

# Preface

The BBC has been asked by the DCMS to write a submission covering our learning activities since the last licence fee settlement. It has been agreed with the DCMS that seven key questions should be covered:

- What does the BBC aim to contribute to society in the field of learning?
- Whom does the BBC serve through its contribution to learning?
- What investment does the BBC make in learning and what does that investment deliver?
- Through what outputs, activities and projects does the BBC deliver its learning contribution?
- With whom does it work?
- On whom does it have an impact, be it positive or negative?
- How should the BBC's learning contribution develop beyond the end of the current Charter period?

The submission answers these questions through its analysis of the strategy, approach and performance of three areas in which the BBC contributes to learning. These are:

- Formal learning output, which has specific curriculum-related learning objectives. This includes our programming for primary and secondary schools and for pre-school children.
- Informal, targeted learning which aims to create immediate, informal learning opportunities for every citizen over the age of seven.
- Wider programming from the BBC that has no formal learning objectives when commissioned but from which audiences nonetheless feel that they learn.

# Chapter 1 Overview

The BBC aims to create public value by engaging every UK citizen in learning from the cradle to the grave. We hope that our programming and output helps create a better educated, more flexible and dynamic population that engages passionately with new challenges and ideas.

The BBC creates a range of learning output because it aims to reach everybody and to engage them in active learning. This includes:

- Services for pre-school children and their parents
- Support for teachers, students and parents throughout primary and secondary school
- Help for the millions who struggled at school and are learning basic skills
- Integrated cross-media learning experiences that convert viewers and listeners of major factual programming into active learners
- Programming that introduces millions of viewers and listeners to new interests and encourages them to go further and learn more.

In addition, each year the BBC broadcasts 9,900 hours of general, factual programming on network television and radio from which audiences find out about the world around them<sup>1</sup>. This plays an important role in helping to create a well informed citizenship.

The services that we provide constantly evolve. By tracking changes in consumer behaviour, attitudes and interests, exploring the opportunities opened up by technological innovation and noting changes in market dynamics, we keep our learning services fresh and relevant.

We do not concentrate solely on the well motivated minority who naturally engage with learning. This is why we integrate our informal learning services closely into mainstream programming and use cross-media resources to make the first steps into learning as clear and simple as possible. This is just one of the distinctive aspects of the BBC's learning services. In addition:

- The BBC has created CBeebies and CBBC, which broadcast high proportions of UK-originated content making them distinct from other children's channels.
- We have brought a fusion of broadcast and interactive media expertise to basic skills, an area of considerable objective need, through *Skillswise* and our broadcast campaigns.
- Our factual landmarks and social action campaigns have pioneered the use of media across different platforms to maximise learning impact. We have created integrated learning experiences that bind together television,

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<sup>1</sup> BARB analysis / BBC Annual Report 2003/04.

radio, the internet, interactive television and mobile media to involve more people in active learning experiences than the BBC has ever achieved before.

- The BBC is an important innovator in learning. We are already successfully using mobile media to deliver revision support to GCSE students and will continue to find ways to harness new media for learning impact.

The BBC invested £142m in services with specific formal and informal learning objectives during 2003/04. Of this, £29.4m went into formal learning output and the remaining £112.6m into informal output. A further £371.4m was invested in broad factual programming<sup>2</sup>.

The BBC spends these licence fee revenues carefully to maximise their learning impact. We invest the vast majority to satisfy carefully identified audience needs, leaving a small proportion for leading-edge innovation. In schools we undertake a full review of output each year to understand the evolving needs of teachers and students and the impact of our previous spending. We learn from discussions with partner organisations and other learning providers across the UK (including Channel 4's 4Learning), from our own advisory committees, from comprehensive annual quantitative research and from specific qualitative work. We have recently completed an analysis of the country's social needs as we reassess our strategy for future social action output and we will continue to do this on an annual basis.

Partnerships are important both in defining and implementing our strategy. They are already an important part of our learning campaigns and events and will become more important still as we seek to increase the reach of our activities to communities across the country. Successful collaborations with partners have demonstrated vividly how valuable our external relationships can be, how they can add critical mass and how much we can learn from them. The BBC as a whole recognises that more effective partnerships can increase public value. Learning will be at the forefront of this. We will invest more time and effort in building long-term partnerships - as we have done with the Open University - and involve partners earlier in the development of major future learning services.

The BBC recognises the need to be increasingly sensitive to the market, particularly as media convergence and the proliferation of digital services create areas where the boundaries between public and commercial activities are unmarked. We are working closely with the commercial sector on major projects such as the Digital Curriculum and believe this sort of co-operation will be crucial in the future. We will ensure that the public value for the individual citizen and for society is always far greater than any negative commercial impact.

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<sup>2</sup> Consists of Factual and Learning, Music and Arts, Current Affairs, and Children's. Excludes programming with no obvious learning objectives.

We assess the performance of our learning services in terms of reach, impact and effectiveness and carry out analysis and specific audience survey work following each major campaign. Learning services tend to be more expensive than the average BBC programme since they are often targeting more specific groups. Generally we achieve solid reach, impact and value for money through our major services (see Table 1).

Table 1

<b>Service</b>	<b>Reach</b>	<b>Value for money</b>
CBeebies channel	35-40% of under 5s <sup>3</sup>	2.6p per viewer hour <sup>4</sup>
CBeebies online	1.1m users per month on average <sup>5</sup>	3.3p per user
CBBC channel	18% of 7-12s <sup>6</sup>	54.6p per viewer hour <sup>7</sup>
Television for schools	61% primary teachers 67% secondary teachers <sup>8</sup>	5p per student viewing experience <sup>9</sup>
Radio for schools	52% primary teachers <sup>10</sup>	Less than 1p per student listening experience <sup>11</sup>
GCSE Bitesize online	698,000 users per month on average <sup>12</sup>	23.4p per user
Skillswise (basic skills online resource)	70,000 users per month on average <sup>13</sup>	£4.40 per user
Landmark programming	14-36% adult population <sup>14</sup>	4-20p per first run viewer hour
Enduring online factual services	6,519,000 users per month on average	7.1p per user
Social action campaigns	Up to 41% adults <sup>15</sup>	From 8p per viewer hour <sup>16</sup>

A third of television viewers and an average of 44% of listeners to the BBC's five network radio stations say they have learnt directly from these services during the previous three months<sup>17</sup>. We have, however, relied too heavily on

<sup>3</sup> BARB does not record the viewing of the under-4s. 68% of 4 and 5/6 year olds have access to CBeebies (Review of CBeebies against Conditions and Commitments, submission to DCMS, March 2004). CBeebies reaches 35-40% of them – assuming reach amongst 0-3 year olds (not recorded) is at least as high as reach amongst 4-5 year olds (38.2% 30 minute non-consecutive weekly reach).

<sup>4</sup> BBC Annual Report 2003/04.

<sup>5</sup>“Unique users” refers to individual computers (identified through ‘cookies’) – the actual number of pupils will be higher since several people typically use one computer. Average per month across 2003/04; increasing since launch (March 2004, 1.47m users).

<sup>6</sup> BARB analysis.

<sup>7</sup> BARB / BBC Finance.

<sup>8</sup> BBC/NOP Annual Schools Survey 2003.

<sup>9</sup> BBC Finance / BBC / NOP Annual Schools Survey 2003.

<sup>10</sup> BBC / NOP Annual Schools Survey 2003.

<sup>11</sup> BBC Finance / BBC / NOP Annual Schools Survey 2003.

<sup>12</sup> Average per month across 2003/04; peaked at 1.8m in May 2004

<sup>13</sup> Average per month across 2003/04; peaked at 130,000 in March 2004

<sup>14</sup> BARB analysis.

<sup>15</sup> BARB / Human Capital analysis.

<sup>16</sup> BARB / BBC Finance.

<sup>17</sup> BBC Omnibus survey.

traditional broadcast and online measurement techniques to assess the impact and cost-effectiveness of our learning activities. Consistent measurement of learning outcomes will become more important as we seek to create greater longevity through our learning activities on the ground. This is an important area in which we must improve our measurement in order to track and continue to improve our performance.

When viewers are asked to place a value on learning services, they respond positively. Audiences place a value of £240m on CBeebies<sup>18</sup>, for example, whereas the service costs £7.9m and the negative market impact is estimated to be £2m<sup>19</sup>. Educational programming is ranked highly as a genre in terms of the value it creates for society – out of the 38 genres to choose from, education is ranked sixth, with only national and regional news, wildlife programming, current affairs and soaps ranked more highly<sup>20</sup>.

There are four themes to our future strategy. These will maximise learning impact by satisfying identified needs more effectively. They will do this by capitalising on technological innovation and building on lessons learnt during the current Charter period.

1. We will continue to develop leading interactive learning resources. The Digital Curriculum, a broadband, interactive multimedia resource for every child in the UK, will be introduced in 2006. It will become the backbone of our future schools service.

The *Creative Archive* will open up the television and radio archives of the BBC for use by the public for non-commercial purposes. The long-term aim is to create a national resource including public and commercial audio-visual resources.

2. We will build on the success of existing digital services such as CBeebies and *Skillswise*. The CBeebies website reaches 1.5 million unique users each month. We will add greater depth and structure to the learning resources for these important early years. We will introduce *Skillswise*, the service for adult learners, directly into workplaces in collaboration with employers and industry bodies.
3. We will create bigger campaigns with greater impact. These will be about social action and subjects people are passionate about and will be anchored in peak-time BBC One. They will involve hundreds of thousands of people in active learning.
4. Partners will be increasingly integral to the delivery of these campaigns and the maximisation of public value through learning. By creating stronger, longer-term and more wide-reaching partnerships, we will take learning into communities across the country and create the enduring impact to which both the BBC and its partners aspire.

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<sup>18</sup> Human Capital/Martin Hamblin GfK, A study measuring the value of the BBC, 2004.

<sup>19</sup> Oliver and Ohlbaum Market Impact Study, March 2004.

<sup>20</sup> Human Capital/Martin Hamblin GfK, A study measuring the value of the BBC, 2004.

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# Chapter 2 Formal learning

## 2.1 What are the BBC's formal learning services?

Analysis of the BBC's learning services is broken into the three areas in which we operate: formal learning; informal, targeted learning; and general output with learning impact. This is the first of these sections.

Our formal learning services are defined by their intent – all are closely linked to achieving a particular, defined learning objective or qualification and are often related to nationally set educational goals.

The BBC spent £29.4m in 2003/04 on formal educational activities. The core services are:

- **CBeebies** - the dedicated pre-school channel and branded zones on BBC One and BBC Two which encourage under-5s to learn through play, both on their own and with their parents. More than half of the channel's programmes have learning objectives when they are commissioned, and these closely follow national early learning goals.
- **BBC services for schools** - providing a backbone of high quality content and resources for teachers and students in both primary and secondary schools across the curriculum. Television and radio programmes for use by teachers in class have been the core of this service for a long time. Now the programmes have dedicated online resources to help teachers maximise classroom impact.

There are also stand-alone online services. *Bitesize*, launched in 1998, has become a central plank of the schools service. Originally designed as a mixed television and online exam revision service for 14-16 year olds and their teachers, the online service was the first in the market and rapidly took off. The original service was so popular among teachers and students that it was expanded to cover 7-17 year olds<sup>21</sup>. Last year, 69% of GCSE year 11 pupils and 64% of teachers used *GCSE Bitesize*<sup>22</sup>.

- **BBC essential skills services** - comprising *Skillswise*, a pioneering online service designed for the approximately 24,000 tutors<sup>23</sup> teaching basic skills and their students, and *WebWise*, which aims to help the 15 million UK people who have never tried the internet<sup>24</sup> to go online for the first time.

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<sup>21</sup> The original *Bitesize* service has expanded into services for 14-17 year olds (*GCSE Bitesize* in England, Wales, NI; *Bitesize Standard Grade* and *Bitesize Higher* in Scotland), 11-14 year olds (under the name *Key Stage 3 Bitesize*), and 7-11 year olds (equivalent to Key Stage 2; under the name *Revisewise*). See case study on p20 for more information.

<sup>22</sup> BBC Educational Tools, July - August 2003 (BMRB International). When asked, *And which [revision aids], if any, have you used?* (prompted) 69% of year 11 students mentioned *GCSE Bitesize*. 90% of GCSE students have used *Bitesize* in some form.

<sup>23</sup> Estimates vary between 20,000 and 28,000 (DfES). This is an average.

<sup>24</sup> DfES/Basic Skills Agency

- We are also experimenting to find new ways of delivering learning to hard-to-reach groups. We have developed outreach services consisting of seven Learning Centres and twelve Learning Buses to help deliver skills and other learning-related services.

# Chapter 3 Informal, targeted learning

## 3.1 What are the BBC's informal, targeted learning services?

This is the second type of learning output that the BBC produces. The BBC's informal, targeted learning services aim to provide relevant, engaging learning opportunities to every citizen over the age of seven. These opportunities are not connected to formal or course-related learning.

Informal targeted learning accounted for a total spend of £112.6m in 2003/04. The biggest elements of this are CBBC (£46.7m), factual landmarks (£48.6m) and social action (£11.1m)<sup>69</sup>.

Delivering learning across a range of easily accessible platforms is a major theme. We use online, interactive television and events on the ground in close coordination with television and radio programming to maximise our learning impact.

- Our **factual landmark programmes** include series ranging from *Pompeii* to *How to Be a Gardener*. They are designed to attract large audiences to factual programming and then take them on to closely linked interactive learning experiences.
- **Enduring online factual services** are linked to our factual landmarks but are also sustained services in their own right, often attracting hundreds of thousands of users each month. These services cover history, science and nature, religion and ethics, arts and lifestyle.
- **Social action** programming and campaigns engage audiences with important social issues such as basic skills, domestic violence, personal finance and obesity. The campaigns join together partners, national and regional television, national and local radio and interactive media to raise awareness and encourage the audience to take action.

BBC Radio is committed to social action programming across its networks and especially on Radio 1 and Radio 2.

- Our **continuing learning services** include *Sport Academy*, *OneMusic* and BBC Languages.

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<sup>69</sup> £46.7m is the cost of the learning component of CBBC, not the total cost for the channel.

*Sport Academy* and *OneMusic* encourage active involvement in sport and music, building on the popularity of BBC Sport and Radio 1 among hard-to-reach audiences. BBC Languages is a range of multimedia courses designed for learners at different levels.

- **CBBC** is a digital channel and branded terrestrial zone for 7-12 year olds. The concept of 'learning through fun' is at the channel's heart, inspiring children to find out more about their interests and the wider world. Informal learning is the objective of most non-Schools programming on the channel.

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