

Humanities AoLE:

Submission to Curriculum &
Assessment Group: 4 December 2017

(Revised following CAG feedback during AoLE workshop 11 December 2017)

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Introduction

Introduction – Outline of approaches taken during the Autumn term 2017

During the Summer term the Humanities AoLE group commissioned a number of papers from identified experts across the Humanities domain areas. The brief provided to these experts was to provide clarity on ‘what matters’ within the constituent humanities disciplines: - Geography, History, RE, Business and Social Studies.

A list of these papers is provided below: -

- Eleanor Rawling - *Commissioned Work on the Geography Curriculum*
- Geographical Association – *Geographical Association and the Big Ideas*
- Dr Barbara Wintersgill (Exeter University) – *Big Ideas for RE Education*
- Dr Elin Jones – *The Essentials of History*
- Professor Calvin Jones (Cardiff University Business School) - *Business and the Economy in the Donaldson Curriculum*
- Dr Claire Sinnema (University of Auckland)
 - i) *Social Studies within the Humanities Area of Learning and Experience*
 - ii) *Designing a National Curriculum with enactment in mind*
- WASACRE (Wales Association of SACREs) *Religious Education: supporting the early stages of the process of developing the Humanities’ AoLE*

The group also considered: -

- Dr Joseph Smith:- *What remains of history? Historical epistemology and historical understanding in Scotland's Curriculum for Excellence*
- A presentation from Professor Mark Priestley provided to AoLE Leads – *Developing the Curriculum, Concepts and Practices.*
- Selected sections from: - Wiggins, G and McTighe, J (2005) *Understanding by Design*; Alexandria VA: ASCD (to provide theoretical underpinning and help group to understand the origin of ‘big ideas’ in the curriculum.)

During the Autumn term the Humanities AoLE group invited many of the contributors above to present to the group, in order to contextualise the papers. The following individuals presented to the group.

- Gill Miller (Geographical Association)
- Eleanor Rawling (Independent Curriculum Consultant)
- Dr Elin Jones
- Professor Calvin Jones (Cardiff University)
- WASACRE

The group also received feedback on task 1, statement of how the AoLE supports the 4 purposes from Dr. Claire Sinnema and the initial drafting of 'what matters' concepts for History from Dr. Joseph Smith.

During the workshop sessions the groups work on the following tasks:-

Dates	Key Activities
September 27/28	What do we mean by 'Big Ideas' and how does this related to 'What matters' in the curriculum? Consideration of 'What Matters' in History and Geography A summary of the research on learning progression in Humanities from the Camau Project
October 17/18	Consideration of 'What Matters' in Business and Social Studies
November 13/14	Consideration of 'What Matters' in RE Consolidation of learning to develop 'What Matters' in the Humanities, with development of supporting narratives.
December 13/14	Consideration of 'What Matters' following comments received from Curriculum and Assessment Group (CAG) and instigating the CAMAU process.

As outlined in the table above the group started by asking the question 'what matters?' within the constituent Humanities subjects (as defined within Successful Futures). At each 2-day workshop session, the days were split to allow the presentation of new material to the group e.g. the commissioned papers and presentation, but also the opportunity for sense-making. This was essential as

practitioners needed to develop a common understanding of the constituent disciplines with a view to deducing 'what matters' from the point of view of the Humanities as a more integrated entity.

Response from CAG (December 2017)

The group has revisited the original statements following the views expressed by the Curriculum and Assessment Group in December who provided the following comments

- The supporting narratives clearly reflect the four purposes
- There is a need to revisit and review the statements to ensure that more of the narrative comments/messages are evident (messages have been lost between the two)
- The degree to which the What Matters statements reflect specificity, whilst allowing teacher autonomy continues to be a challenge.
- There is a need to consider the guiding principles including pedagogy and topic guides

As a result these are now the current draft revised statements. As you can see the group were not able to complete all their work in the time allocated so they will revisit this work in early January 18.

1. A statement defining 'what matters' in the context of the AoLE

The group refined task 1 from the initial report developed in the Summer term, on the basis of the feedback provided by Dr Claire Sinnema, University of Auckland).

Through exploring 'what matters' about the Humanities, pupils will study the past and present, and imagine possible futures, and will learn about people, place, time and beliefs.

Pupils will build, communicate and apply effectively, a solid base of knowledge and understanding of different times, places and beliefs, in order to become **ambitious, capable learners**.

They will develop a range of skills and dispositions, to become **enterprising, creative contributors**, in order to improve the everyday lives of people in their local community, Wales and in the wider world.

Through understanding and respecting different beliefs and understanding how to exercise their democratic rights and responsibilities, pupils will become **ethical, informed citizens**.

By developing personal stances on matters of faith, spirituality, sustainability and social inclusion they will become **healthy, confident individuals**, ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society.

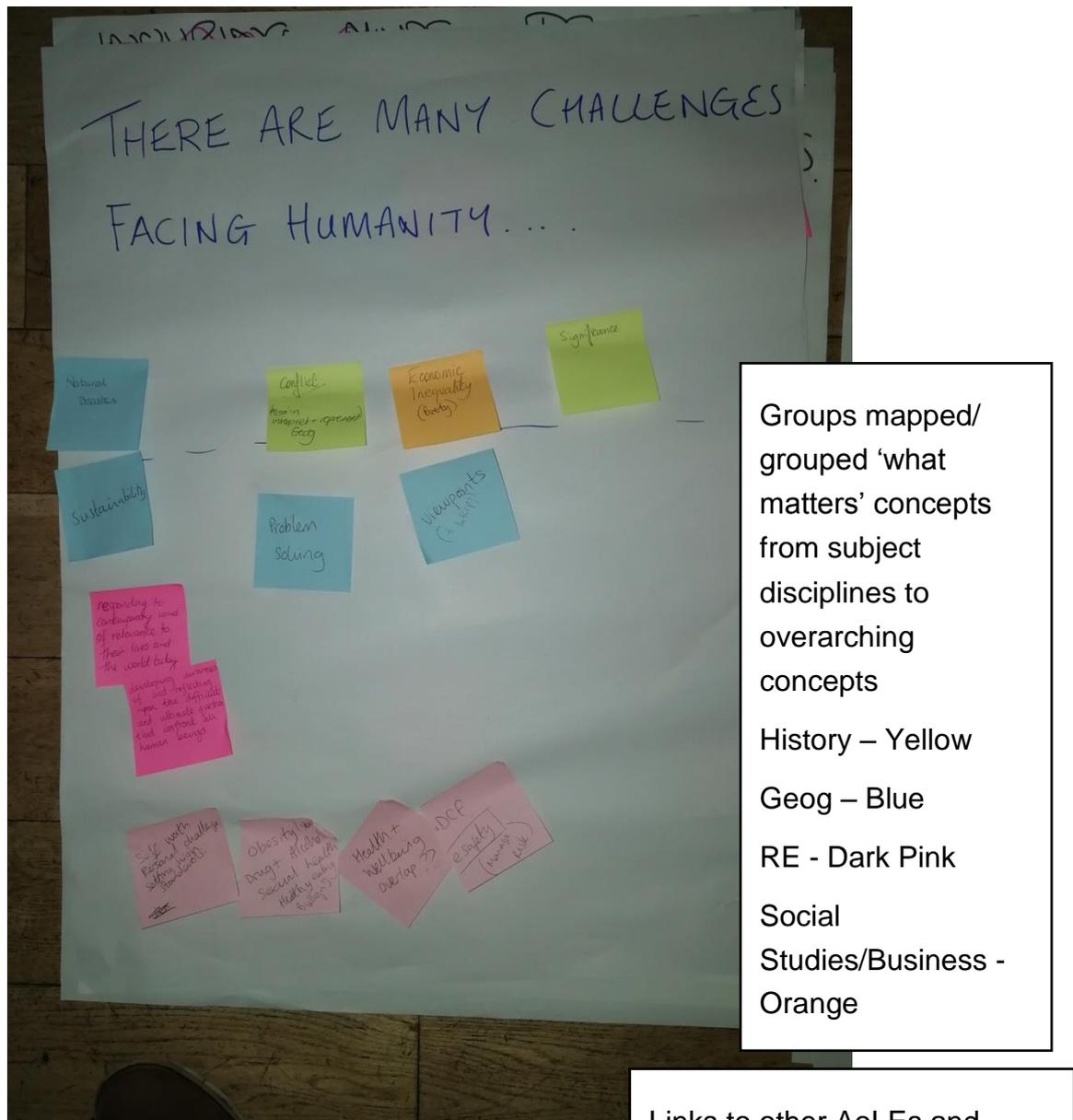
Pupils will:

- understand historical, geographical, political, economic, religious and societal concepts.
- explore their environment to further develop their sense of place and well-being.
- engage in learning experiences about rights, values, ethics, beliefs, religion, philosophy and spirituality.
- consider, explore and make informed choices regarding sustainability and the impact of their actions.
- positively contribute to their community and critically engage with local, national and global issues to become a responsible citizen of Wales and the wider world.

2. Initial titles for strands of ‘what matters’

The group has developed six ‘What Matters’ concepts, that attempt to fully integrate and give meaning to the humanities as a coherent entity. These were developed through a process of abstraction from the starting point of ‘what matters’ from the vantage point of the constituent disciplines.

This process is best illustrated through consideration of the annotated photograph below:-



Links to other AoLEs and opportunities for CCR development identified (in outline – Light Pink)

It was accepted that some of the 'concepts' identified would be evident across more than one of the groups 'What Matters' concepts e.g. sustainability and conflict.

6 Revised statement following CAG comments

- 1) Continuity, change and diversity impact on our world
- 2) Society is influenced by community, culture and power
- 3) Humanity faces many challenges that require informed and considered responses
- 4) People interpret and represent the world in different ways
- 5) Developing inquiring minds allows people to make sense of and engage with the world around them
- 6) Responsible citizens are ethically informed, critical thinkers and play an active part in society

1. Continuity, change and diversity impact on our world

Rationale:

Understanding the complexities and connections of the past, present and future of our world are important to the Humanities AoLE. It is necessary to consider this in the context of the physical and human environment. Understanding the processes that shape the physical landscape and awareness of how human actions can be influenced by diverse beliefs, values and philosophies is essential. The consideration of the Humanities disciplines allows identification, understanding and analysis of causes, continuity and effects of change. Innovation and technological developments have and will continue to shape our diverse world. The appreciation of future challenges and opportunities on a local, national and global scale support a sound empathetic understanding of the lives of others, now and in the future.

2. Society is influenced by community, culture and power

Rationale:

Pupils will become aware that interactions involving individuals, groups, communities, organisations, and nations have shaped, and continue to influence the

nature of the world in which we live. They will understand and appreciate the nature of interactions and their positive and negative effects on the local, national and global environment. They will ask questions, research, critically evaluate, and develop informed and considered opinions on the causes, nature and significance of people's interactions with each other and with their environment, on individual, local, national and global scales.

Pupils will identify, understand and explore interactions in the past to appreciate the significance of individuals, groups, communities, organisations and nations in shaping the world and its development. They will explore the impact of religious and spiritual interactions on the lives of individuals, communities, nations and the world. They will gain an empathetic appreciation for diversity within our communities and across the world and for the significance of spirituality.

(The group wants to undertake further work on this statement)

3. Humanity faces many challenges that require informed and considered responses

Rationale: -

It is important within the Humanities AoLE to be aware of the difficult and ultimate questions that challenge all human beings. Studying Humanities will allow identification, understanding and engagement with relevant contemporary issues that impact on pupils' lives, the lives of others and the wider world. It is important to ask questions, to research, critically evaluate, and develop informed and considered responses to the challenges facing humanity. To be able to respond empathetically, to the beliefs, actions and values of others is important in the Humanities AoLE in order to solve problems and resolve conflict. Humanities students will develop resilience and an attitude of open-mindedness and appropriate respect where appropriate when engaging with their own viewpoints and lifestyles of others. Pupils will develop the ability to form and support their own viewpoints. Commitment to our local, national and global societies and to the sustainability of the planet is an essential part of a Humanities education.

4. People interpret and represent the world in different ways

Rationale: -

In order to become critical, well-informed citizens and understand the way in which society has functioned, functions now and is likely to function in the future it is essential that pupils understand a variety of viewpoints and how these are shaped by different influences. In understanding this it is also important that pupils develop an understanding of the range of factors that have shaped their identities.

Studying Humanities will allow for the exploration of the complexities of real world issues and an appreciation of how these issues can be interpreted in different ways. Knowledge will be gained and an understanding developed of beliefs, teachings and practices enabling them to become conscious of themselves and of the views of others. The recognition and understanding of how identities are established and evolve over space and time can be developed through the study of Humanities AoLE.

Through the critical thinking and exploration of different perspectives and events, the Humanities AoLE will allow the ability to challenge and support these perspectives, as well as developing a critical understanding of the 'big picture'.

(The group expressed the view that this statement and rationale needs to be further reviewed.)

5. Developing inquiring minds allows people to make sense of and engage with the world around them

Rationale:

Pupils will ask fundamental and challenging questions. They will explore issues in an open, reflective, analytical and balanced manner. They will gather evidence from a range of sources, recognise bias, interpret layers of meaning and synthesise (make connections) information. Through critical thinking and analysis pupils will develop informed, considered and justified responses and be able to express their responses in a variety of ways. They will develop a conscious awareness of self, other people, the world and the Universe.

(Further work to be undertaken by the group to as they changed the statement but did not discuss the rationale – need further time to discuss and produce.)

6. Responsible citizens are ethically informed, critical thinkers and play an active part in society

Rationale: -

It is important that the study of Humanities develops active and responsible citizens who are able to identify with, and contribute to their community and the wider world now and in their future lives. To fully engage with their learning, pupils should identify ways in which they can actively address 'what matters' to them (and society) in the world in which they live. Ethically informed citizens are able to be critical thinkers, can respond to issues that they have explored across the humanities and need to be actively engaged in communities. Humanities allows the development of an understanding of their rights and to respect the rights of others. Understanding of their own and others legal and moral responsibilities and the consequences of failing to act responsibly is a part of studying Humanities.

Humanities promotes peaceful and effective engagement with, and within society.

Lessons will be learnt from the past and present; critically reflecting upon own and others beliefs, values and actions, in order to make ethical and informed choices. This will allow for responses through expressing and justifying their own feelings and opinions on the lessons learnt. Through studying Humanities AoLE, opportunities will arise to identify problems, create and develop potential solutions, and take appropriate action in respect of issues within their local community and beyond.

Links to other AoLEs

There are clear links with Science and Technology, in respect of the ways in which physical environments are shaped and changed e.g. Geology and Earth Sciences;

There are clear links to Health and Wellbeing.

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