

A guide to the UK Education system

Age	Year/Setting	Key Stage
0-3	Children's Centre	EYF5
3-4	Nursery	EYF5
4-5	Reception	EYF5
5-6	Year 1	KS1
6-7	Year 2	KS1
7-8	Year 3	KS2
8-9	Year 4	KS2
9-10	Year 5	KS2
10-11	Year 6	KS2
11-12	Year 7	KS3
12-13	Year 8	KS3
13-14	Year 9	KS3
14-15	Year 10	KS4
15-16	Year 11	KS4
16-17	Year 12	KSSPost 16
17-18	Year 13	KSSPost 16

A Guide to the Education System

Schools in the UK are in most respects similar to those that you have attended or taught in at home. There are however aspects of organisation and Curriculum that will differ.

All children in England between the ages of 5 and 16 are entitled to a free place at a state school. The four main types of state school follow the National Curriculum and are regularly inspected by Ofsted. They include:

- Community Schools
- Foundation and Trust Schools
- Voluntary-aided Schools
- Voluntary-controlled Schools

Within the state schools system there are a number of schools with particular characteristics and include Academies, City Technology Colleges, Community and Foundation Special Schools, Faith Schools, Grammar Schools and Specialist Schools.

Independent Schools, also known as Private or Public Schools are funded by fees paid by parents. These schools are not required to teach the National Curriculum and have their own admissions policies. They have to be regularly monitored for standards either by Ofsted or the Independent Schools Inspectorate.

The National Curriculum for the UK

The National Curriculum is a framework used by schools to ensure that teaching and learning is balanced and consistent.

State schools are to follow the curriculum however they may teach in the way they think best meets the needs of their pupils.

At key stages 1 and 2 the statutory subjects that all pupils must study are:

- Art and design
- Design and technology
- English
- Geography
- History
- Information and Communication Technology
- Mathematics
- Music
- Physical Education
- Science
- Religious education must also be provided at key stages 1 and 2.

Schools will also deliver sex education, personal, social and health education, citizenship and modern foreign languages.

At Key Stage 3 the statutory subjects that all pupils must study are:

- Art & design
- Citizenship
- Design & technology
- English
- Geography
- History
- Information and communication technology
- Mathematics
- Modern foreign languages
- Music
- Physical education and science
- The teaching of careers education

The School Day

Generally schools start between 8.30am – 9:00am Monday – Friday and finish between 3pm – 3.30pm. There is no school on Saturday or Sunday in state schools. Some independent schools have lessons on Saturday mornings.

Breaks

Primary schools have a morning break, and some have an afternoon break or “play time” for approximately 15 minutes. Students tend to spend breaks outside if the weather is fine and schools make their own provisions if the weather is bad. You may be asked to supervise students during some break times each week. Secondary schools have a 20 - 30 minute break in the morning only.

Lunchtimes

Lunchtimes vary from school to school, but are generally for an hour. Teachers often volunteer to run lunchtime clubs. Schools in the UK usually have a canteen or dining room where the students can buy lunch.

Extra-curricular

Almost all schools have extra - curricular clubs. These include a plethora of sports, music, art, craft and environmental clubs. You may be asked to help out with club activities during or after school hours.

Extended Day

The Government is promoting and developing extended schools. These schools work with local providers to give access to a number of services and activities to help meet the needs of students, their families and the wider community

Every Child Matters

Every Child Matters is a Government programme to promote the well-being of children and young people from birth to age of 19. The Government's aim is for every child, whatever their background or their circumstances, to have the support they need to:

- + Be healthy
- + Stay safe
- + Enjoy and achieve
- + Make a positive contribution
- + Achieve economic well-being

Visit

<http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk> for further information.

Special Needs

Schools in the UK have an all-inclusive approach to students with SEN. Each school will have a SENCO (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator) who will identify students with difficulties. IEPs (Individual Education Plans) are devised for identified students. Targets on the IEPs will be reviewed half termly. A statement of Special Educational Needs identifies the students' needs and the help they should have.

The statement of SEN guarantees some TA (Teaching Assistant) support in the classroom.

- Sex education
- Religious education is also statutory

The curriculum also includes non-statutory programmes of study for religious education, based on the Framework for Religious Education, personal wellbeing, which includes the requirements for sex and relationship and drugs education and economic

At Key Stage 4 the statutory subjects that all pupils must study are:

- Citizenship
- English
- Information & Communication technology
- Mathematics
- Physical education
- Science
- Careers education
- Sex education,
- Work-related learning
- Religious education

The curriculum also includes non-statutory programmes of study as outlined at Key Stage 3. Students are entitled to follow a course of study in a subject within each of four entitlement areas.

The entitlement areas are:

- Arts (comprising art and design, music, dance, drama and media arts)
- Design and technology (comprising only that subject)
- Humanities (comprising geography and history)
- Modern foreign languages

Programmes of Study (PoS)

For each National Curriculum subject, there is a programme of study that describes the subject knowledge, skills and understanding that pupils are expected to develop during each key stage. These PoS will provide the basis for planning their Schemes of Work.

Teachers will carry out regular checks on students' progress in each subject as a normal part of their teaching.

At the end of Key Stages 1, 2 and 3 they will carry out a formal "teacher assessment", indicating which National Curriculum level best describes a student's performance in each area of learning.

This is compulsory for the three core subjects, English, Maths and Science.

National Curriculum Levels

The programmes of study map outlines a scale of attainment within the subject.

Assessment provides both the level achieved and the target for each pupil.

Assessments

At the end of each key stage students will need to undertake specific assessments.

- **KS1 Teachers** - assess students' performance in English, Maths and Science. This is measured by tasks and tests that are administered informally.
- **KS2 Students** - will take national tasks in English, Maths and Science (SATs – Standard Assessment Tests).
- **KS3 Students** - will not need to take a national test at the end of Key Stage 3, however teachers will assess performance in a variety of subject areas.

- **KS4 Students** –will probably sit exams for GCSE and / or equivalent qualifications including NVQ (level 1 & 2), 14-19 Diploma and for less able students an Entry Level qualification.

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16-19 years

In the UK, Education is compulsory until the end of the school year in which a pupil turns 16. Those wishing to continue may stay on at a secondary school, transfer to a local sixth form college or go to a vocational further education college.

Depending on the education the following qualifications can be obtained:

General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE)

The GCSE is the name of an academic qualification awarded in a specialist subject, generally taken in a number of subjects.

Advanced level (A Level)

An A Level qualification consists of 2 parts, the advanced subsidiary (AS) and A2 units.

An A grade will be awarded from 2010 to those students who have achieved both of the following:

- Grade A overall (that is 80% of the maximum uniform marks for the whole A level qualification)
- A 90% of the maximum uniform marks on the aggregate of the A2 unit scores

National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ)

These vocational awards are achieved through assessment and training. It is a 'competance-based' qualification which means you learn practical, work related tasks designed to help develop the skills and knowledge to do a job effectively. There are 5 levels of NVQ ranging from Level 1, which focuses on basic work activities, to Level 5 for senior management.

Diplomas

A diploma is a new qualification for 14-19 year olds. Designed to bridge the gap. Between academic and vocational learning. It offers a more practical, hands-on way of gaining the essential skills and knowledge that employers and universities look for.