A world-class education system: The Advanced British Standard consultation

The Department for Education

Full Consultation Document

Ufi VocTech Trust Response

20 March 2024

Executive Summary

Ufi welcomes the Advanced British Standard (ABS) as an opportunity to modernise and update the formal English education system. We believe that reform of the assessment and qualifications system offers an unparalleled opportunity to unlock UK skills and productivity and produce a thriving and sustainable economy.

In redesigning post-16 qualifications, there is a unique chance to tailor curriculum, subject design and teaching delivery methods to meet the complex needs of learners, as well as the evolving requirements of employers in a rapidly transitioning economy. It also presents a golden opportunity to think about the many ways the assessment and awarding of qualifications could be evolved to better suit learners and employer's needs. Therefore, it is absolutely essential that the ABS is designed innovatively, harnessing the powers of technology to transform educational experiences.

The aims and objectives of the ABS are to be largely supported – addressing skills and attainment gaps and ensuring more young people progress into quality work are aimed at the right problem. There are not enough people with the skills the UK needs for the future of work. 82% of businesses identify qualifications and skills as the reason they struggle to find the talent they need, and recruiting skilled staff is the second biggest barrier to SMEs growing their businesses.

The proposed reforms do present some challenges. Currently, too much of the assessment or qualification system is focused on 'all or nothing' final exams that often don't show individuals true capabilities and do not evidence the skills and learning acquired in a way that is useful to future employers. This approach requires a burdensome and intimidating commitment in time and resources that deters individuals and employers from investing in skills throughout their lives. This experience from 16 to 19 often leaves people with a lifelong distaste for learning.

Reforms to curriculum are to be welcomed as they address some of the inflexibility and irrelevance of existing qualifications. The inflexibility of the skills system results in assessment and qualifications that are too rigid in time and scope, with funding that is not financially sustainable for providers. The system has not evolved to keep in step with the wider world and this results in learners who are ill equipped for the workplace, employers who are not able to acquire the skills they need and a student body who are put off future learning.

At Ufi, we believe the solutions to both these problems – the path to creating a more flexible, relevant, and engaging assessment and qualification system – can be found in better use of technology.

Learners benefit profoundly from the incorporation of appropriate technology into education across all levels and styles of subjects, from vocational learning to traditionally academic. Digital tools can transform learning by providing immersive, engaging, and intuitive experiences. Innovations such as

artificial intelligence and virtual reality offer exciting prospects for learners, but also education providers in streamlining delivery and tailoring learning. A chief benefit of embedding technology and digital tools into the ABS is its ability to create an individualised, personal learning experience to suit the needs of unique learning styles. A secondary benefit is a learning environment that meets learner expectations and equips individuals with the capacity to utilise tools and develop working styles that are in keeping with modern workplaces.

In an economy which requires modern, vocational skills, embracing technology as a core feature of the ABS' design and delivery also serves the needs of industry. It is essential that the ABS prepares learners for not only traditional academic pathways into higher education, but also for entering the job market. Robust vocational education designed and delivered in collaboration with employers can help learners to understand the wide array of potential careers available to them and prepare them for a successful transition from post-16 education.

Important too is ensuring that the ABS meets the complex requirements of learners. Education is not a one-size-fits-all, and it is crucial that individual students' needs and abilities are catered for. Technology provides the innovative opportunity to do so in an engaging, intuitive way. This is particularly important for those who require additional support, whereupon the power of technology can be profoundly transformative.

Chapter 1

11. We propose several overarching aims and principles that should underpin the introduction and design of the Advanced British Standard. To what extent do you support these proposed aims and principles?

Somewhat support.

Ufi welcomes the Advanced British Standard (ABS) as an opportunity to modernise and update the formal English education system. We believe that reform of the assessment and qualifications system offers an unparalleled opportunity to unlock UK skills and productivity and produce a thriving and sustainable economy.

In redesigning post-16 qualifications, there is a unique chance to tailor curriculum, subject design and teaching delivery methods to meet the complex needs of learners, as well as the evolving requirements of employers in a rapidly transitioning economy. It also presents a golden opportunity to think about the many ways the assessment and awarding of qualifications could be evolved to better suit learners and employer's needs. Therefore, it is absolutely essential that the ABS is designed innovatively, harnessing the powers of technology to transform educational experiences.

The aims and objectives of the ABS are to be largely supported – addressing skills and attainment gaps and ensuring more young people progress into quality work are aimed at the right problem. There are not enough people with the skills the UK needs for the future of work.

At Ufi, we believe the solutions to these problems – the path to creating a more flexible, relevant, and engaging assessment and qualification system – can be found in better use of technology.

12. What do you think is the most important thing that the Advanced British Standard could achieve?

It is vitally important that policy, regulation, and funding help to get more adults learning so that the UK has the skills it needs, and no one gets left behind. The ABS should ensure that young people progress into skilled employment, apprenticeships, or study. The most important change is giving the Government the opportunity to reassess the impact of qualifications and assessment on the UK's skills system as a whole.

Ufi believes in the power of vocational learning with technology at its core, the ABS is a real opportunity to incorporate this approach into the curriculum to help better prepare learners as the future workforce.

We want to see growth in the choice students, employers and training providers have, ensuring that learners have access to a broad range of options and new innovations like micro-credentials. This requires greater modularity, with more qualifications made up of assessments that are smaller and not dependent on high-stakes exams. People should be able to take and resit qualifications module by module and build the award that is right for them and their employers.

This will give the system the flexibility it needs to adapt to an ever-changing world of work. It also ensures that maximum value is gained from the investment in skills, meaning that learners can

evidence skills and learning in ways that are cumulative, helping to reinforce motivation and confidence and providing greater clarity for employers and learning providers.

13. If you have further views on the aims, principles and purposes of the Advanced British Standard, or anything else covered in Chapter 1, please share below.

The proposed reforms do present some challenges. Currently, too much of the assessment or qualification system is focused on 'all or nothing' final exams that often don't show individuals true capabilities and do not evidence the skills and learning acquired in a way that is useful to future employers.

Reforms to curriculum are to be welcomed as they address some of the inflexibility and irrelevance of existing qualifications. The inflexibility of the skills system results in assessment and qualifications that are too rigid in time and scope, with funding that is not financially sustainable for providers.

Learners benefit profoundly from the incorporation of appropriate technology into education across all levels and styles of subjects, from vocational learning to traditionally academic. Digital tools can transform learning by providing immersive, engaging, and intuitive experiences. Innovations such as artificial intelligence and virtual reality offer exciting prospects for learners, but also education providers in streamlining delivery and tailoring learning.

A chief benefit of embedding technology and digital tools into the ABS is its ability to create an individualised, personal learning experience to suit the needs of unique learning styles. A secondary benefit is a learning environment that meets learner expectations and equips individuals with the capacity to utilise tools and develop working styles that are in keeping with modern workplaces.

Chapter 2 – Section 1

19. To what extent do you support the proposal for Level 1 and Entry Level students?

Somewhat support.

20. If you have views or evidence on how students at Level 1 and Entry Level would most benefit from additional teaching hours, please share below.

Ufi broadly supports the proposals for Level 1 and Entry Level students, however, notes the importance of improving accessibility to make routes available for the learners furthest away. These students deserve an equally rigorous curriculum, with adequate support delivered to guide them into their desired pathways. Technology and use of digital tools can help improve the delivery of education to learners furthest away.

Technology can create more engaging learning experiences, particularly important to learners furthest away who may respond less well to traditional academic delivery methods or who may benefit from the additional support framework that good use of technology can provide. Furthermore, vocational, skills-based education helps to better prepare learners to progress to employment beyond education, improving the transition from school to work. This is especially relevant for Level 1 and Entry Level learners, many of whom may not be well-suited to further or higher education.

It is important that those students who leave formal education without any level 1 qualifications are not prevented later in life from gaining those qualifications. Transitions back into learning, later in life, can be challenging at the best of times. It is important that those students who did not succeed when in school are able to gain level 1 qualifications later, and through learning pathways that are relevant and practical.

Chapter 2 – Section 2

21. Once rolled out, we anticipate that the Advanced British Standard qualification framework will supersede the varied Level 3 qualification landscape for 16–19 year-olds (including A levels and T Levels etc.). If you have views on this, please share below.

Ufi found in our VocTech Challenge White Paper that the fragmentation of the existing skills system disadvantages learners and employers. Embracing collaboration and integration is key to streamlining and will also enhance its operation to better suit learners and keep up with the ongoing development of employer needs. This is a principle which should also be incorporated into the ABS. The current varied post-16 education system is not as cohesive or dynamic as it should be to best serve the requirements of students or the economy efficiently. Collaboration and consultation with key industries and stakeholders during the design process is crucial to truly understand their skills and knowledge requirements. However, the ABS should also be future-proof, and able to adapt dynamically to the frequently changing needs of the economy.

Whilst the streamlining of the education system through the ABS is a welcome prospect, consideration should be given to ensure that breadth of learning opportunities is retained. Choice is an important factor in any education system, and the current wide range of subject types available

to students is positive. Continuing to provide vocational and technical qualifications, as has been done with T-Levels, is important to serve the needs of individual learners who may not be suited for traditional academic pathways.

22. To what extent do you support the proposal for how subjects will be selected to be included in the Level 3 Advanced British Standard programmes?

Neither support nor oppose.

Question 23: To what extent do you support the proposal for how subjects will be selected to be included in the Level 2 programmes?

Neither support nor oppose.

24. If you have further views on how subjects will be included in these reforms at either Level 2 or Level 3, please share below. – do we want to prioritise certain subjects?

Ufi agrees with the intention to provide course content that is rigorous in knowledge and underpinned by the skills necessary for employment. Pathways into employment, from learning, need to be as clear as possible. A significant advantage of the existing system is the broad understanding of the qualifications and what they mean. They often do not provide specific skills evidence but are key gateways into further learning or work.

However, the presence of rich vocational learning is missing from the subject selection criteria. Vocational learning is vital for preparing students to enter education or the workforce, as the skills gained through these experiences are transferrable and applicable to many scenarios. Attention should be cast towards incorporating vocational subjects into the curriculum, with consideration of existing T-Levels and skills-based courses.

Our research with the RSA (Rebalancing Adult Learning) has shown that a blended, flexible and often non-linear approach to learning, supported by micro-credentialling and digital badging could provide more support to learners who are furthest from succeeding in existing provision. The risk with the approach to subject selection suggested by this consultation is that it will not provide students with the broad range of choice they need to not only adapt their courses to their needs, but also to provide them with a programme of learning that is motivating and engaging or relevant to future learning or employment.

26. If you have views on the appropriate size of subjects, including whether we should standardise associated hours, please share them below.

Subject sizes should be kept to a scale that allows for greater modularity. It is important for engaging and motivating students, that learners can build pathways that work for them. Breaking subjects down into modular courses helps to instil confidence in learners. We have found that often a lack of confidence is the main barrier to learning. Therefore, we advocate for small-scale subjects with individualised assessment. The particular strengths of this mode of subject design can be illustrated through a case study of Ufi funded project, iDEA:

iDEA is an award-winning confidence and skill building programme which encouraged self-development. Learners are supported to achieve badges and awards through engaging with the iDEA platform. Courses and modules are on a small scale yet retain the key features of quality and rigour which are necessary for comprehensive education. The concept can be scaled up to increase reach. Digitisation of badges and awards helps to upskill individuals in an accessible and interactive way. Learners can build a broader compendium of their achievement which can be shown to future employers, enabling them to better understand what potential applicants are capable of.

iDEA demonstrates the positive way that modular learning can transform learning, through breaking education down into achievable, small-scale learning, and this positive impact is echoed through other micro-credentialing research and deployment.

27. If you have views or evidence on how time for employability, enrichment and pastoral (EEP) can best be used, please share below. We particularly welcome views and evidence about how to support students with additional challenges, e.g. lower prior attainment or the most disadvantaged.

A challenging element of supporting learners furthest from currently succeeding, is motivating and inspiring people to engage in learning. EEP is a valuable opportunity to show how learning can be different and how it can have an impact on preparing for future endeavours. In our report, Rebalancing Adult Learning with the RSA, we set out how important it is to "provide social supports and triggers by ensuring in-person support for people accessing or transitioning between learning".

Incorporating technology into EEP would deliver the ambition to provide opportunities in a more engaging way, whilst simultaneously helping improve the digital skills of students. Ufi have funded numerous projects which can evidence the potential for technology to prepare students for the world of work in a fun, engaging way.

Ada, Bolton College's AI digital assistant, streamlines information delivery for teachers and students, addressing queries and providing updates. By accessing student data efficiently, Ada saves teachers time. Its success enables students to access essential information easily. Recent advancements focus on post-Covid support, with plans to extend Ada's reach nationwide.

Platforms such as Ada could be incorporated into EEP to help guide students through their transition into the world of work experience and offer tailored pastoral support in the college setting having a greater impact on learners furthest away, without overwhelming the capacity of teachers.

28. If you have views on how we can encourage employers to offer industry placements and what further support education providers will require, please share below.

There are opportunities, with technology, to support employers in bridging the complex transition between school and the world of work. Incorporating digital tools into the ABS curriculum will help to streamline the process and offer a broader range of experiences to young people.

Springpod, an all-in-one virtual learning and experience platform, addresses the gap between education and work experience in the UK. It connects young learners with employers, apprenticeships, and educational opportunities. Through virtual events, advice from employer

ambassadors, and virtual work experiences, Springpod prepares students for their next steps in employment or education.

This is beneficial as the school curriculum lacks robust employment preparation, leaving students without the necessary skills, knowledge, or experience to join the world of work.

Metaverse Learning, another organisation supported by Ufi, shows how VR offers realistic work experiences without the risk, cost or time requirements of traditional placements. Learners gain knowledge through participating in realistic work-based scenarios, developing practical skills in a safe environment. Metaverse has strong partnerships with educational providers and industry leaders, meaning content is of high quality.

Incorporating technology such as Springpod and Metaverse Learning into the curriculum augments the experiential offer from employers, providing a more rounded experience of work.

Chapter 2 – Section 3

29. We propose that we develop the English and Maths offer within these reforms around certain principles. To what extent do you support these principles?

Somewhat support.

30. To what extent do you support using the proposed knowledge and skills identified for maths and English to inform these components of the ABS? if you have further views on this, please share below.

Somewhat support.

Ufi acknowledges the importance of developing the English and Maths offer within the proposed principles, particularly emphasizing the significance of 'Breadth' and 'Aspiration.' It is imperative that the delivery of English and Maths, alongside other subjects, is contextualized to highlight their relevance for future endeavours, whether in the workforce or further education. Additionally, Ufi recognises the necessity of providing students with opportunities to not only consolidate but also expand their knowledge and skills beyond what is gained in education, aligning with the principle of 'Aspiration.' This ensures that students are adequately prepared to navigate the challenges of higher-level study and employment, fostering a culture of lifelong learning and personal development.
The biggest challenge to the principles that have been set out, would have to come from the decision not to include digital skills in the same group of core lifelong relevant skills. The UK workforce does not have the digital skills it needs. 22 million adults are unable to complete the 20 essential tasks necessary to engaging in the world of work. The digital skills gap is also unaffected by age, with young people just as likely as older people to be unable to complete work relevant digital tasks.
It is important therefore that the Government commit to raising digital skills alongside literacy and numeracy.

31. We propose that there will be a range of English and maths majors and minors at Levels 3. To what extent do you support this proposal?
Somewhat support.

32. How can we best support students who have secured lower Level 2 passes in English and maths at 16 (e.g. grade 4 or 5) to progress onto Level 3 study in these subjects?

Those who have previously struggled with subjects can often feel discouraged from continuing their studies, which could lead to a lack of engagement with English and Maths on the ABS. Ufi strongly believe that technology is key to providing learners with additional support.

Maths Kitchen, a Ufi supported project, was developed to support Functional Skills Maths learners. The project consists of a digital learning platform covering the relevant numerical skills. It evaluates individual users' knowledge level, recognising the skills they already hold whilst highlighting key areas for improvement. This results in a personalised learning experience with detailed guidance, setting learners up for success.

Incorporating programs such as Maths Kitchen can help to support students who require that extra help with their studies. It can meet students where they are, providing individualised support and

guidance which is tailored to their specific needs. By identifying their strengths and weaknesses, students can better understand the areas they need to work on, whilst also instilling confidence by realising where they thrive.

33. If you have views on how English and maths can be delivered for students taking the occupational programme, please share below.

English and Maths curriculums for students taking the occupational programme should be embedded in real-life work-based learning relevant to their specific occupational pathway. For students uninterested in academic pathways, it is unwise to expect them to succeed or be engaged in a traditionally academic style of delivery of these subjects. Instead, positioning these subjects as a key part of pursuing occupational pathways helps to demonstrate the strong value of English and Maths, and highlight its relevance to all career opportunities.

York College developed a project with assistance from Ufi to encourage vocational students to pursue the study of Maths for non-academic courses. Short-form video content was produced in collaboration with employers, helping learners to recognise the value of traditionally academic subjects whilst also looking ahead to vocational pathways.

York College demonstrates the power of technology in crafting truly engaging curriculums which meet the specific needs of learners in Britain today. It showcases how Maths and English can be made relevant to students who may have otherwise disregarded their importance.

Government should not be averse to trying innovative approaches to learning that support alternative pathways. It is often the case that learners taking occupational programmes might not thrive in traditional academic settings, as such, the necessary English and maths skills they need to develop must also look and feel different.

34. If you have views on how existing Level 2 qualifications (GCSEs and FSQs) could provide the basis for two-year level 2 study for English and maths within the ABS, please share below.

Many of the principles of pre-existing level 2 qualifications can be adopted to provide the basis for two-year level 2 study of English and Maths within the ABS, however it is also crucial to adopt new practices and refresh the style of delivery. Two-year level 2 study must be carried out in a supportive, encouraging environment to ensure students remain engaged throughout the longer curriculum and achieve success at the end. Technology offers an opportunity to transform learning experiences. Artificial Intelligence provides the chance to individualise learning and create personalised pathways for the unique needs of each student.

With Ufi support, CENTURY has created a platform which includes adaptive initial assessment, allowing for teachers and students to quickly identify knowledge gaps. Following this, the platform recommends a curriculum to each learner, tailored to fit their individual requirements. This includes subject content which has been designed in collaboration with teachers and aligns with national curriculum and exam board specifications. Continuous formative assessment is utilised to maintain an understanding of student progress.

A programme like CENTURY could be incorporated into two-year level 2 study for English and Maths by providing teachers and students with a deep understanding of their initial knowledge and learning progress throughout the whole curriculum.

35. If you have further views on what students will study as part of the Advanced British Standard, or anything else covered in Chapter 2, please share below.

Vocational learning should be embedded within the ABS framework as it offers a dynamic pathway for students to acquire practical skills and knowledge directly relevant to their chosen career paths. Unlike traditional academic routes, vocational learning emphasises hands-on experience, providing students with the opportunity to develop industry-specific skills that are in high demand in the workforce. By incorporating vocational learning into the ABS, students are empowered to explore diverse career options and make informed decisions about their futures. This approach not only enhances their employability but also fosters a deeper understanding of the practical application of theoretical knowledge acquired in academic subjects such as mathematics and English.

This also helps to ensure learning remains inclusive, catering to the diverse needs and interests of individual students. Vocational learning allows for those who prefer practical experience to thrive in education, where their talents and abilities are better suited.

Chapter 3

36. We have proposed assessment principles to underpin the ABS. To what extent do you support these assessment principles? If you have further views on this, please share below.

Somewhat oppose.

Ufi generally oppose the principles, in specific disagreement with single end-point assessment. This is a form of assessment which only benefits specific types of learners and can be detrimentally stressful for students often leaving them with a lifelong distaste for learning that turns people away from the Government's aim of creating a culture or lifelong learning.

Excessive use of end-point assessment places enormous pressure on single moments, often resulting in unrepresentative grades. We instead advocate for a more flexible, dynamic form of assessment, with ongoing coursework assignments and continuous assessment, wrapped up with digital badging and micro-credentialling. This will allow for different styles of learning and performance to be fairly awarded. Offering learners a useful record of their achievement which can demonstrate specific skills to employers.

This will help to boost learners' confidence and reduce their anxiety towards learning, as it is a less intimidating approach. Additionally, this helps to foster a richer learning experience in the classroom as, with less heavy a focus on final exams, students can freely broaden their knowledge beyond curriculums. Whilst over-assessment should be sought to be avoided, endpoint, summative assessments are not the solution to this issue, placing undue pressure on students. Carefully considered continuous assessment in unique, creative and engaging formats is a solution which ensures fairness for all learners.

38. To what extent do you support the proposal that students will receive individual grades/marks for each major and minor (or equivalents) studied within the Advanced British Standard?

Somewhat support

39. Do you agree that students should receive some type of overall Advanced British Standard award? If yes, what value could an 'ABS award' add on top of individual component grades, particularly for higher education providers and/or employers? (Options: Yes, No, Don't know. Free text box)

Yes

Overall award style qualifications disadvantage students by not representing their individual strengths. They do not showcase the individual range of abilities which learners develop over their time in education. This also disadvantages higher and further education bodies, as well as employers, as it makes it difficult to see the specific skills, abilities and areas of knowledge where students have thrived. It would be fairer to instead use a system of connected digital badges to accredit students' learning, recognising their progress. This could be wrapped up in an overall 'award' but will only work to demonstrate meaningful skills if the underlying accreditation matches the skills learners have developed.

With Ufi support, the RSA has worked with various 'Cities of Learning' to help develop digitally badged pathways into and through learning in cities across the UK. In Brighton, they have worked with Navigatr to produce digital badging services providing inclusive pathways for young adults. This allows for students to represent their strengths and abilities in a fairer, more accurate way. A system such as digital badging can help to streamline the awarding process, whilst also providing a considerable amount of detail to employers and higher and further education providers.

Wrapping these badges up in an overall award can add value, but only where the underlying content is sufficiently accessible and where the award is representative of the learning contained within.

42. If you have further views on how students will be assessed and graded under these reforms, or anything else covered in Chapter 3, please share below.

Individual grading is important for students to demonstrate their strengths in specific skills and abilities. Employers and universities will be able to see the areas where students are especially successful, compared to overall average-based award grading which would not represent the extent of student's different strengths. Individual grading thus allows for those students who may be less skilled in some areas to not have their chances of success hampered by lower grades pulling an average down, but rather highlights the areas they have thrived in.

Ufi fully support individual grading, and advocate for this approach to be extended to full modularisation of subjects, with digital badging being used to support students in identifying and telling the story of what they have learnt. Moving away from an overall award-style qualification to small modules for each subject allows for student's abilities to be the best represented to employers and education bodies, instilling confidence in learners and smoothing the transition out of secondary education.

Chapter 4

43. What strengths in the current approach to 16-19 education should we aim to preserve under the Advanced British Standard?

We value some of the breadth in the existing system. A wide range of English and Maths majors and minors is a welcome proposal. Students should be able to choose options which suit their individual strengths, interests and future aspirations. Although the universal delivery of Maths and English is important, it is also crucial that students who are less confident in these subjects do not have to study them at a major level.

Consideration should be given to continuing to allow students to resist, or re-enter learning later in life. These students must have the same opportunities to succeed after they finish. It is essential that the motivation and confidence of learners are addressed as people go through learning.

National Numeracy's "National Numeracy Challenge" offers a fascinating case-study in how a digital solution can address low confidence levels in learners. By supporting and inspiring learners with small-scale resources, their confidence is slowly built over time. They have also created a network of digital champions, seeking to foster community through peer learning.

National Numeracy demonstrates how technology can offer much-needed support to learners who struggle in certain subjects, a valuable contribution which should not be neglected in a future system.

46. We are interested in the changes that may need to be made to deliver the Advanced British Standard for all students, regardless of where they live. What changes do you think may be required in the following areas:

46a. Buildings/estates? 46b. Technology? (250 words) 46c. Provider landscape? (250 words) 46d. Accountability arrangements? (250 words) 46e. Admissions? (250 words) 46f. Transportation?

b. Technology

Digital tools and technology should be fully adopted and embedded in the approach of the ABS to improve the accessibility of education, regardless of location. Technological innovations, such as video-calling, cloud-based learning, virtual classrooms, and simulated environments could help to ensure that no learner misses out. Technology and digital provisions can also ensure equal access to educational materials and books. It can also improve communication between students, their teachers, and parents, meaning learners are able to clarify questions or reach out for support when necessary.

Ongoing work needs to be done to ensure that the digital divide, does not mean that students who are less well-off are unable to access the opportunities that technologically enabled learning offers. This means ensuring that staff are effectively trained in how to deliver with digital tools, ensuring adequate access to devices and data for all students and making sure that students and staff have the essential digital skills necessary to use the tools.

Chapter 5

50. If you have views or evidence on the additional support that may be needed to enable students with SEND to access the Advanced British Standard, please share below.

Utilising technology can significantly enhance the support provided to students with SEND to access the ABS. Technology offers a wide range of tools and solutions that can be tailored to meet the specific needs of individual students, creating a more inclusive learning environment.

One crucial aspect where technology can be instrumental is in providing personalised learning experiences. Adaptive learning platforms and software can adjust the pace, level, and content of instruction to match the unique learning styles and abilities of students with SEND. Creating personalised learning experiences can help to ensure that they receive the support necessary to engage with the ABS curriculum effectively.

Assistive technology can help students with disabilities to access subject materials, participate in classroom activities, and complete assignments independently. These technologies empower students to overcome barriers to learning, fostering greater autonomy and confidence in their academic pursuits. This can be transformative in improving learner engagement.

Technology also benefits teachers, who can utilise digital data to monitor student progress and identify areas where additional support may be needed. Data-driven insights can inform personalised curriculum design, which is even more crucial for students with SEND who require targeted support that addresses their unique needs effectively.

51. If you have views or evidence on the additional support that may be needed to enable other groups of students to access the Advanced British Standard, please share them below. Examples of these groups include disadvantaged students and students with caring responsibilities.

Technology and digital learning can play a pivotal role in providing additional support to groups of students who might struggle to access the ABS, including disadvantaged students and those with caring responsibilities.

For disadvantaged students, access to technology and digital resources can mitigate socioeconomic barriers. Provisions of digital devices ensures access to a wealth of high-quality educational materials and online learning platforms. Additionally, digital learning resources can cater to diverse learning needs, offering interactive and multimedia-rich content that engages students from different backgrounds.

Technology also facilitates flexible learning opportunities that accommodate students with caring responsibilities. Virtual classrooms, recorded lessons, and online discussion forums allow these students to manage their studies around their caregiving duties. Furthermore, mobile learning applications enable remote access to course materials, enabling students to study whenever and wherever they have the time.

The personalised support offered by technology can address the unique challenges faced by these student groups. Adaptive learning platforms provide tailored support that meets diverse needs.

Teachers can also access this information, allowing them to understand the needs of individual students and provide targeted support for those that need it.

52. If you have views on how to ensure the Advanced British Standard provides effective pathways into post-18 education or study, please share below.

To ensure the ABS provides effective pathways into post-18 education or study, it is crucial to embed vocational learning and skills-based education within its delivery. By placing a strong emphasis on practical skills development and real-world application, the ABS can equip students with abilities needed to thrive in both further education and the workforce.

The occupational pathway is a key strength here. By aligning vocational learning with industry needs and standards, students can pursue specialised training that directly prepares them for specific careers or fields of study. This not only enhances their employability but can also create a strong base of knowledge for further education through advanced apprenticeships or higher-level vocational qualifications. Furthermore, fostering partnerships between educational institutions, employers, and industry stakeholders is essential for ensuring the relevance and quality of vocational pathways within the ABS. Collaborative efforts can lead to the development of tailored training programs and work-based learning opportunities which directly appeal to learners.

Technology is a key player in providing students these experiences, as interactive digital platforms can tailor learning to individual needs. Virtual reality is a particularly innovative opportunity in this area, as it can provide students stimulated first-hand experiences.

53. If you have views on how to ensure the Advanced British Standard reforms meet the needs of employers, please share below.

In a rapidly digitising world, it is essential for employers that prospective workers are equipped with technical skills necessary to contribute productively. For this reason, we believe that embedding vocational and technical education within the curriculum would help the ABS meet the needs of employers. This could be done in collaboration and consultation with sector-leading figures and key stakeholders in specific industries, who are well-placed to advise on the most important skills and abilities or students to develop.

Ufi funded project, NextGen Skills Exchange is a work-based online platform which delivers training related to the games, animation and VFX industry. With specific attention to the skills required by a particular industry, the project provides learners with a truly comprehensive experience which allows them to gain experience and understanding of working in the sector.

Embracing innovation through the utilisation of technology and digital learning is an excellent way of preparing learners for future work or education our modern society. This allows for the development of hard and soft transferrable skills which are highly relevant for several sectors.

54. If you have views on the impacts of the Advanced British Standard reforms on other groups of students who take post-16 qualifications, please share them below.

ABS reforms can have significant impacts on other groups of students, particularly adult learners and those who are furthest away from traditional education pathways. Utilising technology and digital

platforms can be instrumental in reaching these underserved populations and providing them with access to training and learning opportunities to enhance their skill sets.

Project Thrive, from Career Matters, supports care leavers to access vital training, resources and self-development through their interactive digital platform. Through providing their services with the assistance of technology, they can reach the groups of learners furthest away, prioritising accessibility and delivering support to those who will stand to benefit the most.

Project Thrive proves the transformative abilities of technology to deliver education to groups of learners who require different pedagogical approaches.

58. If you have further views on anything else associated with the Advanced British Standard not covered in the questions throughout the consultation, please share below. (250 words)

Ufi welcomes the ABS as an opportunity to modernise and update the education system. In redesigning post-16 qualifications, there is a unique chance to tailor curriculum, subject design and teaching delivery methods to meet the complex needs of learners, as well as the evolving requirements of employers in a transitioning economy. Therefore, it is essential that the ABS is designed innovatively, harnessing the powers of technology to transform education.

Learners benefit from the incorporation of technology into education across all levels and subjects, from vocational learning to traditionally academic. Innovative technological programs and platforms can revolutionise learning by providing immersive, engaging and intuitive experiences, as well as supportive frameworks that can enhance the face-to-face learning experience. Concepts such as AI and VR pose exciting prospects for learners, but also education providers in streamlining delivery. A chief benefit of embedding technology and digital tools into the ABS is its ability to create a personal learning experience to suit unique learning styles.

We believe the ABS must clearly commit to flexible and modular learning, underpinned by micro-credentialling and badging and supported by structured collaboration with employers.

The delivery of the ABS must be enabled by broader learning technologies, recognising the power of tech to support teachers and trainers and the importance of a tech enabled future focussed skills system.