

Full question breakdown

Numbered and lettered = priorities

Bullet points = to be commented on to the best of our ability, given the available information

RQ	Accountability	Curriculum
1	What is the purpose of accountability?	What is the purpose of the curriculum?
	a) What are the stated aims of accountability? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● are these explicitly linked to a stated view on the purpose of education? ● are these explicitly linked to stated theories about learning and progression? 	a) What are the stated aims of the curriculum? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● are these explicitly linked to a stated view on the purpose of education? ● are these explicitly linked to stated theories about the relationship between curriculum, learning and progression? ● Is the curriculum intended to align with national development policy? ● Who is the curriculum written for? ● Is the mandatory curriculum intended to adhere to any commonly recognised standards or norms (e.g. PISA/TIMSS/CCSS etc?)
	b) Are there particular values (for example 'fairness' / 'excellence' / 'meritocracy') associated with accountability? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To what extent is inclusion and accessibility prioritised and how is this approached? 	b) Are there particular values (for example 'fairness' / 'excellence' / 'meritocracy') associated with the curriculum? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To what extent is inclusion and accessibility prioritised and how is this approached?
c) What if any shifts in priorities can be found in official communications and documentation? e.g. a stated desire to focus more on 'basics', wellbeing, tackling underperformance.	c) What if any shifts in priorities can be found in official communications and documentation? e.g. a stated desire to focus more on 'basics', wellbeing, tackling underperformance.	
2	What is the structure of accountability?	What is the structure of the curriculum (and what is the level of control?)
	a) At what level is accountability directed? (Who is held accountable by whom? For what? In what way? And with what consequences?) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What measures of quality are used (see concept note) ● With whom is information about these measures shared and who are intended users of the information (e.g. are school inspections publicly available, are there 'report cards' and what do they include' are 'league tables' available to everyone at a school level) 	a) What proportion of timetabled school hours are generally dedicated to the nationally prescribed curriculum?

	<p>b) What are the most common types of accountability (eg market/regulatory/performance and single or multiple levels - see concept note)</p>	<p>b) What is the degree of detail/extent of prescription?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> at what level(s) of the system is detail/prescription added (i.e. what does the national policy say should be done at federal government, state, district, school/school group level)
	<p>c) What mechanisms are used or assumed to link accountability to improvement and is there a plan for how these different mechanisms are intended to interact or relate to each other?¹</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Setting Standards and Norms Giving Feedback Sanctions and Rewards (and formal/informal pressure) Building capacity and providing support/resources Sharing good practice and learning Stakeholder voice, choice and action (and related competitive pressure) 	<p>c) What is mandatory at which stage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Which (if any) subjects are mandatory at which stage? Are any '21st century' skills, competencies or dispositions included in the curriculum and if so, in what form? Is there a requirement for cross curricular or extracurricular activity? At what stage do vocational/academic skills become mandatory or optional?
	<p>d) Is there a distinct regulatory/school authorisation function – what is the relationship between the reporting function and regulatory function?</p>	<p>d) To what extent, if any, are schools able to exercise discretion – or innovate around the (mandatory/non-mandatory) curriculum?</p>
		<p>e) How do learners progress between grades/years/stages?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is progression understood as something separate from movement through the school system? (i.e. Levels or stages that indicate capabilities rather than year group) What information is progression based on? Which progressions require certification?
3	How is accountability policy made and introduced?	How is curriculum policy made and introduced?

¹Ehren, M. C. M., Altrichter, H., Mcnamara, G., & O'Hara, J. (2013). Impact of school inspections on improvement of schools—describing assumptions on causal mechanisms in six European countries. *Educational Assessment, Evaluation and Accountability*, 25. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11092-012-9156-4>; Jones, K., & Tymms, P. (2014). Ofsted's role in promoting school improvement: the mechanisms of the school inspection system in England. *Oxford Review of Education*, 40(3), 315–330. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03054985.2014.911726>

	<p>a) What is the process for managing change in accountability policy and which, if any, bodies exist to manage this process?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How is the body with responsibility for accountability policy constituted, appointed, and governed (if applicable)? • Who else is normally involved and why? • How often is change/review (major and minor) planned to take place? • Are all forms of accountability considered together? 	<p>a) What is the process for managing change in curriculum policy and which, if any, bodies exist to manage this process?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How is the body with responsibility for curriculum policy constituted, appointed, and governed (if applicable)? • Who else is normally involved and why? • How often is change/review (major and minor) planned to take place? • Does it take place iteratively and continuously or through one off events /Are all subjects considered together?
	<p>b) How was the most recent accountability reform designed and implemented, and who was involved?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What process and stages took place? (What precipitated the reforms? Were changes/reforms pilot tested before full implementation? Were changes/reforms pilot tested before full implementation? If so did piloting lead to revisions?) • Which groups of stakeholders and experts or what research were consulted and how much input did they have? What was the rationale behind this? What happened as a result? • Did the process follow a standardised process and do reviews happen on a specified timescale (e.g. is there a set date for the next review?) 	<p>b) How was the most recent curriculum designed and implemented, and who was involved?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What process and stages took place? (What precipitated the reforms? Were changes/reforms pilot tested before full implementation? If so did piloting lead to revisions?) • Which stakeholders and experts were consulted and how much input did they have? What was the rationale behind this? What happened as a result? • Did the process follow a standardised process and do reviews happen on a specified timescale (e.g. is there a set date for the next review?) • What mechanisms were used to implement the curriculum? (e.g documentation/resources/training/inspection/mandated textbooks?)
<p>4.</p>	<p>How is accountability policy evaluated?</p> <p>a) Are there regular or ad-hoc assessments of the accountability system's effectiveness?</p> <p>b) Are these evaluations done internally or by an independent partner, outside of government?</p> <p>c) What, if any, success metrics are used to assess the effectiveness of the accountability system?</p> <p>d) How if at all, are unintended consequences (e.g. on leadership and teacher agency and motivation) monitored?</p>	<p>How is curriculum policy evaluated</p> <p>a) Are there regular or ad-hoc assessments of the curriculum system's effectiveness?</p> <p>b) Are these evaluations done internally or by an independent partner, outside of government?</p> <p>c) What, if any, success metrics are used to assess the effectiveness of the curriculum?</p> <p>d) How if at all, are unintended consequences monitored?</p>

	e) To what extent is there evidence that policy evaluation has led to changes in policy?	e) To what extent is there evidence that policy evaluation has led to changes in policy?
5	How does context shape accountability policy and reform?	How does context shape curriculum policy and reform?
	a) How have historic and cultural factors, including the country's 'education policy orientation' influenced its accountability system?	a) How have historic and cultural factors and the country's 'education policy orientation' influenced its curriculum system?
	b) How has context (including political circumstances - eg electoral cycle) shaped (and how is context shaping) recent (and upcoming) accountability reforms?	b) How has context (including political circumstances - eg electoral cycle) shaped (and how is context shaping) recent (and upcoming) curriculum reforms?
	c) What level of coherence ² is there with other elements of the education system?	c) What level of coherence ² is there with other elements of the education system?
6.	What is the evidence about the effects of the accountability system?	What is the evidence about the effects of the curriculum system?
	a) What does research from each jurisdiction say about the intended and unintended impact of the accountability system on outcomes including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● student performance (both overall and for different groups - eg equity; and including '21st century skills' where data is available - eg creativity) ● students' engagement, attendance and motivation to learn, (including different groups of students) , ● psychological outcomes for teachers and students (e.g., stress, anxiety, academic self-concept)? ● the teaching workforce (e.g. teacher performance, recruitment and retention) 	a) What does research from each jurisdiction say about the intended and unintended impact of the curriculum on outcomes including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● student performance (both overall and for different groups - eg equity; and including '21st century skills' where data is available - eg creativity) ● students' engagement, attendance and motivation to learn, (including different groups of students) , ● psychological outcomes for teachers and students (e.g., stress, anxiety, academic self-concept)? ● the teaching workforce (e.g. teacher performance, recruitment and retention)
	b) Looking across jurisdictions, what themes emerge from the available research evidence relating to the impact of accountability systems?	
	c) What does research from each jurisdiction say about key stakeholders' (e.g., students, headteachers, teachers) views and experiences of each country's accountability system. Including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● divergences between stated and unstated aims (cf. RQ1) ● differences in views on the purpose of accountability (cf. RQ1) 	b) What does research from each jurisdiction say about key stakeholders' (e.g., students, headteachers, teachers) views and experiences of each country's curriculum system. Including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● divergences between stated and unstated aims (cf. RQ1) ● differences in views on the purpose of curriculum (cf. RQ1)

² Oates, T. (2010). Could do better: Using international comparisons to refine the National Curriculum in England.

<https://www.cambridgeassessment.org.uk/Images/124223-tim-oates-paper-could-do-better-using-international-comparisons-to-refine-the-national-curriculum-in-england.pdf>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • what are the main criticisms of the system (including criticisms of how the system was developed where relevant) • the extent to which the <i>intended</i> mechanisms for linking accountability to improvement align with <i>perceived reality</i>? (cf. RQ2c) • The interaction between different forms of accountability (e.g. do multiple forms amplify/exacerbate each other or pull in different directions) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • what are the main criticisms of the system (including criticisms of how the system was developed where relevant)
	d) Looking across jurisdictions, what themes emerge from the available research evidence relating to stakeholders' views and experiences of accountability systems?	
	e) Looking across jurisdictions, what does the research evidence and stakeholder interviews tell us about the context, mechanisms, and outcomes of accountability systems?	c) Looking across jurisdictions, what does the research evidence and stakeholder interviews tell us about the context, mechanisms, and outcomes of curriculum policy and structures?
	f) What do causal studies suggest are the effects of accountability systems (in general)?	
	g) To what extent were each country's latest accountability reforms implemented as planned: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What were the key barriers and facilitators to the implementation of the policy? • How much fidelity was there to the policy plan, and to what extent were plans adapted as they are enacted? 	d) To what extent were each country's latest curriculum reforms implemented as planned: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What were the key barriers and facilitators to the implementation of the policy • How much fidelity was there to the policy plan, and to what extent were plans adapted as they are enacted, including by schools?