



ATL response to the Draft Education (NI) Order 2006 Summary of Main points:

- **Curriculum (General):** ATL supports a pupil centred curriculum, and a partnership approach between parents, teachers, schools and governors.
- **Special Cases:** Teachers require training in both teaching and assessing skills for disaffected pupils. There should be appropriate staff / pupil ratios.
- **Entitlement Framework:** ATL supports the entitlement framework, and supports the improved currency and cultural value of “applied” education. ATL supports moves to break the link between “vocational” education and “low achiever”. ATL is concerned, however, that the collaboration agenda (between schools and with Further Education Colleges) may dilute the professionalism of teaching. In particular the GTC should look at the equivalence of the PGCE (FE or HE) qualification and the PGCE, as well as considering those who have no pedagogic or teaching qualification (such as instructors who have entered FE from the Government Training Centres). Undermining teaching jobs in the 14-19 stages through use of less costly (often casual) Further Education staff is a concern.
- **Curriculum Advice:** Curriculum advice, support and training is essential in moving from a content/subject based curriculum to a skills based curriculum
- **Information/Protection of Privacy:** Any increased data collection, monitoring and reporting requirement will cause additional workload strains.
- **Admissions:** ATL supports the Admissions criteria in principle, but considers that putting Admissions in place in advance of the “collaboration agenda” risks “*putting the cart before the horse*”. In advance of collaborative arrangements being clearly put in place, what will pupils be admitted to? With LMS and open enrolment remaining in place, funding mechanisms will continue to stimulate inter school, “*dog eat dog*” rivalry. The ideological dogma of “*contestability*” in the public sector is in danger of getting in the way of purposeful collaboration.
- **Admissions and transfer at 14 or 16:** ATL also considers that “Pathways at 14” will, inevitably, increase transfer at 14, and 16. ATL supports “middle schools” as a useful medium term ambition and is concerned that little thought has been given to transfer arrangements at 14 and/or 16. **Too much remains at stake at 11.** More fluidity and movement between schools at 14 and 16 will ease the “crunch” nature of decisions at 11.
- **Other issues impacting on Admissions:** Other issues which need to be tackled simultaneous to Admissions include:
 - Planning to facilitate the likelihood of transfer at 14 or 16
 - Inflexibility of PFI / PPP / Strategic Investment Board led estate planning – locking schools into long term private procurement and facilities contracts at a time of maximum uncertainty makes no logical sense PFI style contracts also reduce and impact upon professional control of space.
 - Mainstreaming funding to drive collaboration, between schools and with Further Education Colleges. Whilst the Vocational Enhancement Programme is interesting and welcome, it remains a programme with a short term “project funded” approach pertaining.
 - Requirement for Planning, for “sticks and carrots” – and for “capacity” (including partnership or “collegiate” management posts) to facilitate partnerships.

- Need for clear viability criteria, so that less viable secondary schools can opt to become neighbourhood “middle schools”, opt to merge, or opt to close quickly to avoid blighting children’s education, and avoid de-motivating teaching staff.
- ATL has concerns over “post code” criteria, unless catchment areas are sufficiently large to facilitate balanced intakes.
- **Expulsions / Suspension:** ATL is wholly against the proposals in the Draft Order – proposals which – where schools are unable to act – will inevitably lead to increases in school based industrial actions.
- **Further Education Governors:** ATL opposes payment for Further Education governors. Although understanding the “direction of travel” of the Further Education sector within “*FE Means Business*” strategy, the risks of moving away from voluntary governors will promote the profit motive and remove Colleges from it’s area based mission.

Consultation Responses from ATL Question by Question.

Part II CURRICULUM

General Duty relating to curriculum, Articles 3-13 p7

A Support? Why?

ATL supports the partnership idea between teachers, parents, school and governors and that a pupil centred curriculum is being put in place.

B Do not support? Objections and Reasons?

ATL is concerned that there will be insufficient funding available to bring these major changes forward. Teachers need training in both the teaching of specific skills and, more importantly, in 'assessing' of these skills

C Changes to be made?

ATL is concerned that a 'skills vs. content' balance be achieved to provide a platform at the later stages of school.

Children need to be extended to the highest levels in all skill areas at each Key Stage
Content needs to be given a higher profile, be assessed and as a foundation for future learning and key understanding.

Special Cases, Articles 14-17, p

A Support? Why?

B Do not support? Objections and Reasons?

C Changes to be made?

ATL has concerns regarding the time required to ensure curriculum "need not apply" consultations and the monitoring of and about pupil progress.

ATL has concern about what disaffected pupils will study?

Teachers need training in teaching and assessing skills for disaffected pupils

Reassurance is required on the Staff/Pupil ratios appropriate to deliver the whole curriculum Re: disaffected pupils.

Access to Courses for Older Pupils (The Entitlement Framework), Articles 18 — 22, p 1

A Support? Why?

ATL generally supports movement towards a wider subject choice, an "entitlement" for all pupils and supports the improved currency and cultural value of "applied" education. ATL supports moves to break the link between "vocational" education and "low achiever". ATL prefers the terminology of "General" and Applied" to the terms "Academic" and "Vocational".

B Do not support? Objections and Reasons?

ATL is concerned that the collaboration agenda (inter school and schools with Further Education Colleges) may dilute the professionalism of teaching. In particular the GTC should look at the equivalence as between the PGCE (FE or HE) qualification and the PGCE, as well as the issues surrounding those who have no pedagogic or teaching qualification (such as instructors who have entered FE from the Government Training Centres). Undermining teaching jobs in the 14-19 stages through use of less costly (often casual) Further Education staff is a concern.

It is vital that the General Teaching Council gives a clear view of these matters.

Equivalence of FE Lecturer pay with Teacher Pay

There is also a need to ensure that "Applied" courses and exams have a transparent equivalence of "currency" with "General" subjects.

C Changes to be made?

Students should be encouraged to have a broad and balanced education.

Certain schools may not have the resources to deliver applied, general and language courses – how will collaboration models be devised and will they be achievable, e.g. remote rural schools.

How will transport costs between centres be supported?

Curriculum advice & support for all grant aided schools, Article 23, p13

A Do you support? Why?

ATL would emphasise that curriculum advice, support and training is essential and necessary in moving from a content/subject based curriculum to a skills based curriculum.

Miscellaneous and supplementary undermine the vision of the complete process.

B Do not support? Objections?

C Changes to be made?

Information / Protection of Privacy, Article 24, p

A Support? Why?

ATL has concerns over the collection, monitoring and reporting of data on pupil achievement and the degree to which this could create a significant administrative burden on school administration staff

Information must be meaningful to parents – and parents must be involved in the process of change. Guidance and training should be provided in understanding what is happening. In assessing and monitoring skills, class sizes must be reduced.

B Do not support? Reasons?

C Changes to be Made?

Appeal Tribunals to consider complaints against Boards of Governors, Article 25, p

A Support? Why? No ATL comments

B Do not support? Reasons?

C Changes to be Made?

Provisions NOT applying to nursery schools, nursery classes in primary schools or hospital schools, Article 26, p

A Support? Why? No ATL comments

B Do not support? Reasons

C Changes to be made

Admissions, Articles 27-29, p

A Support? Why?

ATL in its previous submission broadly supports the measures taken, however ATL does have some fundamental reservations about the manner in which the Government, through DENI, appears to be implementing change (See below)

B Do not support? Objections and Reasons?

ATL considers that putting Admissions in place in advance of the “collaboration agenda” risks *“putting the cart before the horse”*. In advance of collaborative arrangements being clearly put in place, what will pupils be admitted to? With LMS and open enrolment remaining in place, funding mechanisms will continue to stimulate inter school rivalry. ATL also considers that “Pathways at 14” will, inevitably, increase transfer at 14, and 16. ATL supports “middle schools” as a useful medium term ambition and is concerned that little thought has been given to transfer arrangements at 14 and/or 16. Too much remains at stake at 11. Other issues which need to be tackled simultaneous to Admissions include:

- Planning to facilitate the likelihood of transfer at 14 or 16
- Inflexibility of PFI / PPP / Strategic Investment Board led estate planning – locking schools into long term private contracts at a time of maximum uncertainty - contracts which reduce and impact upon professional control of space.
- Mainstreaming funding to drive collaboration, between schools and with FE Colleges
- Requirement for Planning, for “sticks and carrots” – and for “capacity” (including partnership management posts) to facilitate partnerships.
- Need for clear viability criteria, so that less viable secondary schools can opt to become neighbourhood “middle schools”, opt to merge, or opt to close quickly to avoid blighting children’s education, and avoid de-motivating teaching staff.

C Changes to be made?

The points raised by ATL above are of a fundamental nature and may not be able to be accommodated by tinkering.

ATL has concerns over “post code” criteria, unless catchment areas are sufficiently large to facilitate balanced intakes.

Suspensions and expulsion of pupils Articles 30-33, p 23

A Support? Why? ATL does **not** support this provision.

B Do not support? Objections and Reasons?

ATL supports the view that suspension and expulsion of pupils should rest with Principal and Governing Body of schools, - not the Education and Library Board or new Super Body.

Principal and Board of Governors should be 'legally' advised in all cases

C Changes to be made?

ATL supports the view that an expelled student has the 'right' to appeal – we stress that while the 'appeals' process is taking place the student should not be admitted to school

There should be no 'appeal' for a student who is suspended

General Teaching Council Articles 34-36, p

A Support? Why?

All teachers should be fully qualified to degree standard and PGCE as defined by GTC (NI) and be registered with GTC(NI). This should include any Further Education staff teaching school pupils in or out of school.

B Do not support? Objections and Reasons?

C Changes to be made?

Further Education Institutions (Payment for Governors) Articles 37-38,

A Support? Why?

B Do not support? Objections and Reasons?

ATL objects to this provision.

ATL have concerns about that remuneration for members of Boards of Governors would dilute the voluntary, and "not for profit" basis of Further Education. ATL understands the direction of travel set out in the Further Education Means Business Strategy, but considers that the area based mission of the Colleges will be compromised by remuneration for Governors – particularly when no similar remuneration is available to school governors. ATL is also concerned that the Department for Employment and Learning does not have a good record in controlling potential excesses. The recent example of Andrew Smith, a member of the former Training & Employment Agency Board between 1990 and 2000 travelled regularly from his home in France for Agency business. The travel and subsistence costs for Mr Smith (who also held a consultancy role with the Social Security Agency) were, by any reasonable standards, unacceptable.

C Changes to be made?

Baseline Assessment of pupils Article 39, p

A Support? Why? No ATL comments

B Do not support? Objections and Reasons?

C Changes to be made?

Annual Parents Meeting -- Removal of existing requirement on Boards of Governors, Article 40, p

A Support? Why? No ATL comments

B Do not support? Objections and Reasons?

C Changes to be made?

DARD - specification of charges for courses, p33

A Support? Why? No ATL comments

B Do not support? Objections and Reasons?

C Changes to be made? ATL has no objections to this provision, so long as it is in cooperation with other Higher and Further Education institutions and that there is an equivalence in tariffs. There may be a need to seek 'clarification' in terms of who is responsible for paying fees.

Supplementary Provisions Articles 42,43 (includes registration, role of BoG's & information about FE Colleges: In respect of pupils attending another school/college for part of their education, p35

A Support? Why? No ATL comments

B Do not support? Objections and Reasons?

C Changes to be made?
