms of students' abilities or likely achievement (mentioned in 36% of the responses) or with specific reference to the E-Bacc measure which was explicitly cited in 26% of the comments.

### **1.3.6. The potential impact on history provision of the new Progress 8 measure based on an average grade value-added score across eight subjects**

There were very limited indications that the new measure of schools' performance, Progress 8 (which focuses on students' progress at all levels, rather than only recognising A\*-C grades, and that is due to be implemented from 2016) is beginning to influence some decisions, with only five respondents mentioning it explicitly as grounds for encouraging students to take history.

Teachers tend to be supportive rather than critical of the new measure, with only around 27% disagreeing with the suggestion that Progress 8 would be an appropriate way of calculating and reporting students' achievement. However, only around 38% actually expressed positive support for it. Almost as many respondents (34%) had not yet formed any clear opinion of it, which suggests that history teachers may currently have limited knowledge or understanding of what it will entail.

### **1.3.7. The impact of the new 'linear' GCSE**

Overall, respondents were divided about the benefits or otherwise of ending modular GCSE exams. Around a third endorsed the suggestion that this change would have a positive effect, allowing more time for teaching and learning; another third adopted a neutral position and the final third tended to disagree with it. Support for ending modular exams was more pronounced among the independent school respondents and particularly among the small number of grammar school respondents.

### **1.3.8 Teachers' reactions to the new GCSE subject criteria (for first teaching from 2016)**

Broadly speaking, respondents indicated their support both for the statement of aims and for the subject outcomes set out in the new GCSE subject criteria for history, although around a third of respondents expressed neutral views, which could suggest that they were not yet very familiar with them.

The most distinctive feature of the new criteria is that it requires students to study history from a range of three different eras: the Medieval (500-1500); Early Modern (1500-1750) and Modern (1700-present day). While around half of respondents positively support this requirement, there is, perhaps unsurprisingly, quite a large measure of disagreement, with around 40% of respondents opposed to it, a view that is slightly more marked among independent school respondents and among the few from grammar schools.

Almost two thirds of teachers agree with the new requirement for candidates to study history on three different timescales, and less than a quarter indicated that they were opposed to it. While most teachers are sympathetic to the idea, and many are indeed extremely positive about it, respondents are also anxious about the range of ways in which the demands of the course were being simultaneously increased.

The majority of respondents (59%) also support the study of a particular locality, although very few expressed strong support for it, and opinion was much more evenly divided among grammar and independent school respondents. Many respondents, including those who approved of its inclusion expressed concerns about how a local study could be effectively accommodated in an examination system that relied entirely on external assessment set by the exam boards.

Despite the support for many features of the new GCSE criteria, teachers are extremely worried about the extent of the change that will be involved (a matter of concern for 88% of respondents). This challenge is compounded by the timescale for implementation which means that GCSE boards have only a year in which to produce new specifications and that major curriculum reform will be taking place within one or more key stage over successive years from 2014-2018. Some are fearful that the extent of simultaneous change may mean that all those involved in developing new specifications will simply settle for options that cause least disruption rather than trying to address the persistent problems that they perceive there to have been with GCSE.

Respondents are also clearly concerned about the nature of the demands that the new specifications will make on students, and are particularly fearful that the new examinations may prove even less accessible to the full range of learners than the current examinations. Almost half of all respondents have *serious* concerns about the suitability of the new courses for lower attainers or those with particular needs, and 85% in total expressed some concern about this issue.

While the removal of controlled assessment from the new specification is warmly welcomed by nearly a third of respondents, over half are concerned about the implications of this change, and many of those who commented on it drew a contrast between the types of approaches to assessment now favoured at higher levels, and the reversion to a reliance on recall at GCSE.

## **1.4 A level history**

### **1.4.1 The proportion of students taking A level history**

Among respondents in schools offering A level history it is most common for between 11% and 20% of the cohort to take the subject, a pattern noted in over a third of schools. Although around a quarter of the schools and colleges represented had less than 10% of the students taking AS level history – a proportion that rose to around a third for students studying A2 in Year 13 – it is also important to note that in at least a third of schools more than 21% of the cohort are studying history at AS level and beyond. In a very few schools and colleges (four in total) the proportion taking history even exceeds 40%.

In so far as respondents can discern any trend (rather than yearly fluctuations) in the uptake of history, this appears to be a positive one. In Year 12, a greater proportion of respondents reported an increase in numbers (33%) than reported a decrease (14%), and in Year 13 the proportions were essentially similar, cancelling each other out.

Most respondents (81%) report that their school operates some kind of minimum admissions policy and for almost half of respondents this was set at a minimum of a B grade in GCSE history (sometimes in combination with similarly high grades in a number of other GCSE subjects, most often English). In most cases, schools seem willing to admit students who have not taken history at GCSE, in which case they tend to apply their minimum requirement to the students' prior achievement in English.

### **1.4.2 Reactions to forthcoming A level changes**

Most respondents (58%) disagreed with the suggestion that decoupling AS and A2 would improve students' learning and equip them better for university. Only 17% of respondents agreed with the

suggestion, although a further 25% did not express a view either way. Support for the change was more evident among independent school respondents, 34% of whom agreed with the suggestion that it would lead to an improvement, while disagreement was most pronounced among teachers in the comprehensives and new academies.

Although almost half of the respondents thought that it was still too soon to judge what the impact of the decoupling would be on the take-up of history in their schools, it was clear that very few (only 4% of all respondents) thought that the effects would be positive, whereas 29% predicted that the change would have a negative impact on take-up of the subject. Concerns are particularly pronounced among the respondents teaching in sixth form and tertiary colleges. In some cases, it was suggested that students who had previously taken history as fourth subject (often alongside sciences) would no longer be prepared to do so. In most others it was suggested that students who were quite nervous about taking history, regarding it as a very demanding subject, but who would previously have been prepared to risk taking it at AS level, and then been reassured by their results and continued to A2, would no longer be willing to give the subject a try.

The timescale on which the changes to A level are to be implemented is a matter of concern to 85% of respondents, with more than a third rating this timescale as a matter of *serious* concern. Significant levels of concern were also expressed about the increase in chronological range that the new specifications would require, with 65% of respondents regarding the new requirement (for topics to be taken from a chronological range of at least 200 years) as a matter of concern. Other aspects of the changes – particularly the inclusion of an independent historical enquiry and the minimum requirement for 20% British history – were broadly welcomed or at least accepted.

## **1.5 Initial teacher education**

### **1.5.1 Views of current trends in initial teacher education**

The vast majority of respondents believe that the most effective way of training history teachers is in the context of a secure partnership between schools and university providers. There is little support for further moves to expand the role of schools in ITE, especially if this comes at the cost of the university contribution, which is particularly valued for the access that it gives to subject-specific educational research. This vital role of universities is so strongly recognised that over 90% of respondents thought that all trainees should receive a guaranteed minimum entitlement to university-based elements in their training, incorporated within a partnership programme. Respondents were keen to acknowledge that it was not only the trainees but also the mentors and other experienced teachers working with the trainees who benefitted through the partnership arrangements from this access to subject-specific research.

### **1.5.2 The extent to which mentors feel equipped for their role**

A short series of questions was directed to those respondents currently acting as mentors to teachers in training. In analysing their responses a distinction was drawn between those mentoring trainees on ‘traditional’ partnership programmes and those mentoring beginning teachers following an essentially employment-based route into teaching (including the Teach First and School Direct Salaried programmes). Although most mentors claimed to be well equipped and well supported in

relation to each of the dimensions we explored, those supporting trainees on more traditional partnership programmes reported higher levels of satisfaction in relation to all aspects *except* the allocation of time that they were given for their work as mentor.

Around 70% of mentors felt that their allocation of time for the role was at least adequate for them to fulfil their role as ITE mentors, although only around a third of them suggested that they were well or very well supported in terms of protected time. Most mentors – well over 90% - felt that they were at least adequately equipped for their role in terms of the guidance and training that they received, and over 60% felt that this provision was more than adequate. The mentors also reported that they were generally well equipped for their role in terms of subject-specific resources for themselves and their trainees. Over half the mentors responded that they were well or very well equipped and over 85% felt at least adequately equipped.

On the whole history mentors also claimed to be well supported in their role, whether this support came from others within school (or a school network) or from a university partner. More than 87% of mentors felt that they were at least adequately supported and nearly two thirds of them that they felt well or very well supported. This issue saw the most marked difference between mentors supporting trainees on traditional programmes and those working with trainees on employment-based routes. While only 7% of mentors on traditional courses felt that the level of support they received was poor (and not one of them claimed that it was 'very bad'), a quarter of the mentors on employment-based routes felt that the support that they received was inadequate, with half of those describing it as 'poor' and half of them as 'very bad'.

## **1. 6 Teachers' concerns**

When asked to reflect across the range of their history teaching, the most significant concern, identified as an issue by 81.5% of respondents, is the combination of curriculum changes all happening in quick succession. This was regarded as a matter of *serious* concern by half of all teachers responding to the survey. Linked with this concern are anxieties about the lack of funding for new resources to support the curriculum changes, which is a matter of concern for 70% of respondents. Although this proportion is lower than it was last year (which probably reflects the fact that changes to the content of the Key Stage 3 have been less extensive than was suggested by the draft proposals) teachers remain very anxious about how they can respond to change at so many levels within tightly constrained limited budgets.

Concerns about the provision of subject-specific CPD and the chance for teachers to participate in appropriate courses where they are available, are slightly more pronounced than they were last year, and are a matter of concern for just over half of teachers.

It is encouraging to note that concerns about a lack of specialist history teaching are slightly less pronounced than in last year's survey, but the amount of history being taught by non-specialists remains a concern for almost 30% of respondents, while worries about history teachers leaving and not being replaced by specialists were expressed by more than 20% of respondents. In such circumstances, it is likely that what specialist expertise there is will be targeted at public examination classes, leaving Key Stage 3 classes to non-historians, which is particularly troubling at a time when schools are being called upon to devise and implement new systems of defining, measuring and recording progression within the subject.

## 2. Nature of the survey

The findings reported here are based on the response of history teachers in England to an online survey sent by the Historical Association to all schools and colleges teaching students in the 11–18 age range. The survey was conducted during the summer term 2014.

Responses were received from 325 history teachers working in a wide range of different contexts, including sixth form and tertiary colleges. While some responses – such as teachers’ concerns – were analysed at an individual level, multiple responses from teachers within the same school were eliminated to ensure that each school was counted only once in response to questions about the nature of provision for history at different key stages. These school-level responses were analysed in relation to different types of schools: state-maintained comprehensives, state-maintained grammar schools, independent schools, old-style academies (established under previous Labour governments in areas of socio-economic disadvantage) and new academies<sup>1</sup> (established under the terms of the Academies Act of 2010 which allows high-performing schools to convert to academy status, as well as for sponsors to take over schools that are judged to be failing). While all types of academy have similar independence from local authority control and are equally free to ignore the requirements of the National Curriculum, the different circumstances in which they have been established means that they tend to serve very different kinds of catchment areas.

Responses to questions about teaching history at Key Stage 3 (traditionally the first three years of secondary school for students aged 11-14, but now reduced in some schools to the first two years of secondary provision for students aged 11-13) were received from 282 schools. These 282 schools included 95 state-maintained comprehensive schools, 7 state-maintained grammar schools, 40 independent schools, 22 old-style academies and 118 new academies. This means that detailed responses in relation to Key Stage 3 were received from approximately 4% of grammar schools, 12% of the old-style academies and 9% of independent schools. The number of schools switching rapidly from comprehensive to academy status makes it difficult to calculate exactly what proportion of these types of school responded to the survey, but the figure for their combined responses represents approximately 8% of the combined total of comprehensives and new academies. Responses to questions about provision at Key Stage 4 (conventionally ages 14-16) were received from 268 schools; while 185 schools and sixth-form colleges reported on their AS and A level history provision.

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<sup>1</sup> One response was received from a history teacher working in a free school. Since free schools enjoy the same rights as academies to determine their own history curriculum at Key Stage 3, this response was analysed alongside those of respondents from new academies.



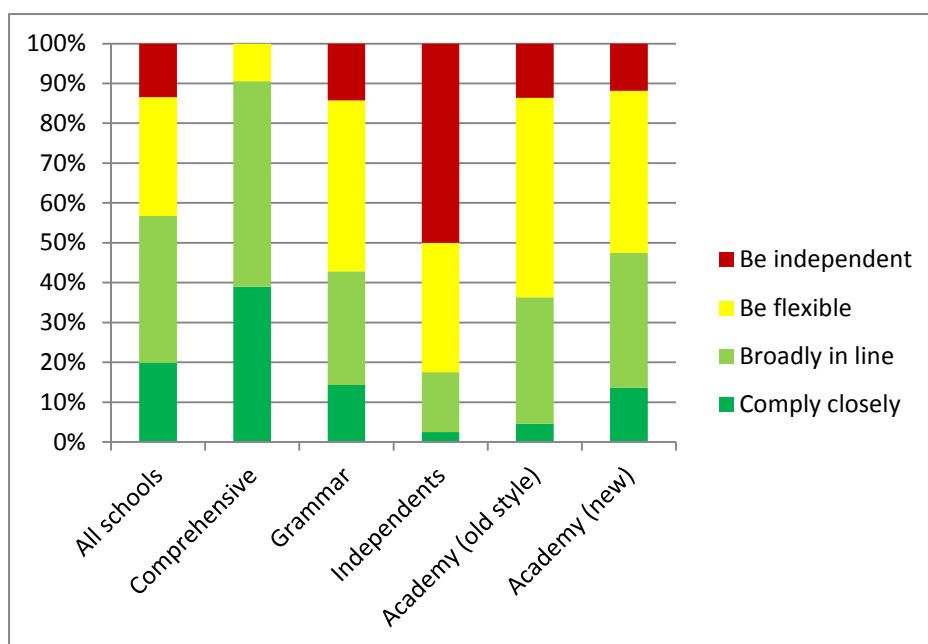
### 3. History departments' responses to the new National Curriculum

#### 3.1 The extent to which history departments expect to follow the new curriculum

From September 2014, the new National Curriculum will be mandatory for all schools maintained by their local authority, but optional for all free schools and academies. The survey began with a series of questions about the extent to which respondents expected their departments to comply with the new curriculum, and the extent of change that they thought it would entail.

As Figure 1 reveals, comprehensive schools, still under local authority control and therefore legally obliged to follow the National Curriculum, express the strongest commitment to teaching history in accordance with those requirements. Around 90% of comprehensive school respondents expect that their curriculum will be closely compliant or broadly in line with the new proposals. In contrast fewer than 50% of academy respondents (both those working in old and new style academies) feel the need to 'comply closely' with or 'broadly' follow the new proposals, although a further 40% do expect to respond 'flexibly' in relation to the requirements, rather than devising a curriculum entirely independent of its requirements. The extent of this variation does call into question the very notion of a 'National Curriculum' and principles of equity and entitlement for all young people. To the extent that the new curriculum requires significant changes to be made in what is taught, the varying responses required of different schools also mean that some teachers (most obviously those in comprehensive schools) may also face a much more demanding workload in preparing to implement those changes.

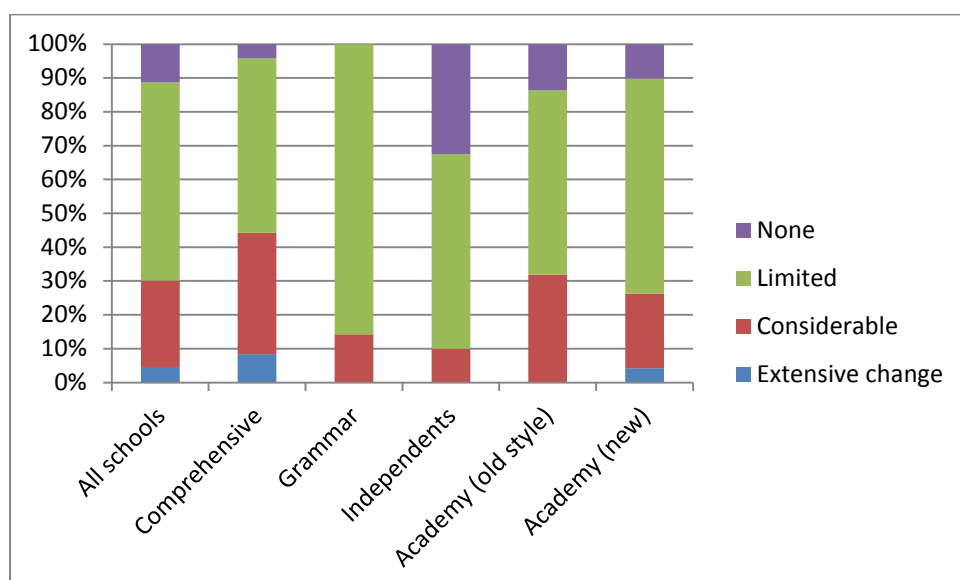
Figure 1: The extent to which respondents thought that their departments would comply with the requirements of the new National Curriculum for history



### 3.2 The extent of change to the history curriculum taught at Key Stage 3

When asked how much change they envisaged that their curriculum plans would require, it was unsurprisingly the comprehensive school respondents who envisaged the greatest change, but even among them relatively few (less than 10%) thought that the changes would be extensive – though for a further third of those respondents, the changes were expected to be at least ‘considerable’. Only around 10% of all schools thought that they would be making no change at all. Although this proportion was much higher (over 30%) among the independent school respondents, it is worth acknowledging that two-thirds of independent schools did envisage some kind of change to what they were teaching, even if it was only ‘limited’.

Figure 2: The extent of change that respondents anticipated making to their existing schemes of work in light of the revised National Curriculum



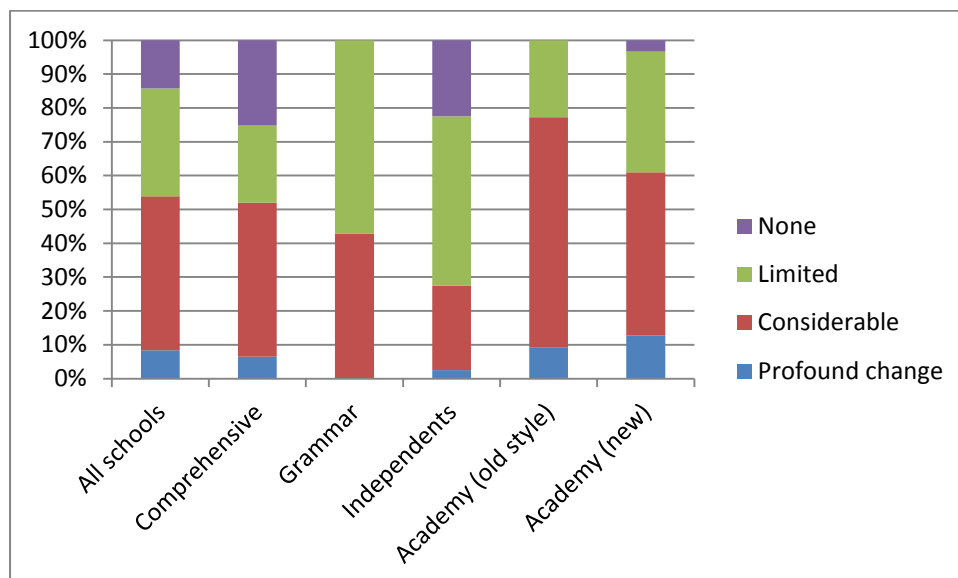
### 3.3. The potential impact of changes to GCSE on the curriculum taught at Key Stage 3

Since teachers had intimated that they wanted to know more about proposals for GCSE before finalising their curriculum plans at Key Stage 3, the survey also included a question asking about the extent to which GCSE specifications (not due to be published until the spring of 2015, and unlikely to be finally approved by Ofqual until the summer) might impact on the decisions that they made about their Key Stage 3 curriculum.

The overall responses to this question are shown in Figure 3, which reveals that while only 30% of respondents expected to make ‘extensive’ or ‘considerable’ changes to their Key Stage 3 curriculum in light of the new curriculum itself, 50% expected to make such changes once they knew what the new GCSE specifications looked like. This response makes clear how much more influential changes at GCSE are likely to be on departmental decisions about the history curriculum, a fact that further calls into question the status and role of the

National Curriculum and that highlights the absurdity of establishing a new Key Stage 3 curriculum that teachers are expected to implement without knowing what exactly is coming next. While teachers are deeply concerned about the *extent* of curriculum change, which is happening at all key stages, they are also frustrated by the *sequence* of reform which sees changes to Key Sage 3 being required from 2014, with changes to A level following in 2015 and changes to GCSE only being brought in from 2016. Developing GCSE before the new A-level specifications would have allowed for a much more logical and consistent approach. As things stand, many history departments are effectively waiting until they know more about GCSE before determining exactly how they will respond to the revision of the Key Stage 3 curriculum.

Figure 3: The extent to which respondents thought expected changes at GCSE to impact on their curriculum plans for Key Stage 3



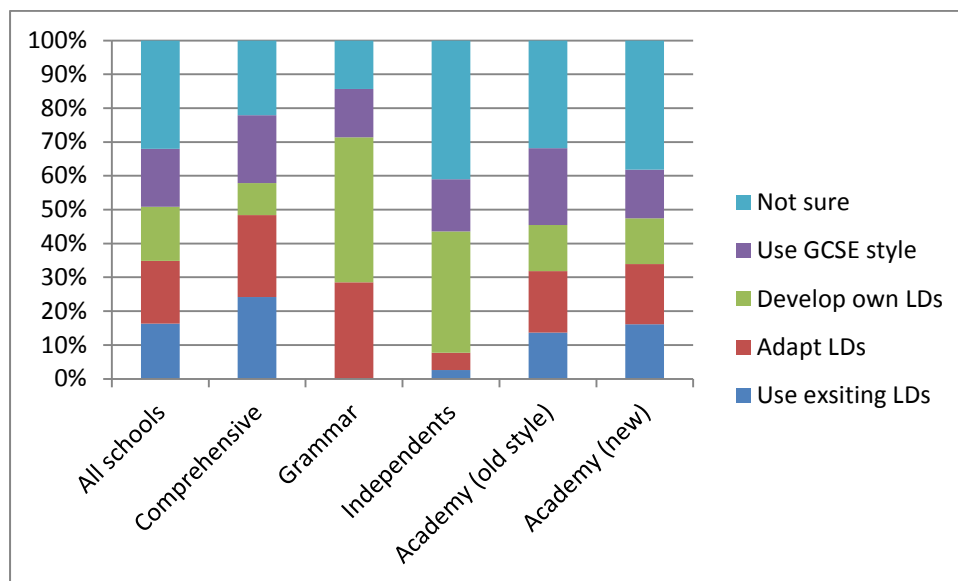
### 3.4 History departments' plans for assessing and reporting students' progress

One of the most profound changes to the National Curriculum has been the removal of level descriptors from the attainment target. In many respects, this has been broadly welcomed because of the range of ways in which the original level descriptors, originally intended to serve as 'best fit' descriptors to be applied at the end of a Key Stage in reporting students' attainment, had been distorted by being used to assess individual pieces of work and corrupted as measure of progress, which relied on the creation of meaningless 'sub-levels'.<sup>2</sup> However, no specific measures or alternative descriptors have been defined within the revised National Curriculum, which merely states that '*By the end of each key stage, pupils are expected to know, apply and understand the matters, skills and processes specified in the relevant programme of study*'. Schools have thus been effectively left to decide for

<sup>2</sup> For details of this critique, see paragraphs 76-78 of the Ofsted (2011) report *History for All*. For a summary of how the corruption developed see Fordham, M. (2013) 'O brave new world without those levels in't: where now for Key Stage 3 assessment?' in *Teaching History 153 Supplement, Curriculum Evolution*.

themselves how they will define, measure and report students' progress. The survey therefore included a question exploring history department's current intentions – asking whether they intended to retain or adapt the level descriptors set out in the 2008, or whether they intended to develop their own descriptors, or whether they might perhaps adapt an assessment system based on the criteria and standards used at GCSE. (The latter might relate to current GCSE grades, but would be adapted as new marking schemes and assessment criteria were developed for implementation from courses starting in 2016.)

Figure 4: Respondents' plans for measuring and reporting students' attainment at Key Stage 3



As Figure 4 reveals, schools are taking a variety of different approaches and seemed quite divided about how they would address this issue. Overall around a third of schools indicated they were undecided, which is a matter of concern, given that the new Key Stage 3 curriculum is intended to be applied from September 2014 (and that these responses were being given in May-July 2014). Grammar schools and independent schools seem more confident about developing their own processes, although it has to be acknowledged that they have also indicated they are going to be the least affected by the changes to the curriculum. Given the criticisms of the previous level descriptors it is encouraging that relatively few schools were suggesting that they would continue to employ them, but the fact that around a sixth of all schools were intending to continue with them, reveals how much more development work is needed in some contexts.

## 4. Key Stage 3 history

### 4.1 The length of the Key Stage 3 curriculum

In comparison with the 2013 survey, the figures for 2014 show a minor shift overall towards a condensed version of Key Stage 3, with most change observable in new academies, from just over 20% of schools reporting a two-year Key Stage 3 compared to a figure of just over 28%. There also appear to be shifts in this direction among the grammar school and independent respondents (but the small number of schools in these particular categories means that we cannot make a strong claim here). It still continues to be most common, as a percentage, in the older style academies.

*Table 1: The length of the Key Stage 3 programme in respondents' schools in 2014 and 2013 (Figures for 2014 are given in the shaded boxes; those for 2013 are given in italics)*

		3-year Key Stage 3		2-year Key Stage 3	
<b>2014</b>	<b>Comprehensive</b>	82	86.3%	13	13.7%
<i>2013</i>	<i>Comprehensive</i>	<i>178</i>	<i>84.0%</i>	<i>34</i>	<i>16.0%</i>
<b>2014</b>	<b>Grammar</b>	5	62.5%	3	37.50%
<i>2013</i>	<i>Grammar</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>75.0%</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>25.0%</i>
<b>2014</b>	<b>Independent</b>	34	89.5%	4	10.5%
<i>2013</i>	<i>Independent</i>	<i>39</i>	<i>95.1%</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>4.9%</i>
<b>2014</b>	<b>Academy (old style)</b>	11	50.0%	11	50.0%
<i>2013</i>	<i>Academy (old style)</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>47.4%</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>52.6%</i>
<b>2014</b>	<b>Academy (new)</b>	81	71.7%	32	28.3%
<i>2014</i>	<i>Academy (new)</i>	<i>145</i>	<i>79.7%</i>	<i>37</i>	<i>20.3%</i>
<b>2014</b>	<b>All schools</b>	213	77.2%	63	22.8%
<i>2013</i>	<i>All schools</i>	<i>377</i>	<i>81.6%</i>	<i>85</i>	<i>18.4%</i>

### 4.2 The organisation of history within the Key Stage 3 curriculum

Although the provision of discrete history lessons at Key Stage 3 remains most likely in independent and grammar schools, there is an encouraging trend now visible across the last four years of the study showing an increase in the proportion of schools teaching history as a separate subject – from 77% of respondents in 2011 to 85% in 2014. As Table 2 shows, there seems to have been a particularly marked increase in the proportion of old style academies offering history as a discrete subject which is particularly welcome, since this has always been the type of school in which history was more likely to have been subsumed within more integrated programmes in which there was less scope to acknowledge and address the distinctive demands of learning about the past.

Table 2: Survey findings over the last four years about the organisation of history teaching in different types of school (Figures from the 2014 survey are presented in the shaded rows and those for 2013, 2012, and 2011 are given in successive rows below.)

		As a discrete subject	As a distinct subject within humanities	Within integrated humanities	Other	Total respondents
<b>All schools</b>	2014	228 (84.8%)	25 (9.3%)	9 (3.3%)	7 (2.6%)	269
	2013	368 (82.1%)	44 (9.8%)	21 (4.6%)	15 (3.3%)	448
	2012	179 (77.8%)	26 (11.3%)	19 (8.3%)	6 (2.6%)	230
	2011	287 (76.5%)	40 (10.7%)	28 (7.5%)	20 (5.3%)	375
<b>Comprehensive</b>	2014	83 (88.3%)	7 (7.4%)	2 (2.1%)	2 (2.1%)	94
	2013	165 (80.5%)	21 (10.2%)	12 (5.9%)	7 (3.4%)	205
	2012	90 (78.3%)	12 (10.4%)	10 (8.7%)	3 (2.6%)	115
	2011	181 (72.7%)	30 (12.0%)	21 (8.4%)	17 (6.8%)	249
<b>Grammar</b>	2014	7 (100%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	7
	2013	8 (100%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	8
	2012	5 (83.3%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (16.7%)	0 (0.0%)	6
	2011	16 (100%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	16
<b>Independent</b>	2014	35 (97.2%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (2.8%)	36
	2013	40 (97.6%)	1 (2.4%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	41
	2012	22 (95.7%)	1 (4.3%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	23
	2011	48 (92.3%)	2 (3.8%)	1 (1.9%)	1 (1.9%)	52
<b>Academy (old style)</b>	2014	17 (85%)	1 (5%)	2 (10%)	0 (0.0%)	20
	2013	9 (47.4%)	3 (15.8%)	3 (15.8%)	4 (21.1%)	19
	2012	5 (50.0%)	3 (30.0%)	1 (10.0%)	1 (10.0%)	10
	2011	14 (56.0%)	4 (16.0%)	5 (20.0%)	2 (8.0%)	25
<b>Academy (new)</b>	2014	86 (76.8%)	17 (15.2%)	5 (4.5%)	4 (3.6%)	112
	2013	146 (78.9%)	19 (10.3%)	6 (3.2%)	14 (7.6%)	185
	2012	56 (74.7%)	10 (13.3%)	7 (9.3%)	2 (2.7%)	75
	2011	28 (84.8%)	4 (12.1%)	1 (3.0%)	0 (0.0%)	33

#### 4.3 Comparison of provision in schools with a three-year and a two-year Key Stage 3

In comparing the way in which history is offered by schools that continue to allocate three years to Key Stage 3 with the way it is offered in those that have reduced Key Stage 3 to only two years, it is clear that those schools which give longer to Key Stage 3 are also more likely to teach history as a discrete subject from Year 7. However, it is pleasing to note from Table 3 that among those schools with a two-year Key Stage 3 there does seem to have been an increase since last year in the proportion of schools teaching history as a discrete subject. The comparison with the previous year also shows that older style academies are moving towards more discrete history being taught, for both two- and three-year Key Stage 3 provision.

Table 3: Comparison of history provision in schools with a three-year and a two-year Key Stage 3 (The figures for schools offering a **two**-year Key Stage 3 are presented first in each case, while the figures for schools offering a **three**-year Key Stage 3 are shown in the rows below.)

	Length of Key Stage 3	Year	As a discrete subject	As a distinct subject within humanities	Within integrated humanities	Other	Total respondents
All schools	3 year	2014	181 (86.8%)	20 (9.6%)	4 (1.9%)	4 (1.9%)	209
		2013	312 (84.8%)	31 (8.4%)	16 (4.3%)	9 (2.4%)	368
	2 year	2014	47 (78.3%)	5 (8.3%)	5 (8.3%)	3 (5.0%)	60
		2013	56 (70.0%)	13 (16.3%)	5 (6.3%)	6 (7.5%)	80
Comprehensive	3 year	2014	72 (88.9%)	5 (6.2%)	2 (2.5%)	2 (2.5%)	81
		2013	142 (82.6%)	16 (9.3%)	9 (5.2%)	5 (2.9%)	172
	2 year	2014	11 (84.6%)	2 (15.4%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	13
		2013	23 (69.7%)	5 (15.2%)	3 (9.1%)	2 (6.1%)	33
Grammar	3 year	2014	4 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	4
		2013	6 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	6
	2 year	2014	3 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	3
		2013	2 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	2
Independent	3 year	2014	33 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	33
		2013	39 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	39
	2 year	2014	2 (66.7%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (33.3%)	3
		2013	1 (50.0%)	1 (50.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	2
Academy (old style)	3 year	2014	9 (90.0%)	1 (10.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	10
		2013	5 (55.6%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (22.2%)	2 (22.2%)	9
	2 year	2014	8 (80.0%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (20.0%)	0 (0.0%)	10
		2013	4 (40.0%)	3 (30.0%)	1 (10.0%)	2 (20.0%)	10
Academy (new)	3 year	2014	63 (86.6%)	14 (17.3%)	2 (1.9%)	2 (1.9%)	81
		2013	120 (84.5%)	15 (10.6%)	5 (3.5%)	2 (1.4%)	142
	2 year	2014	23 (74.2%)	3 (9.7%)	3 (9.7%)	2 (6.5%)	31
		2013	26 (78.8%)	4 (12.1%)	1 (3.0%)	2 (6.1%)	33

#### 4.4. The extent of non-specialist teaching at Key Stage 3

In looking at the extent of non-specialist teaching at Key Stage 3, a comparison of the overall figures for 2013 and 2014 shows very little difference between the two sets of survey responses. However a focus on those schools offering a two-year Key Stage 3 shows that there are some important distinctions between different kinds of schools. As can be seen in Figures 5 and 6, a much higher proportion of respondents in comprehensives and academies (both old style and new) report that they are using non-specialist teachers in Year 7 to teach history. The reason for this is unclear, although we can speculate that this might be because what specialist teachers there are within such schools are committed to teaching a longer GCSE course, and are therefore less available to teach at Key Stage 3.

Figure 5: 2014: The proportion of history lessons in Year 7 taught by non-specialists in schools with a two year Key Stage 3

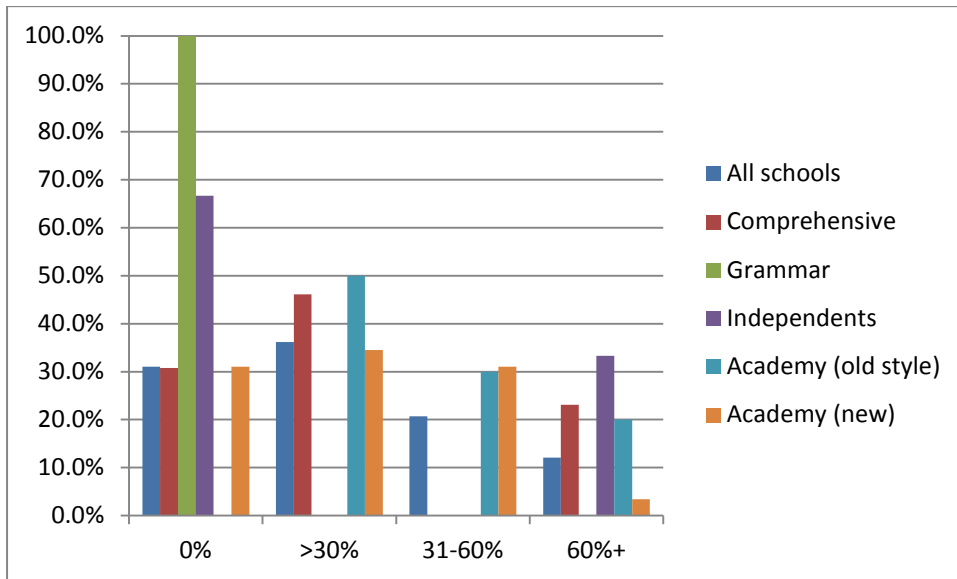
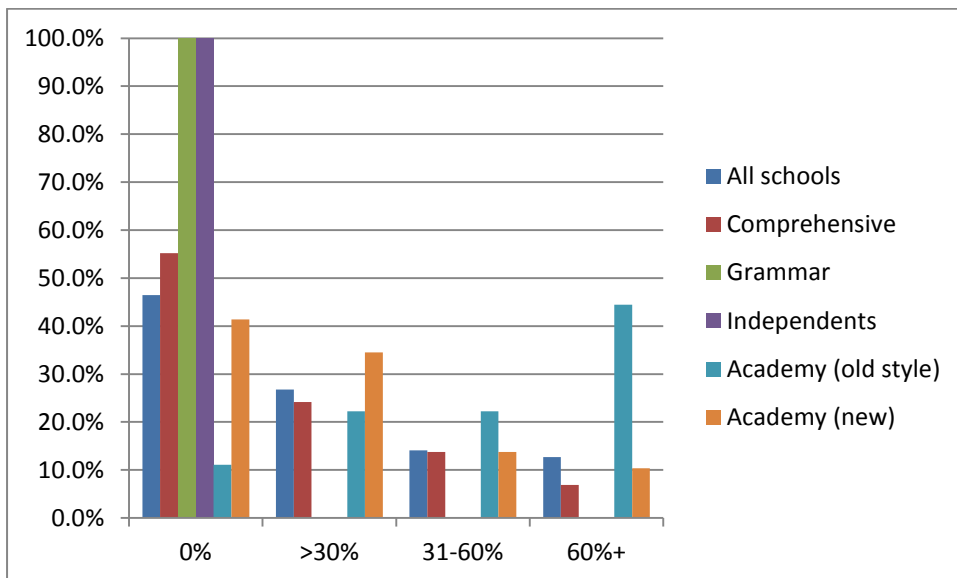


Figure 6: 2013: The proportion of history lessons in Year 7 taught by non-specialists in schools with a two year Key Stage 3



#### 4.5 Time allocation at Key Stage 3

The overall figures suggest that the amount of time being allocated to history in Year 7 has at least held stable or perhaps even improved very slightly over the past few years (although there are variations across different types of school). In 2012 just over 55% of respondents reported that pupils had more than 75 minutes of history per week, and in 2014 the figure was close to 58%. As noted in previous reports older style academies are more likely to restrict the time that they allocate to history to an hour per week or less: just under 50% of old style academy respondents report this time allocation, whereas the average for all types of schools offering only an hour or less a week is around 30%. (However, it should be noted that the same is also true of grammar school respondents



in schools with a three-year Key Stage 3, though the numbers in this group are so small that such a figure cannot be regarded as representative of this type of school as a whole).

Overall the schools with the most generous time allocation for history at Key Stage 3 are the comprehensive schools and new academies. Although there are overall differences in time allocation between types of school, there are clear differences between those offering three-year and two-year Key Stage 3. Generally speaking, those schools with a two-year Key Stage 3 tend to provide more curriculum time for history: the proportion of respondents in all schools with a two-year Key Stage 3 offering more than 75 minutes of history per week is approximately 66%, whereas for those with a three-year Key Stage 3 the proportion is only 54%. If this figure is broken down further into those schools that offer between 76-90 minutes a week and those that offer over 90 minutes a week we see that among respondents with a two-year Key Stage 3, 27% offer 76-90 minutes and 37% offer more than 90 minutes, whereas for respondents whose schools run a three-year Key Stage 3 the figures are 29% and 26% respectively. Just over two thirds of comprehensives with a two-year Key Stage 3 provide more than 75 minutes of history per week (with only 56% of those with a three-year Key Stage 3); the figures for new academies are 67% and 62% respectively, whereas those for old academies are 45% and 40%. The reason why schools with a shorter Key Stage 3 offer more time to the subject is unclear. While it might represent an attempt to provide sufficient time for history departments to fulfil the requirements of the Key Stage 3 history curriculum, it is important to recognise that the greater time allocations that we have noted do not fully compensate for the time that is lost by reducing the key stage to only two years. Allocating 75 minutes a week to history over two years equates to 5850 minutes (97.5 hours) which is substantially less than the 7020 minutes (117 hours) that would be given to the subject in a school that teaches history for only an hour a week over three years.

There seems to have been little change recently in most schools in the time allocated to history. Overall around 87% of schools reported no change in time allocation, and among those few that reported a recent reduction, there was little difference between respondents with a two-year Key Stage 3 (just over 8% reporting a reduction) and those with a three-year Key Stage 3 (just over 6%). However, comprehensives and old style academies were most likely to report a reduction: over 15% of comprehensives with a two-year Key Stage 3 reported a reduction in time, whilst 10% of old style academies (both those with a two-year and those with a three-year Key Stage 3) reported a reduction.

## 5. GCSE history

### 5.1 The length of GCSE history courses

As Table 4 demonstrates, in the vast majority of cases (94% overall) where schools taught a standard three-year Key Stage 3 and then had two years available for Key Stage 4, history was offered as a two-year GCSE course. A very small proportion of schools (4%) – mostly new academies – offered a one-year GCSE programme.

For the first time, the survey included a question about whether Ancient History and IGCSE courses were taught. While only five schools in total offer Ancient History (two within a two-year Key Stage 4 programme and three within a three-year Key Stage 4 programme), the numbers taking IGCSE are slightly more extensive with 31 respondents reporting that this was the case (22 in schools with a two-year Key Stage 4 programme and nine in schools with three years for Key Stage 4). It can thus be seen that the IGCSE makes up a small, but significant proportion of the history entries at this level, especially within the grammar and independent sectors. Of the 31 respondents who reported offering IGCSE 17 are independent schools.

*Table 4: The nature of GCSE provision in schools with a two-year Key Stage 4 (Figures for 2014 are given in the shaded boxes and those for 2013 are in italics)*

History courses offered by schools running a two-year Key Stage 4	1 year GCSE	2 year GCSE	Humanities	Other	Total respondents
<b>All schools</b>	8	190	2	3	203
	9	363	14	15	401
	3.9%	93.6%	1.0%	1.5%	
	2.2%	90.5%	3.5%	3.7%	
<b>Comprehensive</b>	2	77	1	0	83
	5	176	8	9	198
	2.5%	96.3%	1.3%	0.0%	
	2.5%	88.9%	4.0%	4.5%	
<b>Grammar</b>	0	3	0	0	3
	0	6	0	0	6
	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	
	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	
<b>Independent</b>	0	21	0	0	35
	0	36	0	3	39
	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	
	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	
<b>Academy (old style)</b>	0	11	0	0	11
	0	9	1	0	10
	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	
	0.0%	90.0%	10.0%	0.0%	
<b>Academy (new)</b>	6	78	1	3	94
	4	136	5	3	148
	6.8%	88.6%	1.1%	3.4%	
	2.7%	91.9%	3.4%	2.0%	

Where schools have three years allocated to Key Stage 4 (because of a shortened Key Stage 3 lasting only two years) the survey sought to establish how many years students might spend preparing for their GCSE. As Table 5 shows, there seem to be rather fewer schools in 2014 than there were a year ago encouraging students to undertake history in just one year. Overall just over a third of schools reported that students followed the GCSE history course for two years, while at the other end of the spectrum, only around 60% of schools used the extra year gained from Key Stage 3 to extend the GCSE history course to three years.

*Table 5: The nature of GCSE provision in schools with a three-year Key Stage 4 (Figures for 2014 are in the shaded box and those for 2013 are in italics)*

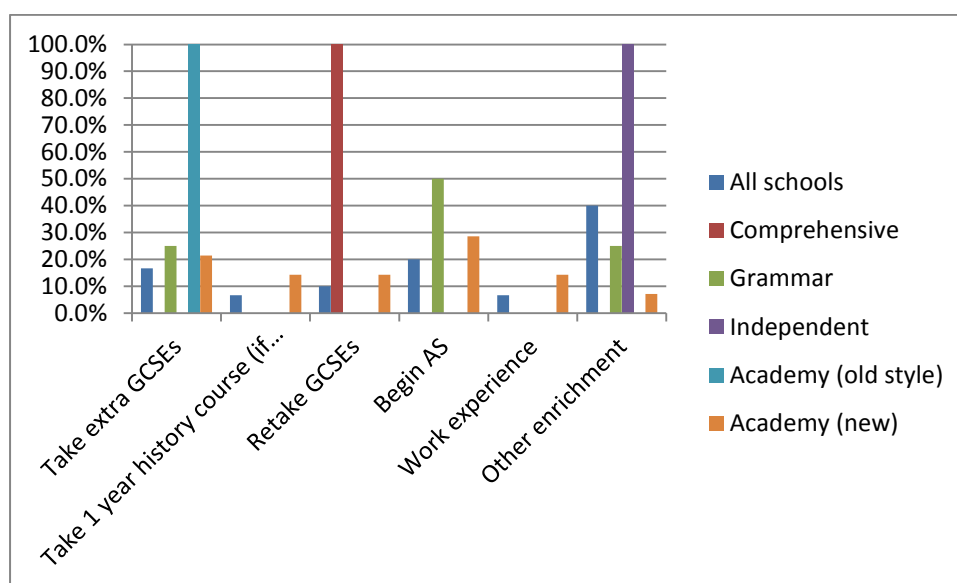
History courses offered in a three-year Key Stage 4	1 year GCSE	2 year GCSE	3 year GCSE	Humanities	Other	Total respondents
<b>All schools</b>	3	25	37	0	0	65
	<i>17</i>	<i>38</i>	<i>34</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>93</i>
	4.6%	38.5%	56.9%	0.0%	0.0%	
	<i>18.3%</i>	<i>40.9%</i>	<i>36.6%</i>	<i>3.2%</i>	<i>1.17%</i>	
<b>Comprehensive</b>	0	5	8	0	0	13
	<i>7</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>36</i>
	0.0%	38.5%	61.5%	0.0%	0.0%	
	<i>19.4%</i>	<i>36.1%</i>	<i>44.4%</i>	<i>0.0%</i>	<i>0.0%</i>	
<b>Grammar</b>	0	3	1	0	0	4
	<i>0</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>2</i>
	0.0%	75.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%	
	<i>0.0%</i>	<i>100.0%</i>	<i>0.0%</i>	<i>0.0%</i>	<i>0.0%</i>	
<b>Independent</b>	0	2	0	0	0	2
	<i>0</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>1</i>
	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	
	<i>0.0%</i>	<i>100.0%</i>		<i>0.0%</i>	<i>0.0%</i>	
<b>Academy (old style)</b>	1	4	6	0	0	11
	<i>1</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>11</i>
	9.1%	36.4%	54.5%	0.0%	0.0%	
	<i>9.1%</i>	<i>36.4%</i>	<i>45.5%</i>	<i>9.1%</i>	<i>0.0%</i>	
<b>Academy (new)</b>	2	11	22	0	0	35
	<i>9</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>43</i>
	5.7%	31.4%	62.9%	0.0%	0.0%	
	<i>20.9%</i>	<i>41.9%</i>	<i>30.2%</i>	<i>4.7%</i>	<i>2.3%</i>	

This year, respondents were also asked to indicate what students did if they completed their GCSE course earlier than the end of Year 11 (as for example, if they had taken a two year GCSE programme within a three-year Key Stage 4 course). The numbers who responded to this particular question were quite small, only 30 in total, of which 10 came from independent schools and 14 from new style academies. Four grammar schools, one comprehensive and one old style academy, made up the overall numbers. As can be seen from Figure 7, less than a fifth of schools use their two-year Key Stage 3 to create opportunities for students to take additional GCSEs in Key Stage 4; while one

fifth simply start AS level study early, a further two-fifths reported that their schools provided some form of enrichment, but did not specify what this involved.

We also looked at the difference in uptake in respondents' schools in relation to the provision of one, two, or three-year GCSE courses. Although the number of responses to this particular question was quite small, it was nonetheless clear, that schools offering shorter history courses,( i.e. a one-year GCSE course within a two-year Key Stage 4; or a one-year or two-year GCSE within a three year Key Stage 4) tended to attract smaller numbers of students to study the subject.

*Figure 7: The range of alternative courses of study open to students who have completed a history GCSE course within Key Stage 4 and have time to spare (within their third year)*



## 5. 2 Patterns of uptake at GCSE

The survey in 2013 had revealed that differences between the numbers of students studying GCSE history (in some form) seemed to be directly correlated with the extent of their direct experience of studying history at Key Stage 3. Schools with a shortened or condensed Key Stage 3 were less likely to get students opting for history. Although the figures are more positive this year than they were in 2013, with only about 33% of schools with a condensed two-year Key Stage 3 reporting that less than a third of the cohort opt for history (in comparison with around 50% of respondents claiming in 2013 that fewer than a third opted for history), these proportions still compare unfavourably with the uptake of schools offering a three-year Key Stage 3, among whom more than 80% of respondents report that over a third of students are studying history at GCSE.

On a more positive note, the responses to the survey indicate that some schools with a three-year GCSE course are also increasingly attracting more than 60% of the cohort to study history. Nearly 29% of all schools with three years allocated to Key Stage 4 said that over 60% of Year 9 students were starting a GCSE history course, compared to around only 19% of schools with a traditional two-year Key Stage 4, reporting that more than 60% of students embarked on a GCSE history in Year 10. This growth in numbers studying the subject in some schools does appear to be a new development, because it is not reflected in the proportions of students taking the subject in Years 10 and 11. The reasons for this are unclear but they could perhaps relate to the importance of the E-Bacc as a

measure of schools' achievement or simply reflect the fact that students who complete GCSE within one or two years, will obviously not feature in history GCSE numbers in Year 11.

### 5.3 The extent of non-specialist teaching at GCSE

It is encouraging to report that the vast majority of GCSE history teaching is being undertaken by specialists. In total 87% of respondents reported that all their GCSE classes had specialist teachers, which is higher than the figures for either of the two previous years (81% in 2013 and 85% in 2012). It is particularly pleasing to note that all 20 of the respondents from old-style academies (those originally established in areas of socio-economic deprivation) could report that all their GCSE classes had specialist history teachers, since last year this was true of only 64% of such academies. Where non-specialist teaching is taking place at this level it is most often found in comprehensives and new academies. Although the proportion is very small (just less than 3%), it remains a concern that there are a small number of schools reporting that over half their GCSE history classes are taught by teachers who are not subject specialists.

Figure 8: 2014 Extent of GCSE teaching undertaken by non-specialist teachers

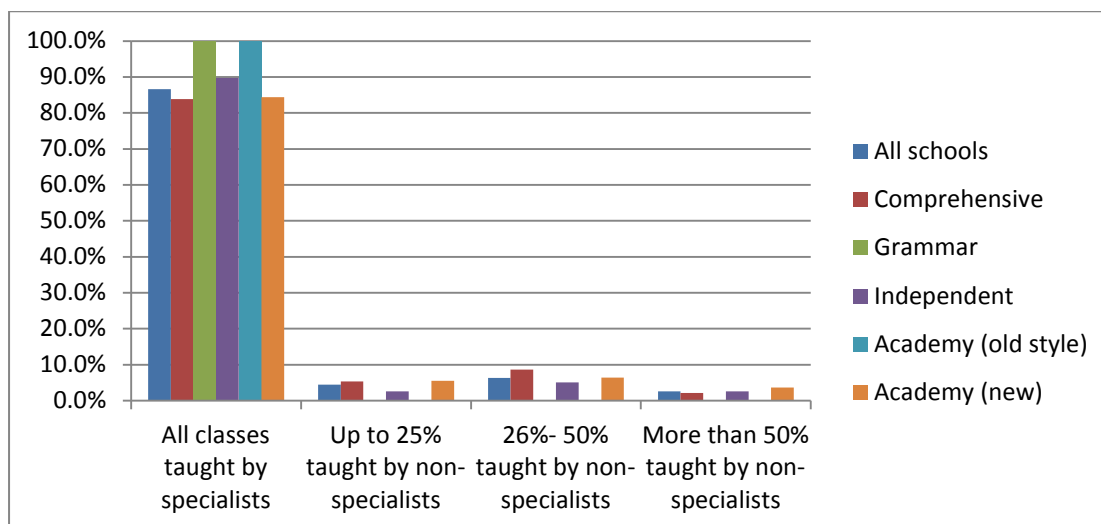
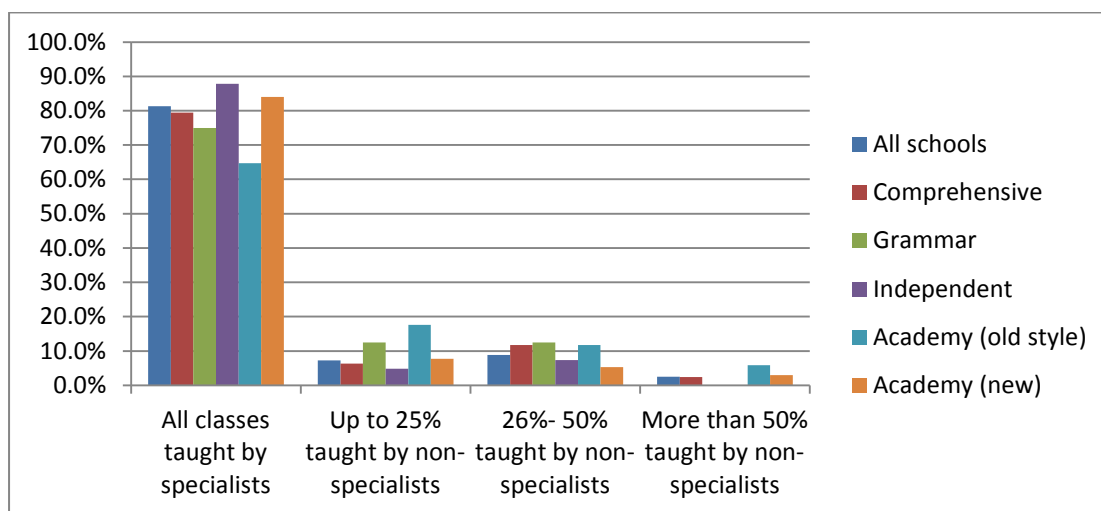


Figure 9: 2013 Extent of GCSE teaching undertaken by non-specialist teachers



Respondents were asked in a separate section of the survey about the extent to which they felt that particular issues were matters of concern to them. Almost 30% of respondents noted that a lack of specialist history teaching was a matter of current concern to them (and half of these regarded the situation as a matter of serious concern). Reflecting the patterns noted above in terms of the extent of non-specialist GCSE teaching, the concern was greatest among respondents from comprehensive schools and new academies. As in previous years, teachers also remain anxious about the continued capacity or commitment of their schools to provide specialist history teaching with over a third of respondents noting that this might become an issue of concern in the near future.

A question was also asked directly about whether respondents had any concerns about specialist teachers who were leaving and not being replaced and 21% reported that this was indeed the case. Again those schools reporting the greatest concerns were academies (29.4%) and comprehensive schools (25.3%). Although GCSE classes are likely to be better protected from the effects of this phenomenon than Key Stage 3 classes, the figures above illustrate that even they are not entirely immune. (Our analysis of previous surveys has also demonstrated that there is correlation between the extent of specialist teaching at Key Stage 3 and subsequent take-up of history at GCSE level).

#### 5.4 The degree of freedom that students can exercise in relation to GCSE choices

The E-Bacc measure of schools' performance means that many schools now actively encourage those students thought capable of achieving the appropriate number and range of A\*-C grades to take history or geography GCSE as one of their options. The survey sought to assess the impact of this measure on students' freedom of choice. As Table 6 reveals, no students are compelled to take history for GCSE, but various forms of prescription are applied to some or all students in certain schools. In 19% of respondents' schools, **all** students are required to take either history or geography and in most cases (16.5%) they have the opportunity to take both subjects if they wish to do so. In 23% of respondents' schools, an element of compulsion applies only to **some** students. In a small minority of cases (2.6% of the total) certain students are obliged to take history, whereas in the others these students are allowed to take either history or geography, with most of them (17.3% of the total) being given the chance to take both subjects if they so wish.

In summary, while a clear majority of the respondents' schools (57.9%) allow all students to make a completely free choice about history; around just over two fifths of them (42.1%) exercise some kind of compulsion in relation to the humanities subjects, although in most of these cases, students have the opportunity to select between history and geography or even to opt for both. Grammar and independent schools tend to be more likely than other types of schools to insist that all students take either history or geography at Key Stage 3.

*Table 6: The position of history within the schools' GCSE options systems*

	Requirement applies to <u>all</u> students						Requirement applies to <u>some</u> students						Free choice		Total
	History		History or Geog		History &/or Geog		History		History or Geog		History &/or Geog				
<b>All schools</b>	0	0%	7	2.6%	44	16.5%	7	2.6%	8	3.0%	46	17.3%	154	57.9%	266
<b>Comprehensive</b>	0	0%	4	4.3%	16	17.4%	2	2.2%	4	4.3%	16	17.4%	50	54.3	92
<b>Grammar</b>	0	0%	0	0%	2	28.6%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	5	71.4%	7
<b>Independent</b>	0	0%	0	0%	9	23.7%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	29	76.3%	38

<b>Academy (old style)</b>	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	5	29.4%	0	0%	1	5.9%	11	64.7%	17
<b>Academy (new)</b>	0	0%	3	2.7%	17	15.2%	0	0%	4	3.6%	29	25.9%	59	52.7%	112

## 5.5 The extent to which certain students are steered away from GCSE history

As in previous years, we are concerned that the fact that schools actively encourage certain students to take history should not distract attention from the parallel fact that many schools are also actively steering students *away* from GCSE history. At 44.7%, the proportion of respondents who report some kind of active deterrent or outright prohibition is higher than in last year's survey (38.9%) and this proportion is now almost three times higher than it was when we first asked this question in 2011. Surprisingly, however, while the proportion of comprehensive school respondents applying some kind of restriction is slightly higher than it was among respondents last year, the proportion of such responses from academies is lower (particularly from the old style academies) and most of the increase actually seems to be accounted for by a much higher proportion of independent schools reporting that they actively direct certain students away from the subject.

*Table 7 : The extent to which certain students are steered away from taking GCSE*

<b>Are students actively prevented or discouraged from taking history GCSE</b>					
	<b>Yes</b>		<b>No</b>		<b>Total</b>
<b>All schools 2014</b>	119	44.7%	147	55.3%	266
All schools 2013	175	38.9%	275	61.1%	450
<b>Comprehensive</b>	38	41.8%	53	58.2%	91
Comprehensive 2013	77	37.6%	128	62.4%	205
<b>Grammar</b>	0	0%	7	100%	7
Grammar 2013	1	14.3%	6	85.7%	7
<b>Independent</b>	28	73.7%	10	26.3%	38
Independent 2013	12	24.0%	38	76.0%	50
<b>Academy (old style)</b>	6	30.0%	14	70.0%	20
Academy (old style) 2013	10	52.6%	9	47.4%	19
<b>Academy (new)</b>	47	42.7%	63	57.3%	110
Academy (new) 2013	75	44.4%	94	55.6%	169

## 5.6 The grounds on which students are steered towards or away from GCSE history

As last year, we invited respondents to explain the grounds on which students might be encouraged (or compelled) to take history, and equally those on which they might be discouraged or prevented from doing so.

Ninety respondents chose to comment on the positive steer that students were given, with 12% of them pleased to declare that all students had a genuinely free choice and would be encouraged to take the subject. However, only a very small number (3) referred to students' interest or enjoyment of the subject as the grounds on which they might be encouraged to take it further. The most frequent reasons given, as was the case last year, were expressed either in terms of students'

abilities or likely achievement, which were mentioned in 36% of the responses, or by specific reference to the E-Bacc measure which was explicitly cited in 26% of the comments. There were very limited indications that the new measure of schools' performance, Progress8 (due to be implemented from 2016) is beginning to influence some decisions, with five respondents mentioning it explicitly as grounds for encouraging students to take history.

Students' abilities were generally described with reference to their prior attainment, and where this was specified it was usually with reference to the National Curriculum level that students had achieved by the end of Key Stage 3, although occasional reference was also made to levels of attainment at the end of Key Stage 2. In a significant number of cases 'ability' was linked to, or seen as synonymous with the 'set' in which students had been placed or the 'pathway' to which they had been assigned, sometimes on their arrival in the school in Year 7. As last year, there were indications that students' abilities or prior attainment in *other* subjects might have a bearing on the recommendation that they should take history. Those 'in the top two sets' for languages' for example, at one school, would therefore be expected to take history because their language qualification would help to ensure that they would be eligible (if they also took history) for inclusion within the E-Bacc measure. The idea of history as an 'enabling subject' for university applications was also implicit in a couple of responses.

One hundred comments were made to explain the grounds on which particular students might be guided away from history GCSE, and 50% of these also included some kind of reference to the students' abilities or likelihood of achieving a particular grade. A further eight responses addressed the same issue but couched it in terms of the difficulty of the history GCSE exam with a few of them making explicit reference to the lack of a foundation paper in history. Twenty-seven responses made reference specifically to literacy, commenting either on the demands of the paper or on students' particular difficulties with literacy, and a further six comments were related to the specific challenges faced by students in the early stages of learning English as an Additional Language. Only one reference was made to a student's capacity to work independently as a requirement to continue with the subject and only two comments were made that included any explicit consideration of students' enjoyment (or rather, lack of enjoyment) of the subject itself, although obviously such concerns may also be implicit in comments about the extent to which students would struggle with the literacy demands of the subject or of the exam paper.

Yet again, we were struck by the variation between schools in terms of the boundaries that they set as a threshold for acceptance in relation to either students' prior achievement or to their predicted GCSE grades. While some schools insisted that students must be working at least at Level 5 by the end of Key Stage 3, others seemed happy to accept them when working at Level 4. While a 'C' grade was most often required in terms of students' predicted grades, other schools were happy to admit students thought capable of achieving any GCSE grade at all (from grade G upwards).

Similar variation was also apparent in the degree of flexibility that schools seemed to allow if a student was particularly keen to take the subject but was thought unlikely to secure an 'acceptable' grade. While some teachers pointed out the scope that they would have to over-rule guidelines in particular instances, other barriers were essentially immovable. In cases where students were allocated to particular pathways (which they may already have been following for some time), it was



simply accepted that 'vocational' routes or those that included college courses within them simply did not include a history option.

Eighty-two respondents offered some kind of explanation for what those who were steered away from history might do instead. Nearly half of these comments included reference to some kind of 'vocational' course and seven references were made explicitly to BTEC courses. The fact that 14 respondents suggested that such students might be directed to geography confirms the impression given by earlier references to the lack of a foundation paper in history that geography GCSE tends to be regarded as more accessible than history GCSE. Where other subjects were specified they tended to be related to ICT and computing, to design technology, or to the creative arts. While very occasional reference was made to ASDAN (but not explicitly to the history qualification that is available among its short courses), only one respondent referred to the OCR 'Applied' History course which offers another kind of history qualification.

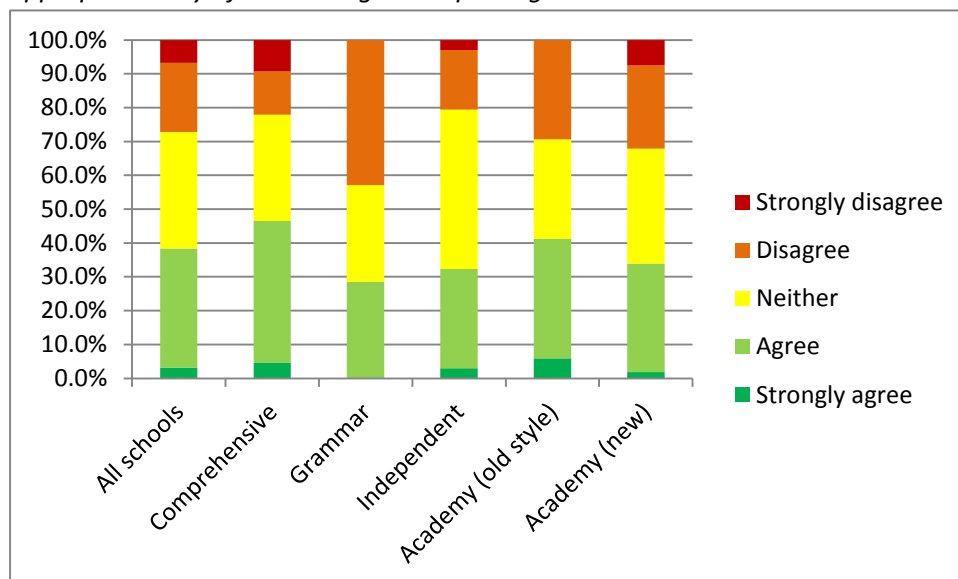
As last year, we remain very concerned about the extent to which all young people who might wish to do so really have the opportunity to follow a course of study in history beyond the end of Key Stage 3.

### **5.7 The potential impact on history provision of the Progress8 measure based on an average grade value-added score across eight subjects**

Although the final details of the new Progress8 measure had not been confirmed when the survey was conducted, we were interested to see whether the idea of publishing a measure that would highlight progress rather than simply attainment might provide a stimulus for teachers and senior leadership teams to encourage more students to take history even if they were unlikely to achieve the C grade needed for inclusion within current measures based on 5 A\*- C grades or the E-Bacc standard. The fact, reported above, that 44.4% of respondents are continuing to steer students away from history, seems to imply that the prospect of Progress8 has had little impact so far – but the encouraging signs that a smaller proportion of academies than in previous years are steering certain students away from history may hint at early acknowledgement of the value to schools of enabling all their students to demonstrate progress within the subject. We therefore sought out respondents' views of the appropriateness of the new measure and asked them to consider the nature of its impact in their particular school context.

As Figure 10 reveals, teachers tended to be supportive rather than critical of the new measure with only around 27% disagreeing with the suggestion that it would be an appropriate way of calculating and reporting students' achievement. However, only around 38% actually expressed positive support for it. Almost as many respondents (34%) had not yet formed any clear opinion of it.

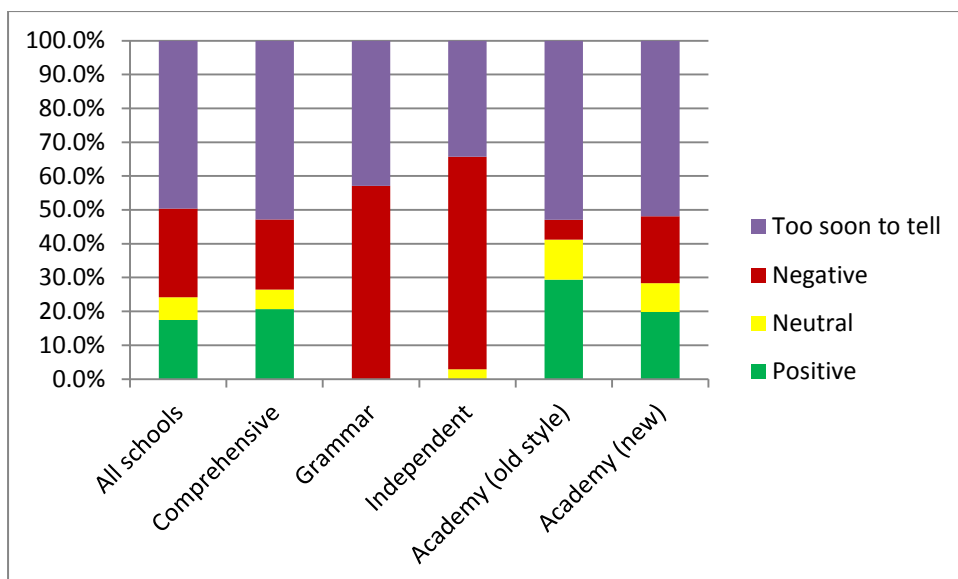
Figure 10: The extent to which respondents agreed with the suggestion that Progress8 would be an appropriate way of calculating and reporting students' achievement and schools' performance.



When we invited respondents to explain their judgments, only five of those who supported use of the measure explained their reasons, which were rooted in the claim that it would make the progress of all students more important rather than focusing attention simply on those thought likely to make progress across the D/C borderline. Among the 13 comments explaining a negative judgment, there was some concern that the range of qualifications that would be included would still not allow the very progress of the very lowest attainers to be acknowledged. The other reason why the Progress8 measure was criticised was for the emphasis that it placed on English and Maths (which would be double-weighted), which teachers feared would continue to mean that those subjects would go on claiming an ever greater share of curriculum time.

A similar level of uncertainty was evident when we asked teachers to judge the impact of the new Progress8 measure on the options system and the choices given to students in their school. As Figure 11 reveals, half of the respondents thought it was simply too soon to tell what the impact would be. Among those who felt they could give some sort of verdict, the judgment tended to be negative rather than positive, particularly among respondents from independent and grammar schools. Only in the older style academies was a view of its likely impact as positive more common than the claim that its effects would be negative. Very few explanations were given for respondents' judgments, with none at all put forward by those who had suggested that the impact would be harmful. Among the few explanations of a positive impact the main suggestion was that more students would be encouraged to take the subject, although responses here hinted at some anxieties about the way in which students' 'choices' would continue to be manipulated, rather than allowing them to pursue their interests and aptitudes.

Figure 11: Respondents' views of the impact of the new Progress8 measure on the options system and the choices given to students in their school.



### 5.8 The impact of the new 'linear' GCSE

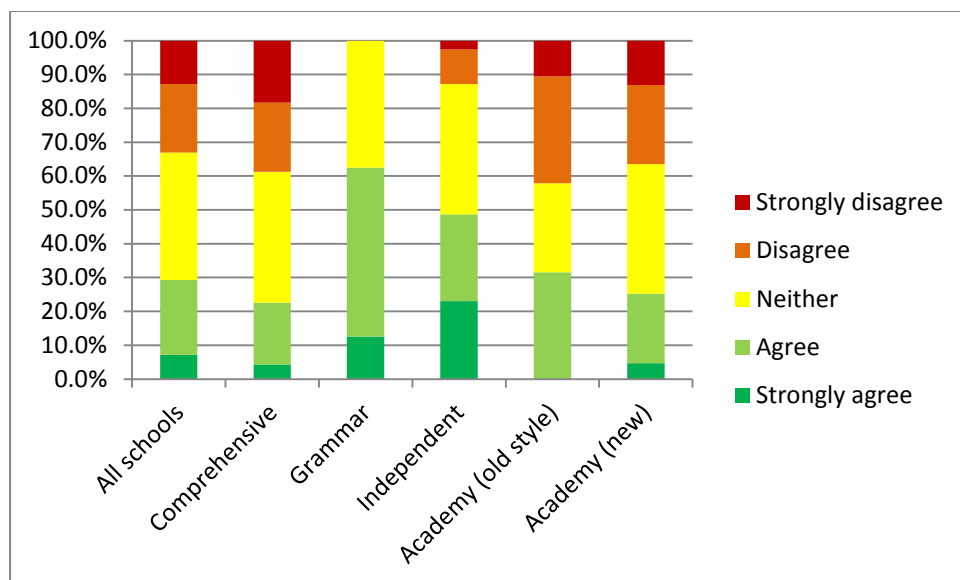
Since this is the first year in which students have been required to undertake all the externally examined elements of their GCSE course in one session (rather than allowing them to take modules at different times during the course of the two years), we first asked teachers whether they thought that this change would have had a positive effect, improving the quality of teaching and learning. Overall, respondents were divided on this question, with around a third of them endorsing the statement, another third adopting a neutral position and the final third tending to disagree with it. Support for ending modular exams was more pronounced among the independent school respondents and particularly among the small number of grammar school respondents.

Where respondents gave reasons for their positive view of the new 'linear' GCSEs, their focus tended to be on the increased teaching time that this gave them, with less time lost to modular exams (in other subjects as well as in history) over the course of the two years. While, a couple of respondents suggested that the previous scope for retakes had meant that some students did not take all of their exams particularly seriously, others stressed the benefits of students' increased maturity at the end of two years and the chance that the full range of the course gave them to develop the necessary knowledge and capacity for historical thinking before students were examined on any part of the course.

The explanations offered by those who were critical of the change ranged quite widely. Many of them referred to the intensive pressure that students would face at the end of the course, and several suggested that the content of individual modules had been increased under the previous system but that no allowance had been made for this in now requiring students to master all the separate modules at one time. Several concerns were raised about the inappropriate nature of an examination system that placed so much emphasis on recall, with some respondents acknowledging that the ability to store and retrieve so much information would need to be developed much more consistently over the course of secondary schooling since it could not be adequately developed during a two-year GCSE course. Arguments about the inappropriate nature of the emphasis on final exams were also based on the nature of assessment within higher education and the demands of the 'real world' of which they were thought to be a poor reflection. A common concern echoed in a

number of responses was that the change would unduly penalise students from disadvantaged backgrounds. It was not simply that ‘weaker’ students would find the new regime more challenging, but that those who lacked support structures to sustain them in intensive programmes of revision would face greater difficulties than they had under the modular system.

*Figure 12 Teachers’ views as to whether the move to end-of-course exams has had a positive impact, improving teaching and learning at GCSE.*



### 5.9 Teachers’ reactions to the new GCSE subject criteria (for first teaching from 2016)

New GCSE criteria were formally published in 2014. The examination boards are currently drafting new specifications (which will not be available until next year) but the survey asked respondents for their views about a number of key features of the new criteria, some of which will mean quite radical changes, especially for the majority of schools that have followed Modern World syllabuses which have focused entirely on 20<sup>th</sup> century history.

Broadly speaking, as Figures 13 and 14 illustrate, respondents indicated their support both for the statement of aims and for the subject outcomes set out in the new criteria, although around a third of respondents expressed neutral views, which could suggest that they were not yet very familiar with them. However, the lack of commitment in teachers’ responses may be more reflective of a view expressed by one teacher in a new academy that ‘while the aims are fairly non-controversial - the devil tends to lie in the detail’.

Figure 13: The extent to which teachers agreed that the new GCSE criteria set out an appropriate statement of aims

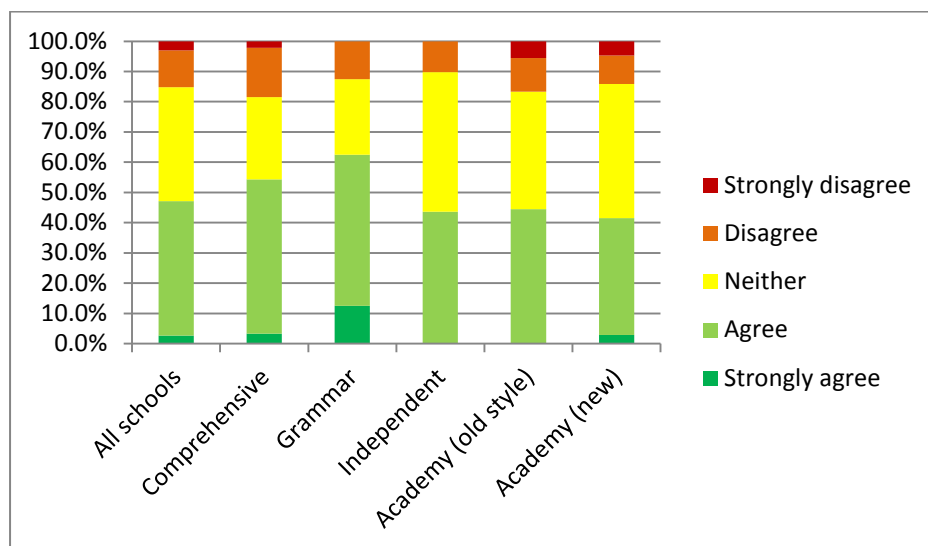
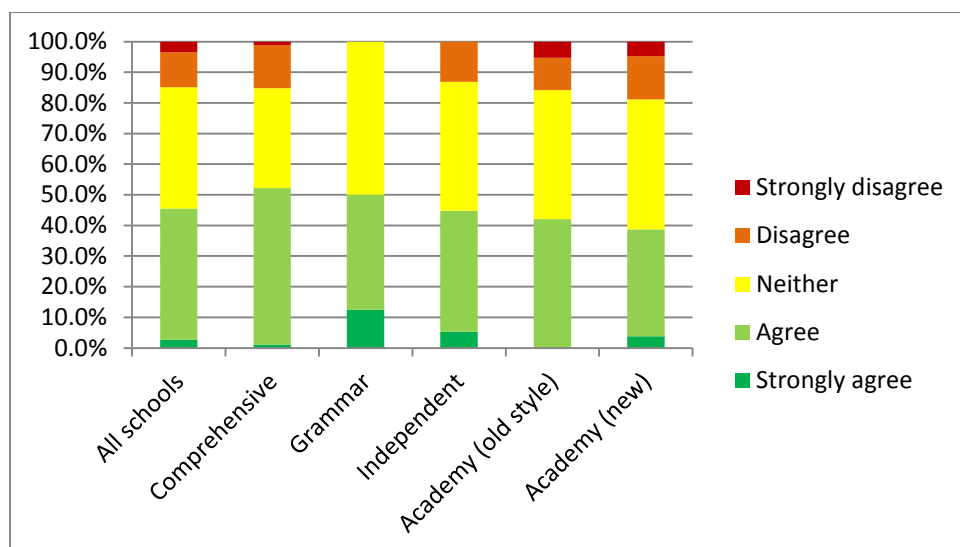


Figure 14: The extent to which respondents agreed that the subject outcomes in the newly published criteria provide an appropriate statement of what studying GCSE history should enable students to achieve



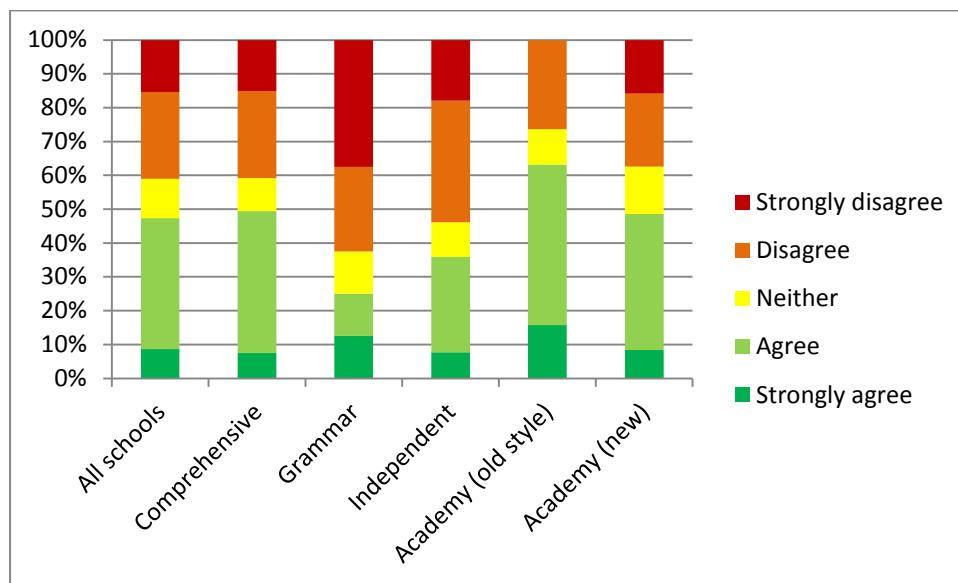
The most distinctive feature of the new specification is that it requires students to study history from a range of three different eras: the Medieval (500-1500); Early Modern (1500-1750) and Modern (1700-present day). While around half of respondents positively support this requirement, there is, perhaps unsurprisingly, quite a large measure of disagreement, with around 40% of respondents opposed to this requirement, a view that is slightly more marked among independent school respondents and the few from grammar schools.

Only 16 comments were offered to explain positive responses and these tended to point out that such a range could already be achieved within some current GCSE specifications. A few respondents specifically pointed out that an exclusive focus on the 20<sup>th</sup> century was too narrow. While some

teachers welcome the broader scope that the new criteria would require in general terms, one teacher specifically endorsed the inclusion of medieval history.

Twenty comments were offered to explain respondents' disapproval of the requirement. While around a third of these suggested that modern history would be more engaging for students, the most common argument, included within more than half the comments, was that the chance to specialise in one period led to a depth of understanding, while ranging across so many periods could lead to superficiality and potential confusion. This was echoed by a few specific concerns that the increased range of periods would further increase the demands of history GCSE, which was already seen as more challenging than other subjects.

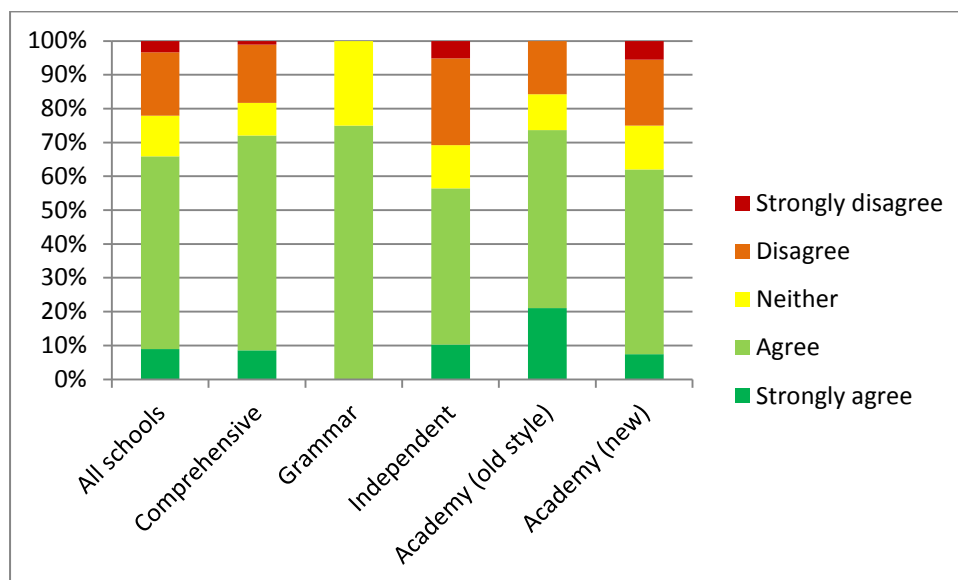
Figure 15: The extent to which respondents agreed that it is appropriate to expect GCSE history students to study history from three different eras: Medieval (500-1500); Early Modern (1500-1750) and Modern (1700-present day)



Along with the requirement to study periods from three different eras, the new criteria also require candidates to study history on three different timescales. While all previous courses have included a mix of longer term or 'breadth' studies and shorter term 'depth' studies, this is the first time that it will also be compulsory to include a thematic study that ranges over a considerably longer time span. Teachers who have previously taught SHP courses are more familiar with such thematic studies, but they may represent a new departure for those who have taught only Modern World GCSE specifications. Nonetheless, almost two thirds of teachers agreed with the new requirement, and less than a quarter indicated that they were opposed to it. The main concerns that were expressed by these critics related either to the fact that they did not think such a requirement should be compulsory (though they could see the value of studying the past on this kind of scale) or to the additional demands that it would present, especially with all assessment now being confined to end of course examinations. Teachers referred to the time constraints that students would face in trying to accommodate this diverse range of approaches and to the demands that they would make – with one respondent claiming that this would make GCSE history more challenging than A-level. Thus while most teachers were sympathetic to the idea, and many were extremely positive about it, respondents were also anxious about the range of way in which the demands of the course were

being simultaneously increased. As one head of department in a new academy noted, 'It's simply, an issue of the amount of curriculum time available to cover all three areas!'

Figure 16: The extent to which respondents agreed that it is appropriate to expect GCSE history students to study history on three different time scales: short (depth study), medium (period study) and long (thematic study)

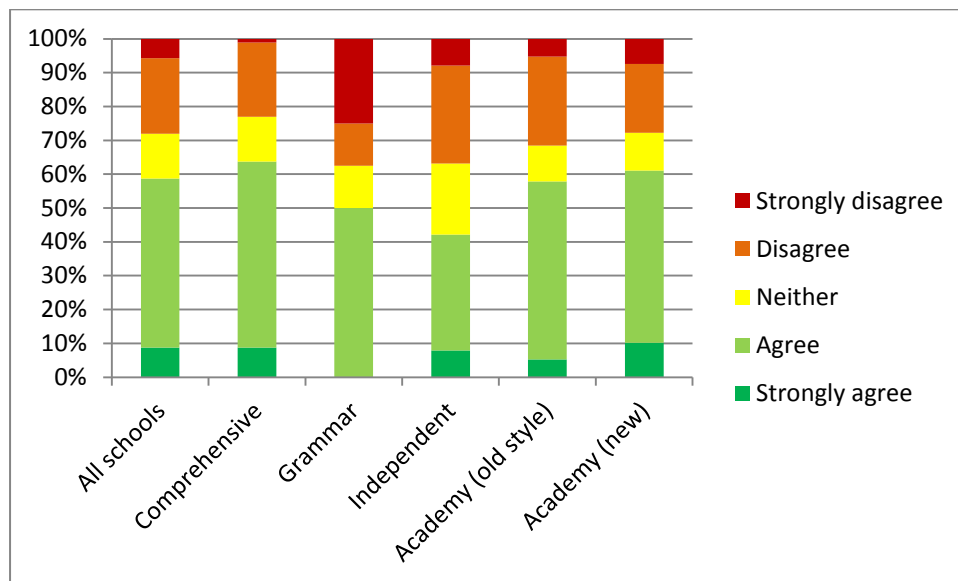


Another feature of the new specification is the inclusion of the history of a specific locality, which means that students will be required to study history from three geographical contexts: a particular locality (which they do not necessarily need to visit); a British context; and a European or wider world setting.

Again the majority of respondents (59%) tended to support this requirement, although very few expressed strong support for it, and opinion was much more evenly divided among grammar and independent school respondents. Among the comments that were put forward to explain their point of view, it is important to note that even those who thought that the requirement was an appropriate one expressed concerns within their responses about the challenges that the inclusion of a local study would present. While some were anxious about the kind of resources that might be available and others suggested that teachers with positive experience in this area would need to share their expertise with others, many respondents also noted that it would be extremely difficult to accommodate the study of a locality without any form of internal assessment (that had previously allowed schools to set questions relevant to their particular historical site).

Among the direct critics of the study of a locality, three respondents made the assumption that local history is inevitably boring or relatively unimportant, but in most cases criticism was related either to concerns about the wide range of different elements which, it was suggested, would make it difficult to achieve the stated aim of providing 'coherent and substantial study of history', or to the challenges of ensuring consistent and appropriate forms of assessment within an exams-based system.

Figure 17: The extent to which respondents think it is appropriate to expect GCSE history students to study history from three geographical contexts: a locality (the historic environment); a British context; a European and/or wider world setting.



A requirement has also been included that a minimum of 40% of any specification should be concerned with British history (which is defined as 'British history and/or the history of England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland as appropriate to the historical context and focus of the study'). This represents an increase from the previous minimum of 25%. Opinion was evenly divided on this requirement. While around 40% of respondents thought that this it would be appropriate, a similar proportion was opposed to the idea and a further 20% did not express a view either way. Interestingly, support for the requirement was weakest among independent and grammar school respondents.

Only three comments were offered in support of the proposal, however, and two of these made it clear that this should effectively be the upper limit of any formal requirement, noting, for example, that the proportion should be reduced at A level. Among those critical of the requirements, the comments either called for less British history or advanced an argument that focusing so intensively on British history was essentially inappropriate in the 'international' or 'globalised' society in which young people were growing up and for which they needed to be prepared. The following comments give a favour of this widely expressed view:

We live in a globalised society, and the future success of our country will depend on our young people being able to understand and work in foreign contexts - we should study this rather than being insular.

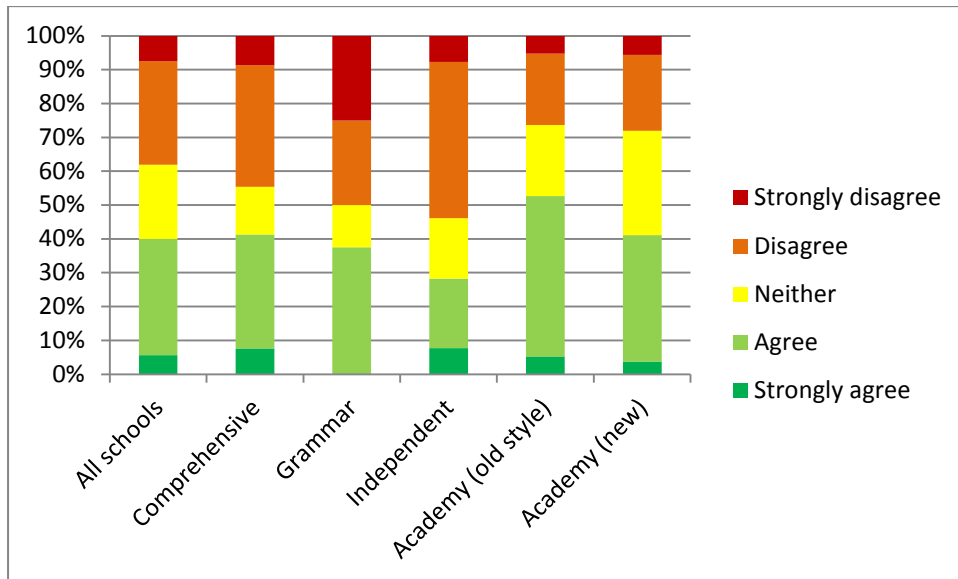
*Teacher 287, Academy (new)*

With a large international community I would say 'to do what'? No sense of why studying British history will enhance or enrich their understanding of their world and environment.

*Teacher 276, Independent School*



Figure 18: The extent to which respondents think that it is appropriate that British history should form a minimum of 40% of the assessed content over the full GCSE course.



The extensive nature of the changes to GCSE are likely to have significant implications for schools over the next few years, especially as they will follow changes to the National Curriculum which become compulsory from September 2014 and the introduction of new A-level specifications for first teaching from September 2015. We therefore asked respondents how concerned they were about the actual implementation of these changes and the way in which they would impact on their colleagues and students. The concerns in Table 8 are reported in order of the priority that they assumed for all respondents, but as the following comment illustrates, many teachers are deeply worried about the combination of challenges that they will present:

Although we have no specifications from the exam boards yet, I am extremely concerned that the new GCSE will result in increased content to teach, and that the exams will be inaccessible for lower attaining pupils. History GCSE exams are already challenging for lower attainers as there is no tiering system, and there is plenty of extended writing involved. As a teacher (and lone GCSE History teacher) I am extremely concerned that the DfE is operating in a reality vacuum - the timescale for change is too short, creation of new schemes of work will result in a massive increase in workload, and how do we resource a new GCSE if there is no extra money forthcoming?

*Teacher 145, Academy (new)*

*Table 8: The extent to which respondents are concerned about particular aspects of the new GCSE specifications or the way in which they are to be implemented*

<b>Possible issue of concern</b>	<b>Matter of current concern (including those for whom this is a serious concern)</b>	<b>No concern</b>	<b>Welcome change</b>
The extent of the changes that will be involved	88.3% (39.6%)	9.1%	2.6%
The suitability of the changes for lower attainers	84.5% (48.7%)	14.3%	1.1%
The timescale on which the changes are being implemented	84.7% (34.1%)	13.1%	2.2%
The range of content that students will be required to study	76.2% (35.6%)	18.8%	5.0%
The removal of controlled assessment (so that all elements of the course are externally examined)	53.2% (25.7%)	15.5%	31.3%

It is clear from Table 8 that teachers are extremely worried about the extent of the change that will be involved, a challenge that is compounded by the timescale for implementation which means that GCSE boards have only a year in which to produce new specifications and that major curriculum reform will be taking place within one or more key stage over successive years from 2014-2018. (Many schools also faced changes in 2013 as a result of the 'strengthening' exercise undertaken to ensure greater rigour and parity of demand across GCSE courses). The changes are a matter of concern not simply in terms of teachers' workloads, but because of the demands that they will make on limited school resources.

I am also extremely concerned about the cost implications. My department have only recently bought new resources for the last changes made that saw us teaching the Cold War for the first time. My budget is being squeezed and now I am expected to develop new resources for teaching in 2016. I have neither the time nor the money to do this well.

*Teacher 249 maintained comprehensive school*

Even those who are highly supportive of the reform of GCSE are alarmed by the fact that so much is being altered at once and fear that all those involved may therefore seek to settle for the least disruption rather than trying to address the persistent problems that they perceive there to have been at this level:

There is a crazy amount of change and I hope this does not lead to minimum tweaks when the chance could be taken to really make GCSE work at last. Not sure about the low attainers until we see what exam boards offer - will take some imagination.

*Teacher 294, Independent school*

As the second part of this comment indicated, respondents are also clearly concerned about the nature of the demands that the new specifications will make on students, and are particularly fearful that the new examinations may prove even less accessible to the full range of learners than the current examinations. Almost half of all respondents have *serious* concerns about the suitability of the new courses for lower attainers or those with particular needs, and 85% in total expressed some concern about this issue.

I strongly believe that the changes to the GCSE have hindered those pupils who are less able, especially those who are dyslexic or literacy weak. I also find that the removal of controlled assessment further penalise them as it made it possible both for the weaker pupils to improve grades, and for more able pupils to work in ways that reflected their full abilities and detailed understanding of the course

*Teacher 144, Comprehensive school*

I work with deaf students who, although perfectly able to understand the course content of a GCSE in Humanities, struggle with literacy and working memory problems. The move away from controlled assessments, in which they can show their understanding and potential, is a serious concern for me. I worry that their results will fall dramatically and will not reflect the real ability of the pupils.

*Teacher 173, Comprehensive school*

While the removal of controlled assessment from the new specification is warmly welcomed by nearly a third of respondents, over half are concerned about the implications of this change, and many of those who commented on it drew a contrast between the types of approaches to assessment now favoured at higher levels, and the reversion to a reliance on recall at GCSE:

[I am seriously concerned about] the removal of the controlled assessment which helped the pupils gain confidence: 'I can do history!' Also the controlled assessment relied on research like at A-level and University. It is a skill which many undergraduates now lack, and universities are offering courses in these skills that we are making redundant.

*Teacher 213, New Academy*

Removal of controlled assessment is bizarre. History students at university level and A-level are expected to research and write extended essays using evidence, so why remove the one element of the course that prepares them for this?

*Teacher 285, New Academy*

## 6. A level History

### 6.1 The proportion of students within Year 12 and 13 taking A level history

Approximately 180 different schools that taught A level responded to questions about the uptake of the subject. As Figure 19 shows, it was most common for between 11% and 20% of the cohort to take history. This was the pattern in over a third of schools. Although around a quarter of the schools and colleges represented had less than 10% of the students taking AS level history – a proportion that rose to around a third for students studying A2 in Year 13 – it is also important to note that in at least a third of schools more than 21% of the cohort were studying history at AS level and beyond. In a very few schools and colleges (four in total) the proportion taking history even exceeded 40%.

Figure 19: 2014 The proportion of each year group in all schools studying AS or A2 history

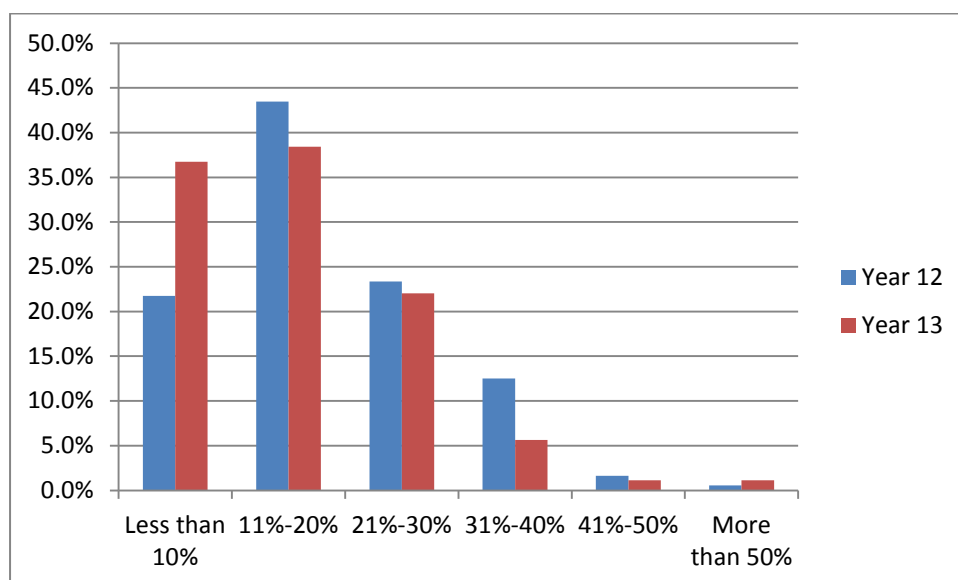


Figure 20, which shows the uptake by type of school in Year 12, reveals that the few grammar school respondents were very likely to report higher proportions of the year group taking history: 85% reported that at least 21% of the cohort was studying history. The prevalence of this trend in independent schools was not as marked as it has been in previous years (42% reported that at least 21% of the cohort were studying history), but it was higher than among the comprehensive or academy respondents (around 30%).

The overall pattern is broadly similar in Year 13 (see Figure 21), although there is less distinction between the independent sector and the academies. Eighty-five percent of the grammar school respondents reported that at least 21% of the cohort was continuing to study history. This proportion was much lower among the independent school respondents (32%), which was in turn only slightly higher than that of the academy and comprehensive school respondents (30% for the new academies, 27% for the old style academies and 24% for the comprehensives).

Figure 20: 2014 The proportion of each year group in different kinds of schools studying history in Year 12 (AS)

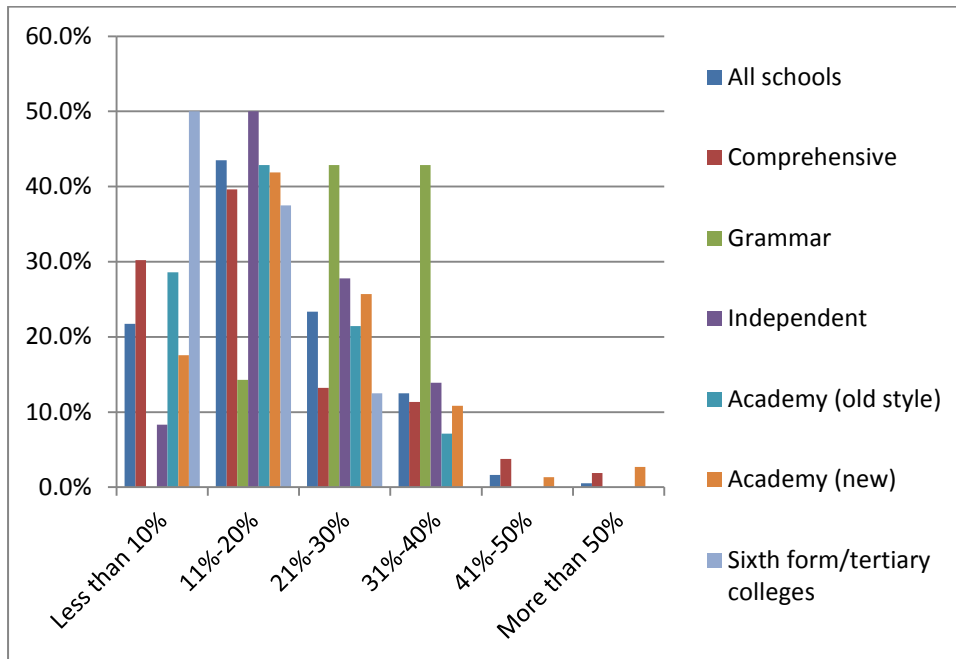
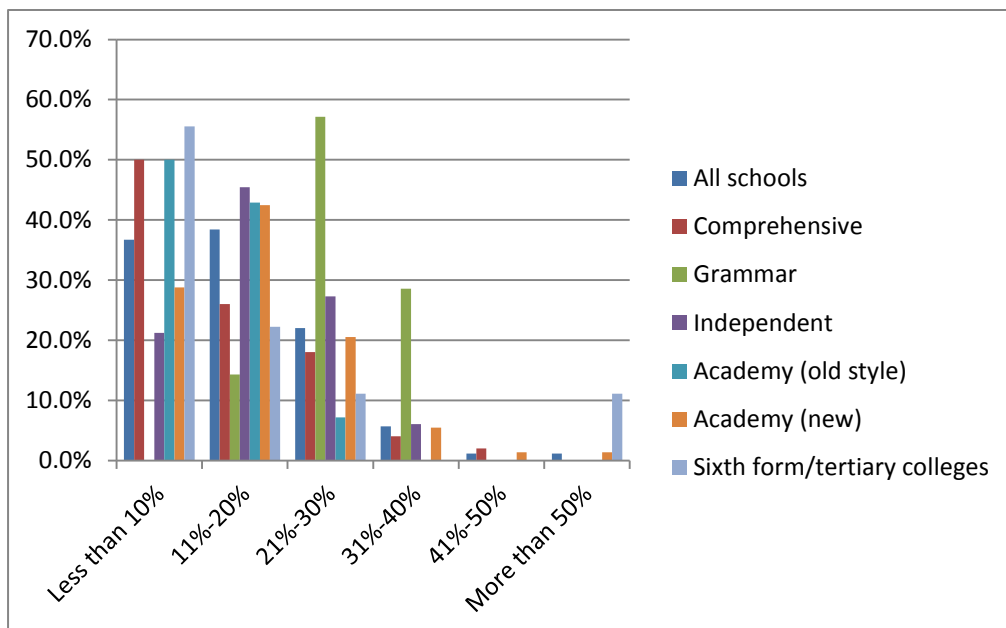


Figure 21: 2014 The proportion of each year group in different kinds of schools studying history in Year 13 (A2)

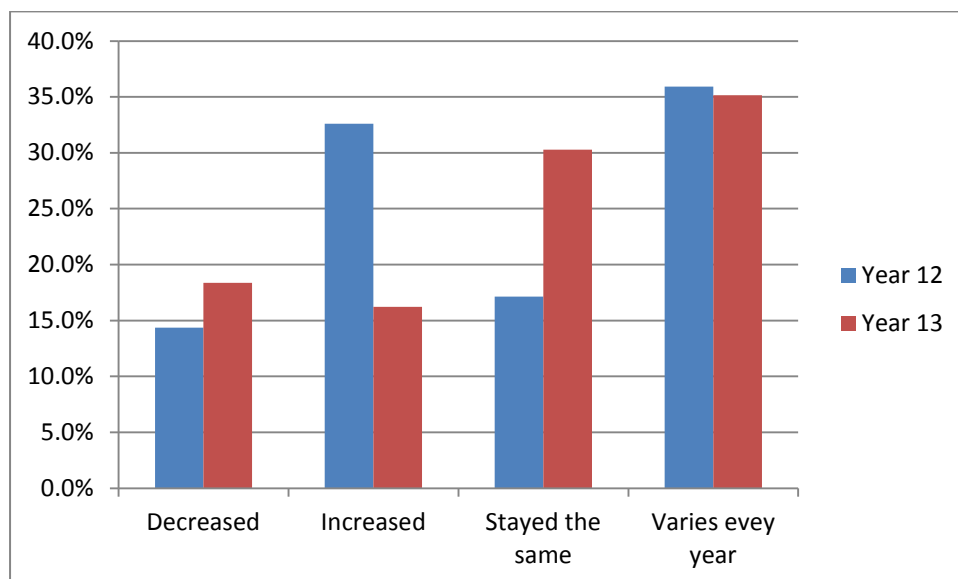


## 6.2 Trends in the uptake of history at AS and A2

In exploring trends in terms of A level uptake, the survey has in previous years invited respondents to reflect on patterns (if any) over the previous years. This year, because of concerns about how the 'de-coupling' of AS and A2 may affect the numbers opting for history from 2015, we invited respondents to explain the direction of change (if any) over the past year. This will allow us to detect any notable differences in their response over the next two years as the new arrangements come

into force. At this stage it is simply worth noting that the trend (insofar as respondents can discern any development rather than random yearly fluctuations) is a positive one. In Year 12, a greater proportion of respondents reported an increase in numbers (33%) than reported a decrease (14%), and in Year 13 the proportions were essentially similar, cancelling each other out.

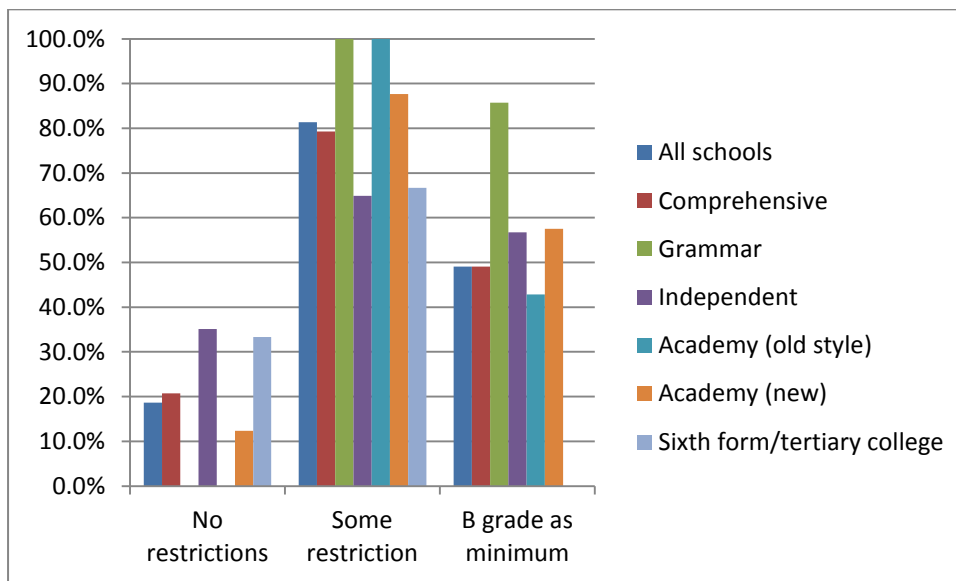
Figure 22: Changes in uptake of AS (Year 12) and A2 history (Year 13) since last year for all schools



### 6.3 Entrance requirements for embarking on A level history courses

The vast majority of respondents (81%) report that their schools and colleges set a minimum requirement for admission to A level courses, although there were cases in most contexts – except the few grammar school and older style academies – of an apparently open admissions policy. Nearly half of all respondents reported that their requirement was set at a minimum of a B grade in GCSE history (sometimes in combination with similarly high grades in a number of other GCSE subjects, most often English). The tendency to insist on a B grade was most marked among the few grammar schools represented, but it was also slightly more common in the independent schools and new academies, and less common in the older style academies. While the sixth form and tertiary colleges did tend to apply some kind of admissions criteria, this was most likely to be 5 A\*-C grades. None of them applied a minimum requirement of a B grade. In most cases, schools seemed willing to admit students who had not taken history at GCSE, in which case they tended to apply their minimum requirement to the students' prior achievement in English.

Figure 23: The proportion of schools of each type applying some kind of restriction to admission to A level history (Note that the category 'some restriction' **includes** all those that set a B grade at GCSE as a minimum standard)



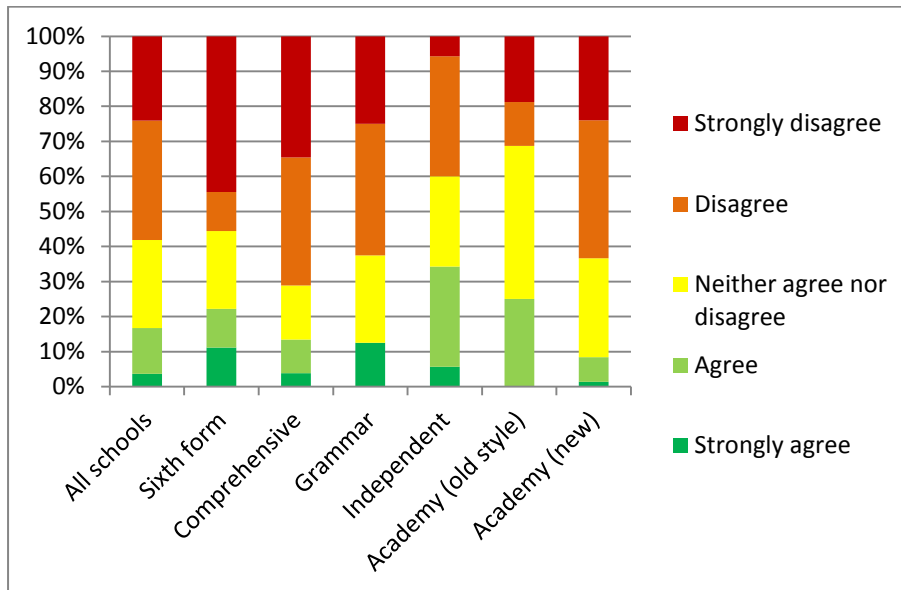
#### 6.4 Reactions to forthcoming A level changes

New national criteria for AS and A2 history were published in the spring of 2014. Although the new specifications had not yet been published at the time of the survey, questions were included about some of the key features of the new requirements, including the de-coupling of the AS and A2 qualifications.

As Figure 24 reveals, most respondents (58%) disagreed with the suggestion that decoupling AS and A2 would improve students' learning and equip them better for university. Only 17% of respondents agreed with the suggestion, although a further 25% did not express a view either way. Support for the change was more evident among independent school respondents, 34% of whom agreed with the suggestion that it would lead to an improvement, while disagreement was most pronounced by teachers in the comprehensives and new academies.

When invited to offer an explanation for their views only two respondents chose to explain their support for the proposal, one declaring that the AS exam came too soon after GCSE, and that waiting a year would both give them additional teaching time and allow students to mature, while the other suggested that it would allow students to keep their options open for longer.

Figure 24: The extent to which respondents agreed with the suggestion that the separation of AS and A level qualifications would ensure that students learned history more effectively and that those continuing with the subject would be better prepared for university study.



Eighteen of those who expressed negative views explained the reasons behind their judgment and the vast majority of these gave various reasons why they thought the change would lead to a reduction in the number of students taking history. In some cases, it was suggested that students who had previously taken history as fourth subject (often alongside sciences) would no longer be prepared to do so. In most others it was suggested that students who were quite nervous about history as a demanding subject but who would previously have been prepared to risk taking it at AS level, and then been reassured by their results and continued to A2, would no longer be willing to give the subject a try. The following comments illustrate these experiences:

Since history is popular at our school, we have a large number of students with career paths needing other subjects who take history as a 4th subject, expecting to discontinue after AS. A significant number of these students choose to continue with it to A2, either changing career paths or studying it as a 4th A2. This will not be possible under these changes.

*Teacher 140, Comprehensive school*

Present system offers flexibility. Presently we get a lot of students who plan to do History in AS only and then enjoy the subject and achieve so well in it that they continue to A2 - this will no longer be possible.

*Teacher 92, Comprehensive school*

We will have fewer candidates. The stand-alone AS Level is likely to be seen as a second-rate qualification, meaning fewer will take it. We will lose out on the kind of student who currently takes three science subjects and takes History as their fourth.

*Teacher 17, Academy (old style)*



The demands of History GCSE relative to some other GCSE subjects mean some pupils currently opt for History only as the 4th AS subject so numbers may fall when only 3 A levels are chosen going into Y12.

*Teacher 226, Independent School*

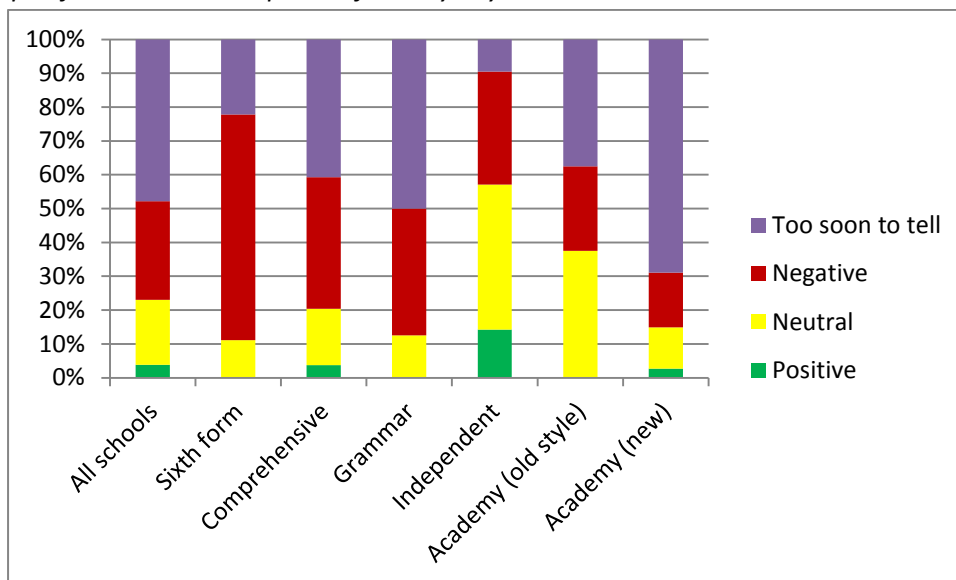
In one case, the concern about falling numbers was so pronounced that the teacher feared they would lose all their A level history teaching as a result. Teachers were also concerned about the anxiety that the change would create for students by forcing them to make a decision about the full A level without any kind of interim measure to guide them.

Students will not have a guide to their success in the subject at exam at the halfway point and may be put off choosing History for their degree.

*Teacher 275, Independent School*

Respondents were also asked quite specifically what they thought the impact of the changes would be on the uptake of history A level at their school, and their responses (as shown in Figure 25) echo the concerns expressed above. While almost half thought that it was still too soon to form any kind of impression, it was clear that very few (only 4% of all respondents) thought that the effects would be positive, while 29% predicted that the change would have a negative impact on take-up of the subject. Concerns were particularly pronounced among the respondents teaching in sixth form and tertiary colleges.

*Figure 25: Respondents' views of the nature of the impact of the separation of AS and A level qualifications on the uptake of history in your school?*



As Table 9 reveals, the timescale on which the changes were to be implemented was regarded as a matter of concern by an 85% of respondents, with more than a third rating this as a matter of serious concern. Significant levels of concern were also expressed about the increase in chronological range that the new specifications would require, with 65% of respondents regarding the new requirement (for topics to be taken from a chronological range of at least 200 years) as a matter of concern.

Other aspects of the changes – particularly the inclusion of an independent historical enquiry and the minimum requirement for British history being set at 20%– were broadly welcomed or at least accepted, although there was some concern among a minority of teachers about these aspects, and about the requirement for A level students to ‘develop an understanding of the nature and purpose of history as a discipline and how historians work’.

*Table 9: Extent to which respondents were concerned about or welcomed particular features of the new A level criteria (that would apply to specifications for first teaching from September 2015)*

<b>Possible issue of concern in relation to the new A level specifications (for first teaching from September 2015)</b>	<b>Matter of current concern (including those for whom this is a serious concern)</b>	<b>No concern</b>	<b>Welcome change</b>
The timescale on which these changes will be implemented	86.8% (34.8%)	10.6%	2.5%
The nature of the changes in terms of the breadth and depth of content for A level: (topics from a chronological range of at least 200 years; a study of change over at least 100 years)	65.0% (24.9%)	26.4%	8.6%
The requirement for A level students to develop an understanding of the nature and purpose of history as a discipline and how historians work.	27.8% (5.1%)	46.5%	25.8%
The requirement for an independent historical enquiry at A level	26.3% (5.1%)	47.5%	26.3%
The requirement that at least 20% of the A level should be British history	20.3% (5.6%)	67.0%	12.7%

## 7. Initial teacher education (ITE)

### 7.1. Views of current trends in initial teacher education

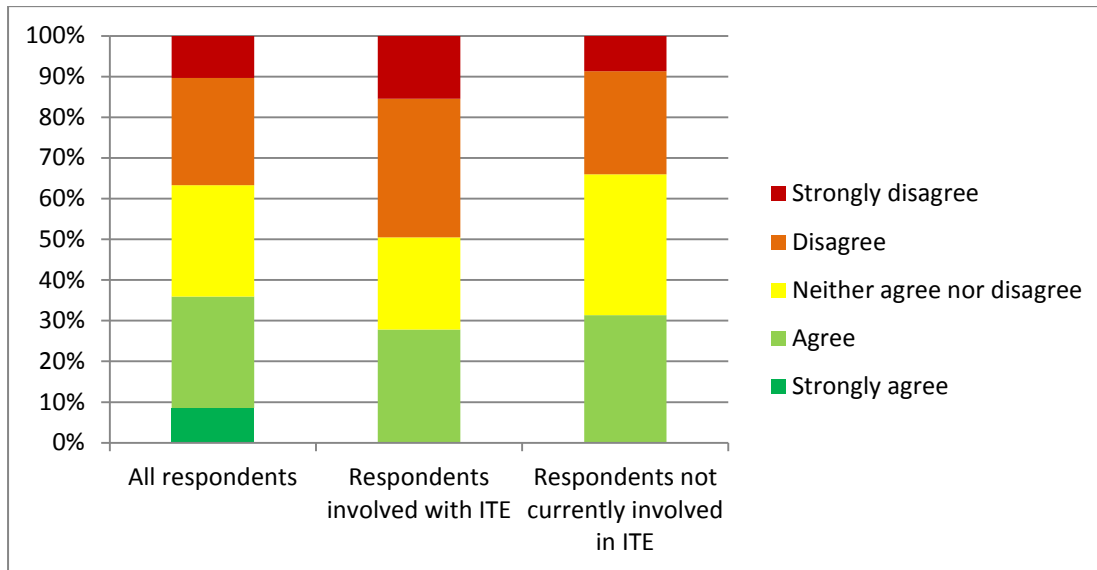
All respondents, whether or not they were directly involved in training teachers – were asked to indicate how far they agreed with each of a series of statements reflecting different views about the relative roles of schools and universities in initial teacher education and the impact of different kinds of arrangement on the quality of history teachers produced. In analysing the responses, a distinction has been drawn between the views of those whose schools are *currently* involved in initial teacher education (around 104 of the 272 respondents to these questions) and those with no current involvement in working with trainees (around 168 respondents). The questions were presented in an essentially random order with a mix of positive and negative emphases on schools and universities so that there was no obvious bias in the sequence of statements or likelihood of bias towards agreement or disagreement. However, in presenting the results, questions with a similar emphasis have now been grouped together so that the findings focus first on the role of schools in ITE and then on universities working in partnership with them.

The clear finding to emerge from this range of questions is that the vast majority of respondents believe that the most effective way of training history teachers is in the context of a secure partnership between schools and university providers. There is little support for further moves to expand the role of schools in ITE, especially if this comes at the cost of the university contribution, which is particularly valued for the access that it gives to subject-specific educational research. This vital role of universities is so strongly recognised that over 90% of respondents thought that all trainees should receive a guaranteed minimum entitlement to university-based elements in their training, incorporated within a partnership programme. Respondents were keen to acknowledge that it was not only the trainees but also the mentors and other experienced teachers working with the trainees who benefitted through the partnership arrangements from this access to subject-specific research.

#### 7.1.1 Views about further expanding the role of schools in ITE

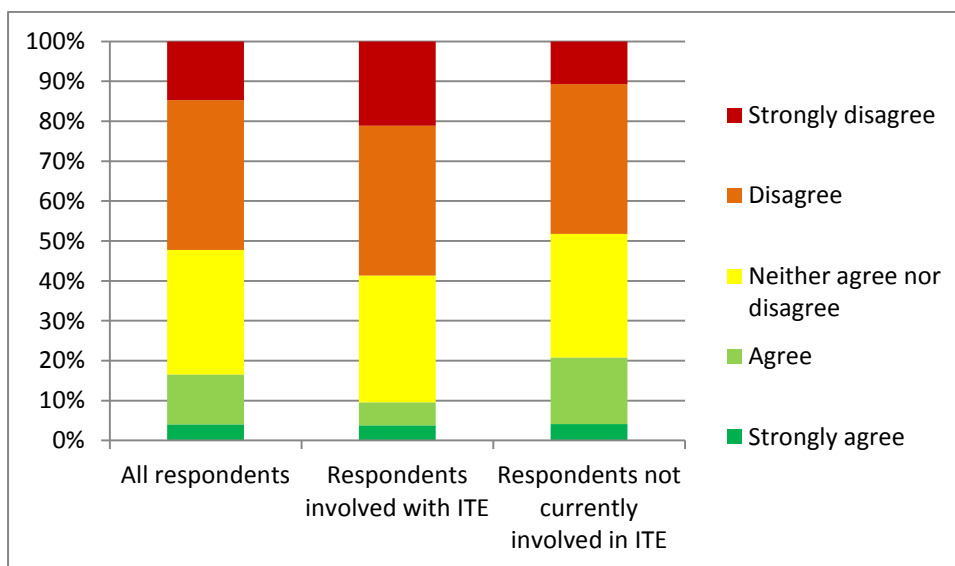
Since recent government policy has focused on expanding the role of schools in ITE through employment based routes such as Teach First and the School Direct programme, respondents were asked how far they agreed that expanding the role of schools in ITE would improve the quality of history teachers entering the profession. Opinions on the issue were broadly divided. While around a third of respondents thought that such a move would improve the quality of history teachers, just under a third offered no particular view, and just over a third disagreed with the suggestion. Opposition to the view was more marked however among those who were currently working with trainees (or Teach First 'participants') in their schools, 50% of whom disagreed with the suggestion.

Figure 26: The extent to which respondents agreed with the suggestion that expanding the role of schools in ITE would improve the quality of history teachers



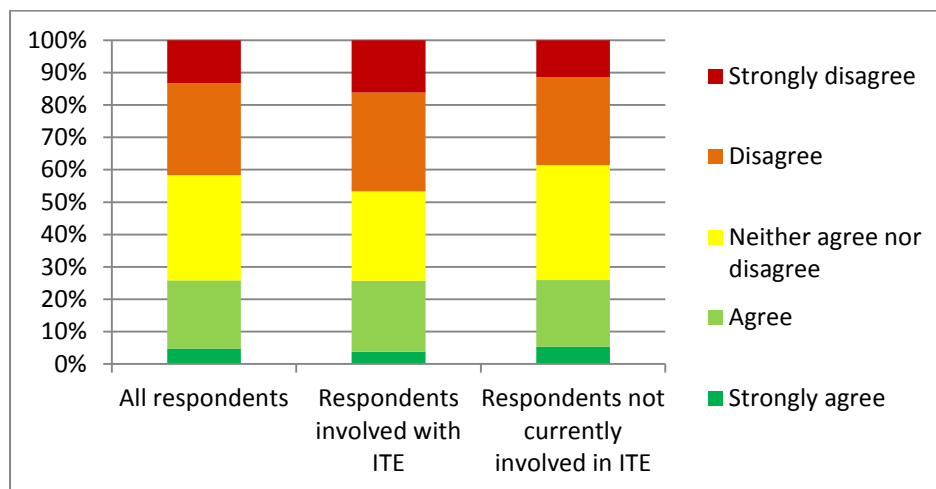
While this first question had asked in general terms about the perceived benefits of further expanding schools' role in ITE, a more specific question asked about the value of increasing the number of employment-based training places. Opinions were rather less evenly divided here, with over half of the respondents (53%) disagreeing with the suggestion that increasing the numbers of employment-based trainees would improve the quality of history teachers entering the profession. While almost a third (31%) had no clear views on the subject, only 17% of respondents expressed support for the idea. Again, opposition tended to be more marked among those respondents who had current experience of ITE, with a current history trainee in their school.

Figure 27: The extent to which respondents agreed with the specific suggestion that increasing the number of places for employment-based salaried trainees would improve the quality of history teachers.



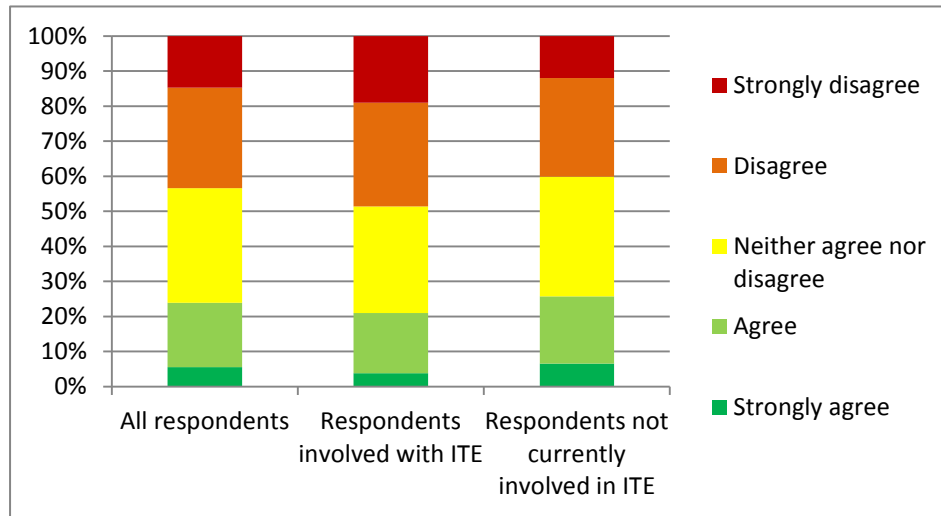
One obvious means by which the role of schools might be expanded is through the creation of more accredited school-centred providers (or SCITTs). Such school-centred schemes tend to involve a number of schools working in partnership, led by one or more Teaching Schools. When respondents were asked how far they agreed with the suggestion that more schools should lead or join SCITTs, only around a quarter of respondents expressed any agreement with it. Around a third of respondents expressed no particular view, but more than 40% of respondents were opposed to the idea. Opposition to the suggestion was more pronounced among those who currently had trainees at their school (47%) than among those who did not (38%).

Figure 28: The extent to which respondents agree with the suggestion that more schools should become SCITTs (school-centred ITT providers) allowing them to offer accredited routes to achieving QTS.



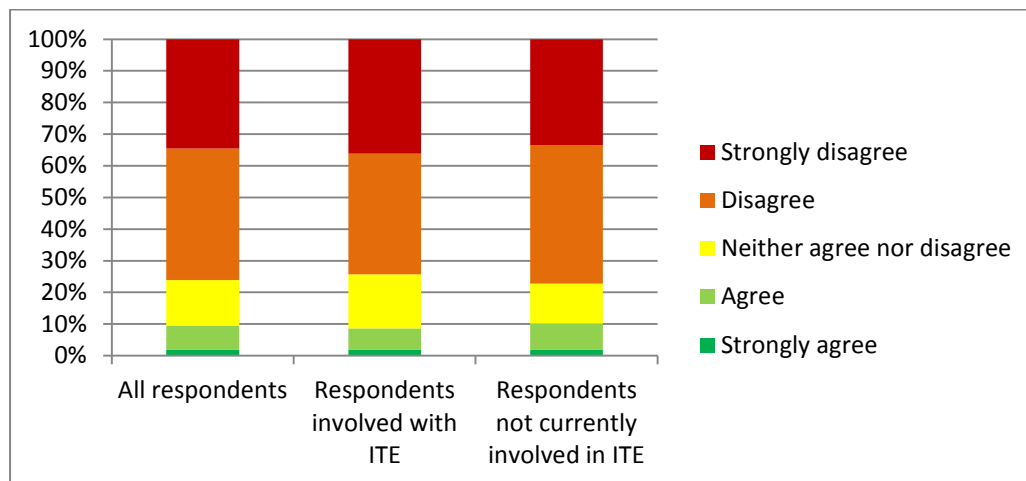
In exploring teachers' responses to the current government drive to expand the role of schools in ITE, it was important to consider the extent to which schools actually have the capacity to play a greater role. Few respondents seemed to think that schools were well positioned in this respect, with less than a quarter of respondents agreeing with the suggestion that schools had sufficient capacity to do so. While around a third of respondents did not express any particular view, the claim was opposed by 41% of respondents. Again, opposition tended to be slightly more marked among those respondents with current experience of working with history trainees.

Figure 29: The extent to which respondents agreed with the suggestion that schools have the capacity to take on a bigger role in ITE



The final question that focused on expanding the role of schools in ITE probed this question of schools' capacity a little further by asking whether respondents thought that experienced history teachers working with beginning history teachers would be capable of acting as the sole providers of ITE. When invited to respond to the claim that history teachers in school have the capacity to provide all that beginning history teachers need, only 10% of respondents agreed with this view. While 14% of the respondents were undecided, three-quarters of them opposed the suggestion. A full third of respondents strongly disagreed with the suggestion.

Figure 30: The extent to which respondents agreed with the suggestion that history teachers in schools had the capacity to provide all the professional education that beginning history teachers need

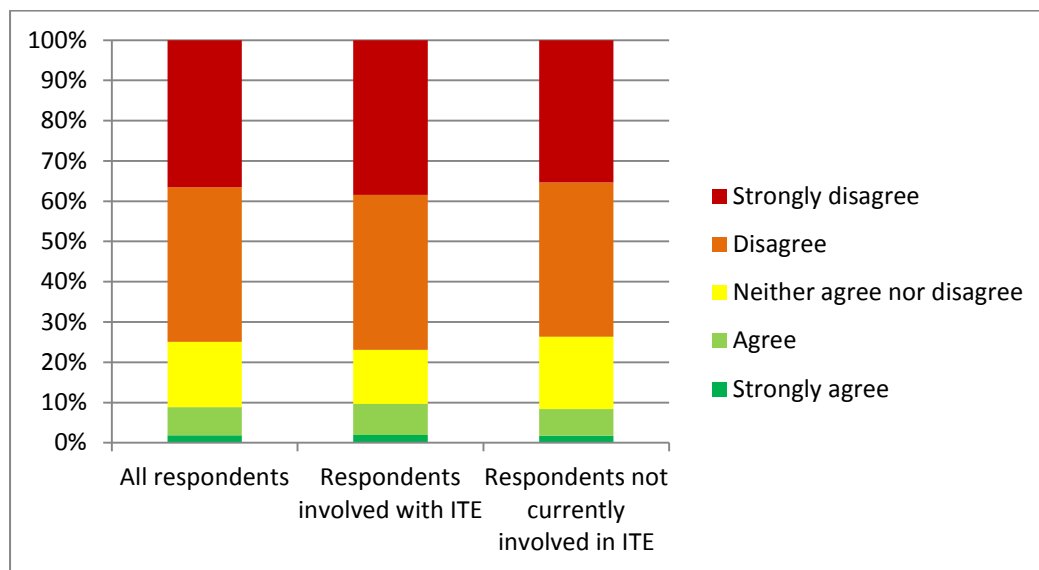


### 7.1.2 Views on reducing the role of universities within ITE training

The corollary of expanding the role of schools in ITE would obviously seem to be a reduction in the role of university-based teacher educators. This reduction has taken a variety of forms in recent years, with some university partnership PGCE programmes closing altogether, and others only able

(because of lack of allocated training places) to offer a variety of School Direct programmes with fewer days of university-based training, or online-only packages of support. The survey therefore sought respondents' views about the potential benefits to be gained by reducing the role of universities in the training of history teachers. When asked whether reducing the role of universities in the training of history teachers would improve the quality of teacher education, less than 10% of respondents agreed with this view. While 17% of respondents were undecided, almost three-quarters of teachers disagreed with the suggestion. Over a third of the respondents disagreed strongly. Again the strength of opposition was slightly more marked among those with current experience of involvement in training history teachers in their school.

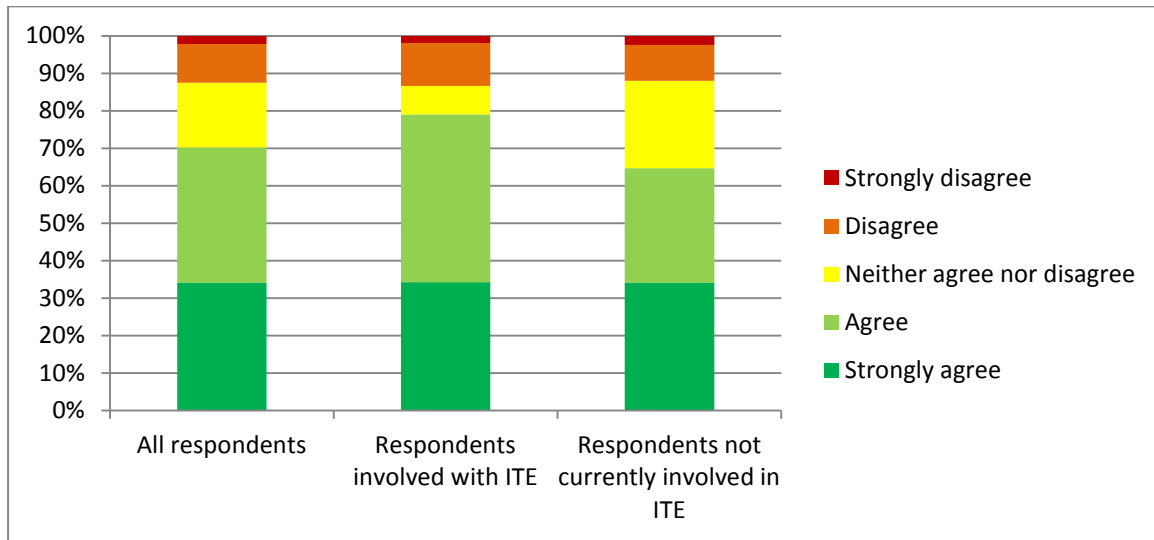
Figure 31: The extent to which respondents agreed with the suggestion that reducing the role of universities in initial teacher education would improve the quality of history teachers



A further question asked respondents specifically to consider the impact on beginning teachers' subject-specific expertise if the universities' role in ITE were to be further reduced. The responses to this question may perhaps help to explain why the prevailing view among respondents is generally one of opposition to further expansion of schools' roles in training. Over 70% of respondents agreed with the suggestion that the subject-specific dimension of teachers' training would suffer if the universities' role was reduced. While 17% of respondents were unsure, only 12% of teachers disagreed with the suggestion, implying that they thought that the quality of the subject-specific dimension would be maintained or enhanced.

Just as those history teachers actually involved in ITE tend to be slightly more opposed to further expansion of schools' roles at the expense of the university contribution, so this question revealed that they are similarly more inclined to fear for the quality of trainees' subject-specific professional learning if the universities' role were to be further reduced.

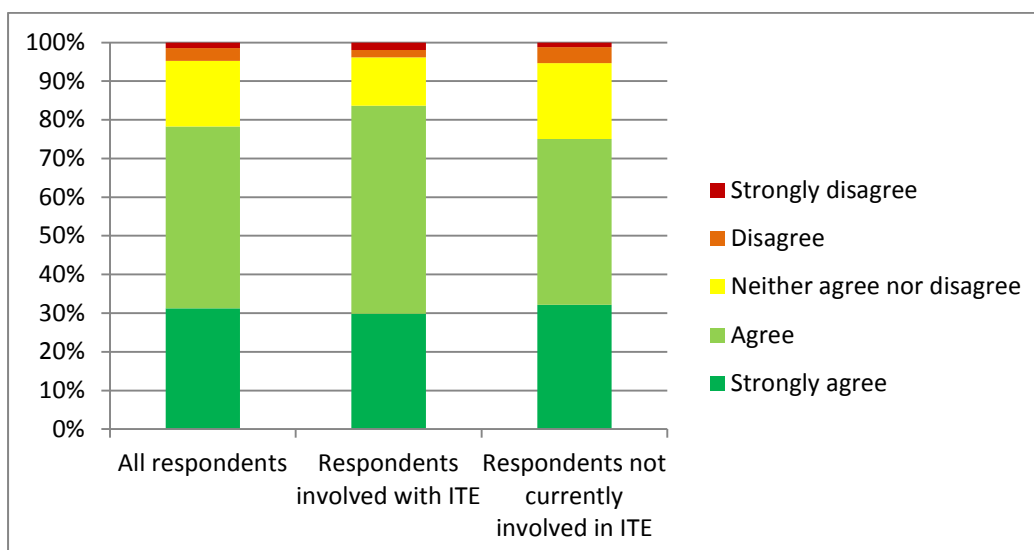
Figure 32: The extent to which respondents agreed with the suggestion that the subject-specific dimension of teacher training would be likely to suffer if universities' role in teacher education was reduced



### 7.1.3 The effectiveness of partnership-based ITE programmes for training history teachers

As well as seeking teachers' views about the likely impact of further shifts away from university involvement in ITE, the survey also included a series of questions seeking their opinion about the value of school/university partnerships in ITE. When directly invited to respond to the proposition that partnerships between schools and universities are the most effective way of training teachers, there was a strong consensus among respondents that this was indeed the case. Nearly 80% of respondents agreed with this view and less than 5% opposed it. Those who were currently working with a history trainee in their school tended to be more strongly supportive of the claim (92%) than those who were not actively working with beginning teachers (85%).

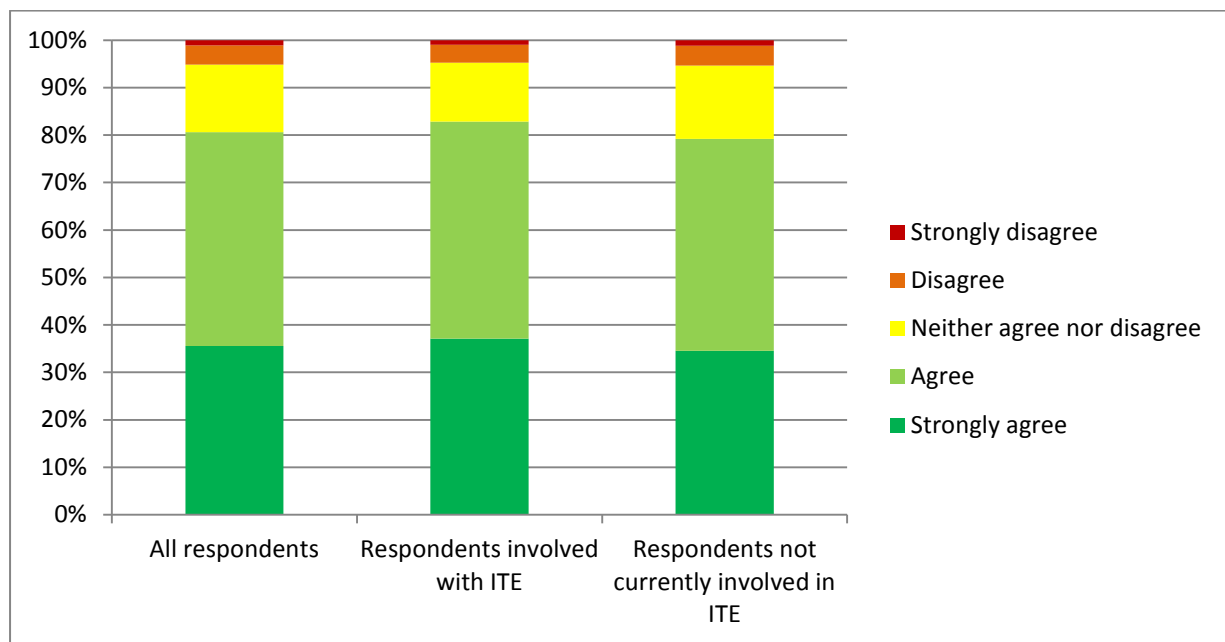
Figure 33: The extent to which respondents agreed with the claim that partnerships between schools and universities are the most effective way of training teacher





In order to understand what kinds of benefits respondents associated with universities' contribution to ITE respondents were asked directly for their view of the claim that one of the most important benefits arising from school-university partnerships in ITE arises from the scope that it provides for trainees to engage with subject-specific educational research. There was very strong support for this claim, with 80% of respondents expressing agreement with it, and only 5% of respondents disagreeing in any way. As with previous responses the tendency to agree with the claim was more pronounced among those actively engaged with history trainees (85%) than among those who were not (75%).

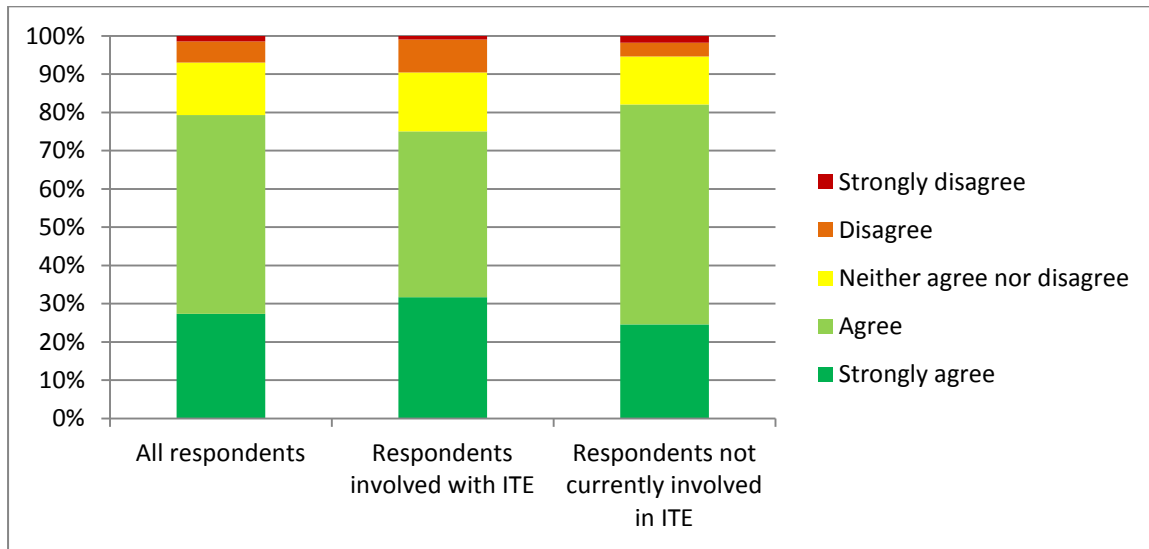
Figure 34: The extent to which respondents agreed with the claim that one of the key benefits of university/school training partnerships is that trainees are encouraged to read and engage with subject-specific education research



In addition to asking about the benefits for history trainees of learning to teach within a school/university partnership between, the survey also included one question about the potential benefits for the teachers working within the partnership. When invited to express their view of the claim that experienced teachers also gain from being involved in a partnership that links their history department to a university ITE provider almost 80% of respondents agreed with the claim. In this case the overall support of respondents with a current history trainee (75%) was slightly less than that expressed by those respondents not involved (82%), but the proportion of *strong* agreement was higher among those with current trainees.

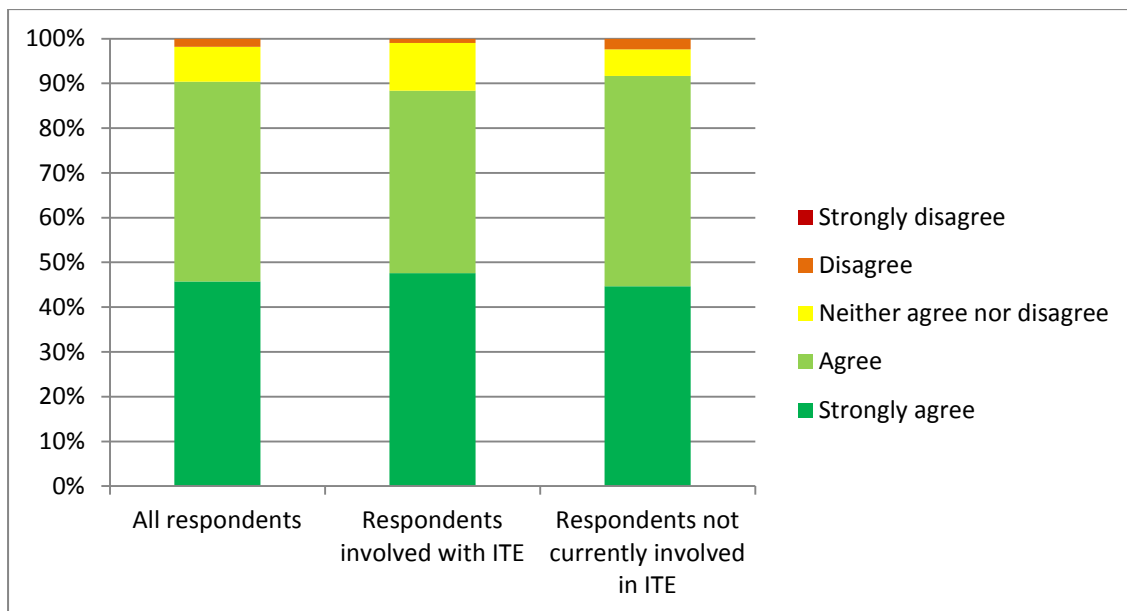
One implication of responses to this question and the last would seem to be that the history mentors and other experienced teachers working with the trainee also benefit from the access that the university partnership gives them to subject-specific educational research.

Figure 35: The extent to which respondents agreed with the claim that history mentors (and other history teachers working with trainees) also benefit from training partnerships that link the department to a university provider



A final question within the survey asked whether respondents thought that all history trainees should be entitled to a minimum amount of university-based training. Support for this suggestion was very strong indeed, with 90% of respondents agreeing with the suggestion (half of them expressing *strong* agreement) and only 2% disagreeing.

Figure 36: The extent to which respondents agreed with the claim that all history trainees should be entitled to a minimum amount of university-based training.



#### 7.1.4 Respondents' comments on the range of statements

Forty-four of the respondents chose to explain their views by adding a comment at the end of the series of statements about the quality and strengths of different forms of provision and the impact

of further increasing the role of school in ITE. Only three of these statements were used to explain positive views of an increased role for schools. While one of these cited the 'twaddle' offered by universities (which they suggested was only appropriate for those training to work in private schools), another referred to the poor communication that they had experienced within a particular partnership, which meant that they had received very late notice of trainee placements. The third respondent suggested that school-based training was the most effective at ensuring good practice in terms of behaviour management, but balanced this by arguing that the university-based contribution helped to ensure effective pedagogy.

The vast majority of comments were therefore made in support of partnership forms of ITE provision. The need for a balanced contribution from both schools and universities was a common theme and was explicitly endorsed in eight comments.

The partnership between schools and universities is invaluable in allowing trainee teachers to gain an in-depth understanding of both practical and theoretical aspects of teaching, and to reflect properly on pedagogy, curriculum and assessment in general as well as being concerned with their day-to-day practice in school. Part of the reason people choose a salaried route like Teach First or Schools Direct with much less university input is because of the costs of a PGCE course balanced against being paid a salary for their training year. It would be much more useful for trainee teachers to provide an allowance and scrap fees than to limit university participation in initial teacher education.

*Teacher 258, Academy (old style)*

Where comments were critical of increasing the role of schools or reducing the role of universities three kinds of arguments were used. One focused on the distinctive contribution of universities in terms of the input that they provided. This input was seen as deriving from research and focused particularly on pedagogy, particularly subject specific pedagogy.

At university, trainees have the time to work with others from their subject and therefore to discuss or engage in more specific issues relevant to them, e.g. research about how to teach the Holocaust. In schools, they have the practical experience but there is nowhere near enough time to engage in such interesting debates or to explore possibilities in the same sort of way.

*Teacher 10, Grammar school*

The learning of pedagogy in universities underpins what students put into practice in schools. If students miss this, they do not have an understanding of what they are doing and why.

*Teacher 146, Academy (new)*

Occasional reference was also made to the way in which university partners could support the development of specific subject knowledge (substantive content).

*I agree that a relationship with a university is important to provide a range of practical pedagogical theories and ideas. I did the GTP scheme and felt I missed the breadth of teaching practice that others experienced on a PGCE. I also agree that subject knowledge development is important - especially after the restrictive diet experienced by recent students. Here a link with a university is also*

important especially if the school doesn't contain teachers with a range and depth of historical knowledge.

*Teacher 153, Independent School*

Another common argument focused on the value of stable partnerships that could bring groups of students together outside the demands of the immediate teaching context to reflect critically on their own practice (which it was argued speeded beginners' learning considerably) and to learn from each other's experiences and through reviewing the range of practices that they each had insight into from different schools.

Most departments are small and may have even fewer specialists themselves. Trainees need exposure to a wide range of ideas/approaches and this could be limited if too much training in school. The opportunity for trainees to learn from their peers (i.e. other trainees) is also invaluable so there need to be forums for trainees to work together not just all alone in school depts.

*Teacher 18, Independent school*

It was also noted, that even where time was officially set aside for particular training activities in school, these were frequently abandoned under the pressure of other, unforeseen events (which was seen as an inevitable feature of school life) or because senior leaders tended to prioritise generic training over a focus on subject specific professional development.

The school-based aspect of ITT is critical, and it is right that this is weighted more heavily as students must be in this environment and in the classroom for as long as they can. However, it works well in conjunction with university-based training. Students NEED university time as this allows them dedicated, proper time to reflect on their practices properly, and engage with the pedagogy. Schools will have the best of intentions but anyone who has worked in a school will know that things fall by the wayside due to the immense day to day pressures. Students will only get proper, dedicated, quality time to reflect and properly learn, if they have Universities drive this aspect of it. BOTH are needed.

*Teacher 209, Independent School*

Some history teachers may have the capacity to provide the professional education but schools discourage any training other than their own devised CPD, for example I have had 3 training sessions cancelled by SLT and made to do them after school in our own time even though there are school-based CPD sessions every night after school. I would say that although schools want to train teachers themselves they want to do it on the cheap without the necessary means or knowledge to do it properly.

*Teacher 136, Academy (new)*

The third main argument focused on the unreasonable demands that mentoring made on teachers if there was no other substantial source of input into the trainees' learning. While some argued that mentors currently lacked the skill and knowledge to fill this gap, others implied that it might be possible but that it would be inappropriate to seek to do so, given the primary commitment of mentors to their pupils' learning.

With the increased (and increasing) pressures on teacher workload, this would add an enormous amount of extra pressure and work on any teacher with the responsibility for that trainee. Furthermore, understanding of pedagogy and ideas/ philosophies/ theories of teaching would be drastically reduced under this system.

*Teacher 148, Academy (new)*

My experience suggests that the demands of teaching a full timetable whilst trying to teach someone how to teach History does not have a positive impact on my teaching.

*Teacher 261, Academy (new)*

With the exception of the three critics of university providers within ITE partnerships, who represent less than 7% of those who chose to add an explanatory comment, the range of views expressed thus provides strong support for the view that secure partnerships represent the most effective way of training beginning history teachers, and ensuring that they have access to subject-specific educational research. While there is obviously strong commitment to the work of school-based mentor as full partners in initial teacher education and a recognition of their vital and distinctive expertise, and in many cases, a sense of confidence about what skilled subject-specific mentors could achieve with more dedicated time for their role, there was also a keen awareness that such time cannot easily be given without seriously disrupting their main teaching commitments and that school-led employment based routes tend to have a strong bias towards generic training that neglects the subject specific dimensions of research and pedagogy.

## **7. 2 The extent to which mentors feel equipped for their role**

We asked all those respondents who were acting as mentors (47) to tell us how well equipped they felt in relation to a number of key resources:

- Time
- Guidance and training for their role
- Access to subject-specific resources (for their own use or directly for their trainee)
- Support for their role as mentor (from within or beyond the school)

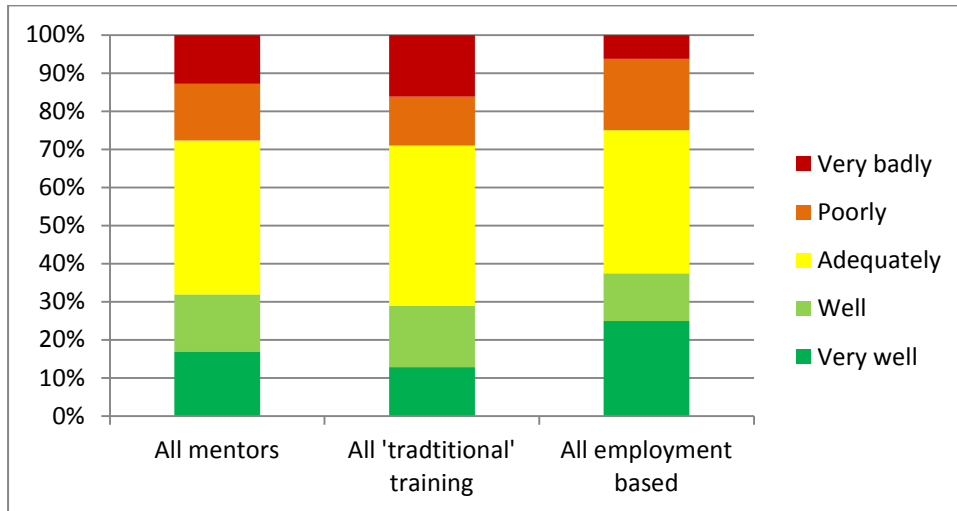
Since mentors were working on a number of different training routes, some with only very small numbers of respondents (e.g. only four Teach First mentors, and only five mentors for School Direct non-salaried programmes) we have only broken them into two distinct groups, those with trainees following more traditional partnership training routes (such as traditional PGCE programmes or School Direct non-salaried routes with at least 30 days in the university) and those which are more obviously employment -based or for which trainees receive a salary (e.g. Teach First and School Direct non-salaried). While the latter may be conducted in partnership with universities, the participants spend far less than one third of their time in sessions led by university-based tutors.

### **7.2.1 Time for the mentoring role**

Around 70% of mentors felt that their allocation of time for the role was at least adequate for them to fulfil their role as ITE mentors, although only around a third of them suggested that they were

well or very well supported in terms of protected time. Views about the allocation of time were slightly more positive among those supporting beginning teachers on employment-based routes than on traditional routes.

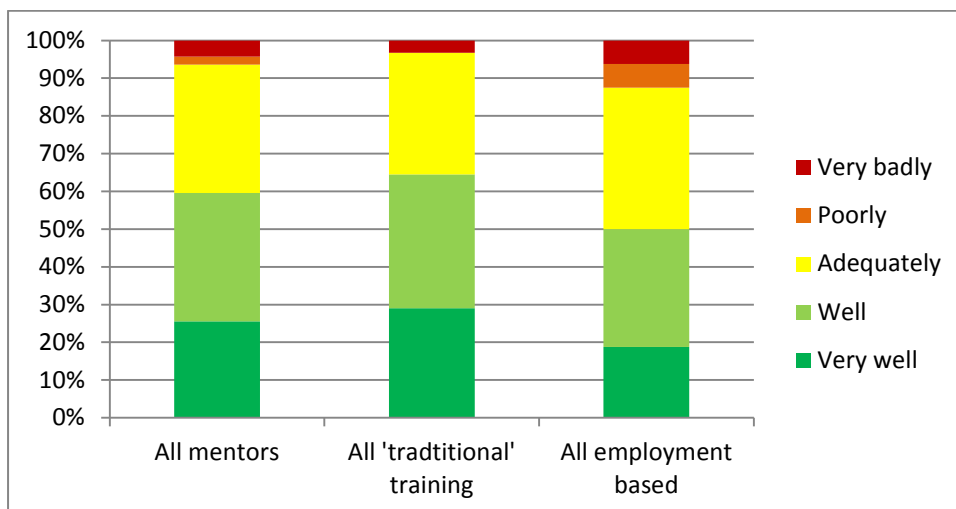
*Figures 37: How well equipped mentors feel that they are in terms of the time allocated to them for their ITE work*



### 7.2.2 Guidance and training for their role

Again most mentors – well over 90% - felt that they were at least adequately equipped for their role in terms of the guidance and training that they received, and over 60% felt that this provision was more than adequate. Here the mentors on more traditional partnership routes were slightly more positive about the provision than those supporting trainees on employment-based routes.

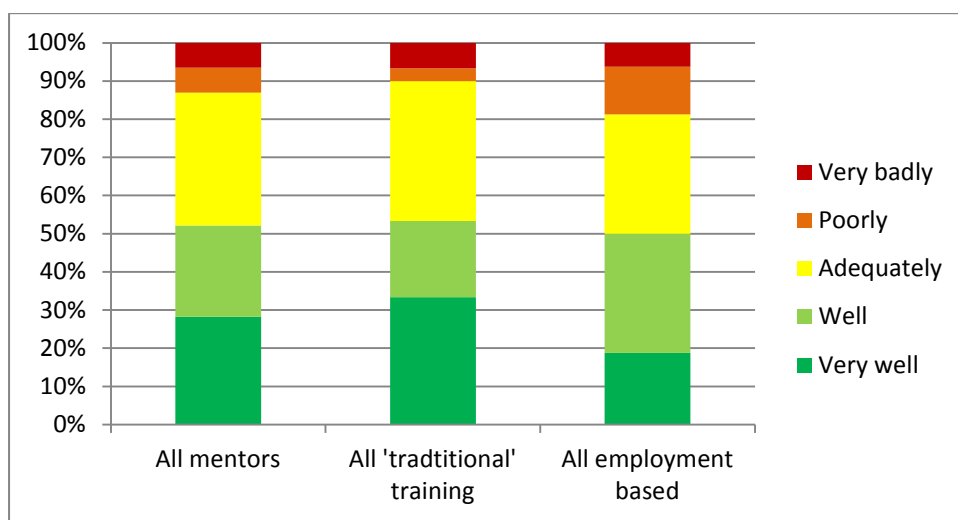
*Figure 38: The extent to which mentors felt that they were adequately equipped for their role in terms of guidance and training*



### 7.2.3 Access to subject-specific resources

Overall, the mentors responding reported that they were generally well equipped for their role in terms of subject-specific resources for themselves and their trainees. Over half the mentors responded that they were well or very well equipped and over 85% felt at least adequately equipped. The responses to this question were more positive among those working with trainees on traditional routes (90%) than on employment based programmes (81%).

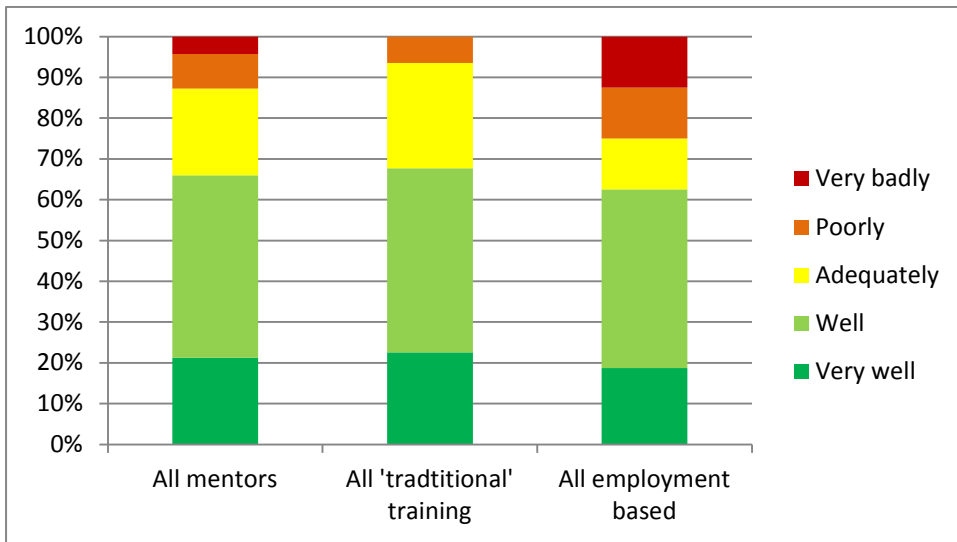
Figure 39: How well do mentors feel they are equipped in terms of access to subject-specific resources (for themselves and their trainees)?



### 4.2.4 Support for their work as mentors

On the whole history mentors claimed to be well supported in their role, whether this support came from others within school (or a school network) or from a university partner. More than 87% of mentors felt that they were at least adequately supported and nearly two thirds of them that they felt well or very well supported. Here, however, there was a more marked difference between mentors supporting trainees on traditional programmes and those working with trainees on employment-based routes. While only 7% of mentors on traditional courses felt that the level of support they received was poor (and not of them claimed that it was 'very bad'), a quarter of the mentors on employment-based routes felt that the support that they received was inadequate, with half of those describing it as 'poor' and half of them as 'very bad'.

Figure 40: How well mentors feel they are supported in their role (from within or beyond school)





## 8. Teachers' concerns

A final section of the survey invited teachers to indicate how concerned they felt about a range of issues – those that had already been identified in relation to specific key stages and others that related to new issue such as the provision of, and opportunity to participate in subject-specific forms of professional development. The issues are listed in the table below in order of priority in terms of respondents' levels of concern.

*Table 10: The proportion of respondents for whom particular issues were a matter of concern ranked in order of severity*

Possible issue of concern	Matter of current concern (including those for whom this is a serious concern)	May become a concern	Not a matter of concern
The combination of curriculum changes happening at the same time	81.5% (50.9%)	12.5%	6.0%
Lack of funding for new teaching resources to implement proposed curriculum changes	70.0% (43.8%)	20.2%	9.7%
2013	83.2%		
Lack of opportunity to attend subject based CPD	56.9% (27.5%)	28.3%	14.9%
2013	49.1%		
Lack of provision of subject based CPD	51.7% (24.5%)	29.8%	18.5%
2013	48.2%		
The amount of history being taught by non-specialists	29.5% (14.6%)	36.6%	34.0%
2013	26.3%		
Specialists are not replacing history teachers who leave	21.2% (13.0%)	42.4%	36.4%
2013	17.6%		

As Table 10 shows, the most significant concern, identified as an issue by 81.5% of respondents is the combination of curriculum changes all happening in quick succession. This was regarded as a matter of serious concern by half of all teachers responding to the survey. Linked with this concern are anxieties about the lack of funding for new resources to support the curriculum changes, which is a matter of concern for 70% of respondents. Although this proportion is lower than it was last year (which probably reflects the fact that changes to the content of the Key Stage 3 have been less extensive than was suggested by the draft proposals) teachers remain very anxious about how they can respond to change at so many levels within tightly constrained limited budgets. The pressure on budgets also impacted on the scope for teachers to attend professional development courses. As

one teacher commented, the costs of travel cover and attendance at any kind of course could rarely be justified when they could be used to purchase a new set of textbooks.

Concerns about the provision of subject-specific CPD and the chance for teachers to participate in appropriate courses where they are available, are slightly more pronounced than last year, and are a matter of concern for just over half of teachers (with one quarter regarding these issues as of serious concern). In contexts where schools had decided to bring all professional development work 'in-house' to save money, there was no opportunity at all to engage in subject-specific courses.

It is encouraging to note that concerns about a lack of specialist history teaching are slightly less pronounced than in last year's survey, but it is important to recognise that the amount of history being taught by non-specialists remains a concern for almost 30% of respondents, while worries about history teachers leaving and not being replaced by specialists were expressed by more than 20% of respondents. In such circumstances, it is likely that what specialist expertise there is will be targeted at public examination classes, leaving Key Stage 3 classes to non-historians, which is particularly troubling at a time when schools are being called upon to devise and implement new systems of defining, measuring and recording progression within the subject.