Generic skills in the 14-19 curriculum: an international review

England

International case study

Generic skills description	None
Generic skills in the academic and vocational curriculum	Fragmented and linked to subject and vocational skills.
Skills teaching and learning approaches	In vocational education, use of practical experiences.
Generic skills assessment	Not applicable
Teacher autonomy	Autonomy lies with academy trusts and schools rather than teachers.

Sheffield Hallam University | Sheffield Institute of Education

CES
Centre for Education Systems

This is a case study of generic skills in 14-19 education in **England**, developed through a desk review of selected, mostly official documents. It is intended to be read alongside another 9 international case studies and an overarching summary report of the research *Sheffield Institute of Education* undertook in collaboration with *Centre for Education Systems* with funding from *The Charitable Foundation for Educational Development*. The project investigated how 'generic skills' are characterised, understood, and implemented across 10 jurisdictions, with particular reference to the relevance for England.

Authors **Charlynne Pullen, Mark Boylan, Lisa Clarkson, Sarah Boodt, Hongjuan Zhu**

Summary

The upper secondary school (14-19) phase is not a discrete stage in England. Instead, there is a secondary phase which finishes at 16, and then a 16-18 phase with a range of different learning institutions to choose from and broadly two pathways – academic (A levels) and vocational. Due to the way these learning institutions have evolved, there is significant local variation, meaning that the choices in one locality may not be available for young people in other areas, even if relatively nearby.

There has been a large shift in the English secondary school system in the last 12 years. Most secondary schools have become academies – schools that are publicly funded but privately run by educational trusts under government contract. Governance of academies varies considerably in terms of the number of schools in each trust.

Academies are not required to follow the national curriculum, but nearly all do, not least because GCSE examinations at 16 align closely with the national curriculum. Also, inspections by Ofsted focus heavily on the curriculum. National curriculum and assessment reform has emphasised content knowledge over skills. Previous versions of the national curriculum did explicitly include generic skills, for example 'thinking skills'.

Government policy allows teachers, schools, and trusts significant freedom in their approaches to teaching and learning. In practice, schools and teachers may be constrained by trust-level policies, and the whole system is strongly influenced by accountability and performativity frameworks. The result is that learners in different institutions and localities can have entirely different experiences of schooling, including the teaching of generic skills.

In the 16-18 phase, there is more freedom for schools and teachers, but vocational education settings take a more holistic approach to teaching and learning. In Further Education colleges, individual study programmes usually involve 'non-qualification' generic skills to complement the core qualification. Thus, vocational learners are likely to receive more support for generic skills than learners on academic courses.

1. Contextual Factors

We begin this overview of the country of England with its social and economic context and educational context in section 1.1. Section 1.2 outlines the key systems and structures of the education system and section 1.3 covers the education workforce and professional status. Finally, section 1.4 describes how policy on skills is formed and enacted in England. These aspects are discussed with a particular focus on generic skills.

1.1 Economic, social and economic context

England is the most populous of the four nations of the United Kingdom, with around 56.5 million of the UK's total population of 67 million in 2021.[1] Reflecting trends in western countries, the population is aging. England is also growing increasingly ethnically diverse; the proportion of people identifying as White dropped from 86% to 81.7% between 2011 and 2021.[2]

The UK is the world's sixth largest economy in GDP terms,[3] although there are concerns about limited business investment and strained public services. Real wages have only just returned to 2006 levels.[4] England has significant regional variation in its levels of employment, productivity, and prosperity, as well as demographic factors.[5]

Politically, England is dominant in the United Kingdom Government, owing to its population size and therefore the number of representatives in parliament. Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland have devolved legislatures with powers over certain matters including education.

The UK is unusual among other developed political systems in that its parliamentary upper house, the House of Lords, is appointed not elected. It maintains a first-past-the-post electoral system rather than proportional representation. Two main parties, Labour and the Conservatives, dominate English politics, with one or the other having been the main party of government for over 100 years. As a result, policies tend to shift significantly when one of the two parties is elected; this applies to education policy.

[1] Office for National Statistics, 2021 https://www.ons.gov.uk/

[2] Office for National Statistics, 2022 https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/ethnicity/bulletins/ethnicgroupenglandandwales/census2021

[3] World Population Review, 2023 https://worldpopulationreview.com/countries/by-gdp

[4] Trades Union Congress, 2022 https://www.tuc.org.uk/news/2022-worst-year-real-wage-growth-nearly-half-century

[5] Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, 2022 https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1052708/Levelling_up_the_UK_white_paper.pdf

Educational overview

Unlike in many other countries, English schools can be religious in character since the 1902 Education Act that brought Catholic schools into the public system. Currently around a third of schools in England have a faith designation,[6] the majority being Christian but some are Jewish, Muslim or Sikh. Faith schools can select pupils and staff on the basis of their faith.

England has a national curriculum which local authority-maintained schools must follow. However, the majority (80%)[7] of secondary schools are academies (including faith academies) or free schools which are not required to adhere to the national curriculum. Their quality and standards are instead regulated through inspection and league tables of progress and attainment. Inspection in England is through a government regulator called Ofsted which uses a common framework to assess each school and decide on a single grade from 4 (Inadequate) to 1 (Outstanding). At present, the majority of schools (72%) are rated 2 (Good) while 17% are rated Outstanding.[8] Standards of attainment are determined by a series of measures of progress in eight subject qualifications at age 16, and the proportion of students completing a specific set of five subject qualifications at 16 known as the EBacc.[9]

Young people who achieve lower grades at school are typically encouraged to undertake vocational education in England. The jobs that those opting for vocational education are being trained for can be considered 'working class', and there is a perception that vocational education is both 'class specific' and held in lower esteem than academic education.[10]

1.2 Key systems and structures

Curricula, assessment and qualifications

In the 14-19 curriculum there are two clear examination points. At age 16, the vast majority of young people sit General Certificate of School Examinations (GCSEs). At age 18 or 19, two thirds (62.9%) of young people complete a Level 3 qualification.[11]

i) GCSEs in England

Theoretically, academies and free schools can offer a wide range of GCSE subjects, but their provision tends to be shaped by the government's system of assessment which is based on progress and attainment in eight qualifications from five subject groupings.[12]

---

[6] House of Commons Library, 2019 https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/SN06972/SN06972.pdf

[7] Department for Education, 2023a https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/school-pupils-and-their-characteristics

[8] Ofsted, 2023 https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/state-funded-schools-inspections-and-outcomes-as-at-31-december-2022/main-findings-state-funded-schools-inspections-and-outcomes-as-at-31-december-2022

[9] As an example: https://www.find-school-performance-data.service.gov.uk/school/143963/the-birley-academy/secondary

[10] Atkins & Flint, 2015

[11] Department for Education, 2023b https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/level-2-and-3-attainment-by-young-people-aged-19

[12] Department for Education, 2023c https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1150803/KS4_Tech_Guide.pdf

These groupings are English, maths, science, a language (not English), and history or geography. Students usually take eight GCSEs focused mainly on these subject groupings, although other GCSEs can also be taken, typically in creative and technical subjects. Physical education, citizenship, and religious education are also part of the curriculum and widely provided for young people although not necessarily assessed.

Since 2015, all young people who fail to achieve a GCSE grade 4 in English and/or maths and who are not exempt (e.g., severe learning disabilities) are required to continue studying towards those English/maths GCSEs until they achieve a grade 4 or reach the age of 18, whichever comes sooner.[13]

ii) Post-16 education

Post-16 education routes and options in England are complex. The most common qualifications are A Levels, BTECs, vocational qualifications, the new T Levels, or apprenticeships. Some of the complexity is due to how qualifications are regulated. This has led to a lack of uniform equivalence (e.g. some types of BTEC are worth one A Level, some are worth two or three A Levels).

- A Levels are the most academic of the post-16 qualifications and used mainly to determine entry to university. Young people opting for this route usually study three A Level subjects in a school. These are assessed through examination at the end of a two-year programme.
- T Levels are a recent initiative with 16 currently available and an ambition for 24.[14] They are designed as technical versions of A Levels, combining breadth of understanding of the subject area with depth in technical skills, and work experience. Subjects or pathways include construction, digital, and health and science. Learners choosing this route typically study one T Level (equivalent to three A Levels) on a two-year programme at a further education college. English and maths GCSE study can be integrated if required. Learners are assessed through exams at the end of each of the two years, and skill-based competency assessments.
- BTECs are applied general qualifications which combine some academic/theoretical knowledge with practical application in a project or portfolio. Assessment is generally via coursework rather than examination. BTECs are offered at a range of levels: the most common are the BTEC National (Level 3 qualification) and BTEC Firsts (Level 2). With T-Levels now in place, the government aims to phase out BTECs but there are concerns for learner choice, given that some BTECs have no equivalent T-Level. Crucially, BTECs have been offered for decades and so are one of the few technical qualifications that many employers recognise.
- Vocational qualifications are generally offered by further education (FE) colleges to learners who want to progress into employment or work-related training. They encompass a wide range of vocational subjects, qualification types/levels and awarding bodies. The FE colleges

[13] Department for Education, 2014a https://www.gov.uk/guidance/16-to-19-funding-maths-and-english-condition-of-funding

[14] Department for Education, 2023d https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/introduction-of-t-levels/introduction-of-t-levels

design the programmes as training for an industry or occupation, typically including English and maths study. Learners who opt for vocational qualifications tend to have lower GCSE attainment. Often they complete a Level 2 (equivalent to GCSE) qualification before progressing to Level 3 or to employment or work-related learning – which could be an apprenticeship.

- Apprenticeships are still an option for 16-18 year-olds, but the number of young people starting apprenticeships has reduced markedly since the apprenticeship levy was introduced in 2017. The apprenticeship levy is a tax paid by large employers and used by the government to fund apprenticeship training. Since it was introduced, the composition of apprenticeships has changed, with fewer being available at Level 2 and more at higher levels. Even before the levy, only a small proportion (5-6%) of 16–18-year-olds were on apprenticeships.

School/college organisation

Secondary schools in England typically take pupils from 11-16 or 11-18, although in a few counties, children move to secondary school at age 13. At 16, young people move to a FE college (36.1%), a sixth form college (13.3%), or remain at a 11-18 school (39.1%).[15] In general, staying on at school means academic study, while studying at an FE college means vocational study, but there is some crossover. Schools and sixth form colleges mainly offer A Levels and BTECs while FE colleges mainly offer T-Levels, BTECs, and vocational qualifications. There is substantial freedom at most institutions to offer courses tailored to the local area as a result of policy changes including the requirement to map provision to Local Skills Improvement Plans.

The organisation of England's school system has evolved considerably over the last four decades. Most schools in England are comprehensive, meaning that all or most pupils are admitted on criteria that do not include prior attainment. However, grammar schools (which are selective) and secondary modern schools (often now called community schools) remain in a few localities where the local authorities refused to opt for the comprehensive system when it was introduced. Historically, all of these types of schools were under local authority control. Since the 1980s, many schools have become independent of local authorities. They receive funding directly from central government and often have other freedoms. This direction of travel began with grant-maintained schools, followed by city technology colleges in the mid-1990s, academies in the late 1990s, and most recently free schools.

The academy trust model was originally adopted by the Blair Labour Government in 1997 to transform failing comprehensive or secondary modern schools, and these academies were usually sponsored by a private company or organisation. From 2010, schools could simply opt to become academies. Now, the majority of secondary schools in England are academies. Many have joined Multi-Academy Trusts (MATs) whose responsibilities and oversight of their member schools are analogous to the role that was once performed by the local authorities. As noted

[15] Department for Education, 2022 https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/key-stage-4-destination-measures/2020-21

earlier, academies can opt out of the national curriculum and set their own curricula, but within the confines of the national quality and standards framework. Faith academies are also allowed to select pupils. Thus, these schools and their leaders have significant educational freedoms.

FE colleges were under local authority control until 1993 when they were incorporated, becoming wholly independent entities. There is still some confusion as to their status. Legislation in 2019 enabled colleges to become insolvent and close down, but in 2022 the Office for National Statistics re-classified colleges as part of the public sector. An area review process that began in 2015 has led to several mergers and rationalisations of FE and sixth form colleges. FE colleges are now typically larger and some cover wider geographical areas. Some have private training provider and commercial arms. Many sixth form colleges are part of larger groups, either MATs or FE college groups.

1.3 Education workforce and professional status

England currently has a shortage of teachers in schools and colleges. Recruitment and retention are problematic, with just over half of teachers (58.7%) in schools still teaching 10 years after qualifying.[16] In colleges, 5.4 teaching posts per 100 are vacant, with the highest figures in construction, planning and the built environment (12.9 per 100), electronics (12.6 per 100), and agriculture and horticulture (12.1 per 100).[17] Recruitment challenges are attributed partly to lower pay rates than in other, similarly qualified professions, and partly to the fact that teaching has inflexible hours and locations, unlike other sectors where flexible working has grown since the pandemic. It is also more difficult to be a part-time teacher in state schools, as only 20% of secondary teachers are on part-time contracts.[18] In colleges, part-time work patterns are more common – only two-thirds (67%) of teaching staff work full-time.[19]

Professional status and autonomy

Teachers in England must be graduates to teach in primary and secondary schools, but vocational teachers in FE colleges do not need a degree. A teaching qualification is expected and required by most schools and colleges but not always compulsory. Teaching qualifications for secondary teachers include achieving QTS, qualified teacher status, while in post-16 vocational education, the appropriate teaching qualification is QTLS, qualified teacher in learning and skills. QTS is a part of most teaching qualifications, including those offered as full-time postgraduate courses such as the Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE), as well as full-time school-based training routes. QTLS status is regulated by the Society for Education and Training. Applicants for QTLS require a Level 5 or Level 7 teaching qualification followed by about a year of teaching experience. To maintain QTLS, holders need to submit evidence of 30 hours of continuing professional development per year. There is no such requirement for QTS at the moment but there has been in the past.

[16] Department for Education, 2023e https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/school-workforce-in-england

[17] Department for Education, 2023f https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/further-education-workforce/2021-22

[18] Department for Education, 2023e

[19] Department for Education, 2023f

Teachers in England report having significant autonomy over how they deliver the curriculum[20] although less autonomy in their work than comparable professionals.[21] Specifically, they report having autonomy over planning and preparing lessons, which teaching methods or strategies are used, and to a lesser extent, the use of time in the classroom and rules about behaviour.[22] There is less flexibility concerning data collected on pupil attainment and on professional development.

1.4 Policy formation and implementation

The Department for Education (DfE) is part of the UK Government, although it only has responsibility for education and children's services in England due to devolution arrangements in the other nations. The DfE is responsible for education at all levels including early years, primary and secondary schools, higher and further education policy, apprenticeships, and wider skills.

The DfE sets the national curriculum for schools and the funding for schools through the National Funding Formula.[23] The formula takes into account various factors including number of pupils and school location. An additional amount is provided for students from low-income backgrounds – the pupil premium. Schools then have flexibility on how to spend the funding.

Funding rates for colleges (16-18 education) are set by a government body within the DfE, the Education and Skills Funding Agency. The Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education sets the rates for apprenticeships. Colleges are funded on a time lagged basis, so in a given academic year they receive an amount of money reflecting the previous year's student numbers on relevant courses.

Policy implementation

Policies set out by the DfE that will require legislation typically start as a White Paper, which is often informed by stakeholders and existing evidence, and subsequently becomes a Green Paper. Then a bill is put before Parliament. A committee of MPs work on the bill, with amendments from both Houses of Parliament, until the bill is passed and becomes an Act. The government usually brings together a group of stakeholders and appoints a chair to advise on the issues. These are typically political appointments, and in recent years there has been some concern about the nature of some political appointments in the UK Government.[24] Interested parties have opportunities to submit evidence to public consultations on White Papers and other policy changes. Parliamentary select committees, made up of members from different political parties, undertake inquiries into particular issues. However, much of the policy engagement in government recently has been partisan in nature.

[20] Education Policy Institute, 2021 https://epi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/EPI-UK-Institutions-Comparisons-2021.pdf

[21] National Foundation for Educational Research, 2020 https://www.nfer.ac.uk/media/3874/teacher_autonomy_how_does_it_relate_to_job_satisfaction_and_retention.pdf

[22] Ibid

[23] https://educationhub.blog.gov.uk/2023/04/26/school-funding-everything-you-need-to-know/

[24] Gill, M., 2022 https://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/sites/default/files/publications/reforming-public-appointments.pdf

2. Generic skills

The national curriculum for England is set by the DfE and must be followed by all local authority-maintained schools for pupils to the age of 16.[25] As explained above, currently 80% of secondary schools are academies or free schools and not obliged to follow the national curriculum. The national curriculum was originally introduced following the 1988 Education Reform Act and has been fully or partially revised regularly since then. Within it, there are set curricula for a series of subjects at different levels.

Generic skills are not explicitly included in the current national curriculum. This was not always the case. For example, the 1999 national curriculum specified 'thinking skills' to be embedded across all national curriculum subjects.[26] Thinking skills were defined as information processing skills, enquiry skills, creative thinking skills and evaluation skills.[27] Today's national curriculum represents a 'knowledge turn' in English education – that is, content knowledge has been prioritised over skills since 2010. However, individual subject curricula do specify certain skills that can be regarded as generic skills. For example, in computing, the age 14-16 specification states that learners should "*develop and apply their analytic, problem-solving, design, and computational thinking skills*".[28] The curriculum for citizenship education sets out aims that refer to critical thinking skills and certain desirable life skills and attitudes, in addition to aims concerning subject-specific knowledge:

- acquire a sound knowledge and understanding of how the United Kingdom is governed, its political system and how citizens participate actively in its democratic systems of government
- develop a sound knowledge and understanding of the role of law and the justice system in our society and how laws are shaped and enforced
- develop an interest in, and commitment to, participation in volunteering as well as other forms of responsible activity, that they will take with them into adulthood
- are equipped with the skills to think critically and debate political questions, to enable them to manage their money on a day-to-day basis, and plan for future financial needs.[29]

[25] Department for Education, 2014b https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-secondary-curriculum

[26] QCA 2000, The National Curriculum Handbook for Primary Teachers. QCA https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ukgwa/20130401042740mp_/https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/QCA-99-457.pdf, p.22

[27] Ibid and QCA 2000 The National Curriculum for England secondary teachers' handbook.

[28] Department for Education, 2014b

[29] Ibid

Academies and free schools have adopted their own approach to teaching generic skills. For example, the not-for-profit Skills Builder Partnership appears to have had extensive reach, reporting that 577 secondary schools and colleges in England have delivered Skills Builder programmes, while 87% of secondary schools and colleges have 'touchpoints' with its skills framework.[30]

Provision of generic skills varies between academic and vocational settings in 16-19 education. Schools teaching A Levels or a mix of A Levels/BTECs are under no formal obligation to provide generic skills or any kind of enrichment activity. However, schools can choose to provide extra-curricular support for careers, employability, or personal and social learning. Schools and colleges generally offer opportunities for A level students to take Extended Project Qualifications (EPQs). EPQs are awarded for student initiated projects related to A level subjects. Approximately 20% of students across different A level subjects do an EPQ. If EPQ in different subjects is considered a single qualification it is the sixth most popular A level.[31]

In colleges, it is a different picture. Study programmes for 16–18-year-olds involve a personalised curriculum for each learner. This has a BTEC or vocational qualification at its core, plus English and maths GCSEs if required, but also includes wraparound activities for generic skills to support the learner's employability and career progress, and for other enrichment and extra-curricular learning including sport and community activity. This pattern of provision is underpinned by funding rules that require a certain amount of guided learning per study programme for each learner, and the non-statutory guidance for study programmes which explicitly states:

> *All study programmes should include work experience and non-qualification activities that complement the other elements of the programme and support the student to progress to further or higher education (HE) or to employment.*[32]

Study programmes in this format were originally proposed in the Wolf Review of 2011. The non-qualification activity is designed to "*develop students' character, broader skills, attitudes and confidence, and support progression*".[33] While colleges have freedom to decide on the aspects of this provision that are most relevant to their learners, it is clear that generic skills as defined by the OECD would be included in study programmes.

---

[30] Skills Builder, 2023 https://www.skillsbuilder.org/impact

[31] Gill, T., 2022 https://www.cambridgeassessment.org.uk/Images/665814-uptake-and-results-in-the-extended-project-qualification.pdf

[32] Department for Education, 2023g https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/16-to-19-study-programmes-guide-for-providers/16-to-19-study-programmes-guidance-2023-to-2024-academic-year

[33] Ibid

3. Subject and vocational skills

Subject and vocational skills make up the bulk of the learning for students aged 14-19. The vast majority of young people take GCSE exams. The EBacc subjects taken at GCSE are a key part of league tables and Ofsted's assessment of schools, so these are offered by all schools and taken by most young people. These subjects are English, maths, science (including computing), a language (not English), and history or geography. Many faith schools also offer religious studies at GCSE. Other subjects typically offered include, art and design, design and technology, music, and physical education. As these are not EBacc subjects, or central to another school performance indicator 'Progress 8'.[34] So, they may not be taken as GCSEs or assessed in another way.

Between 16-18, the only subject requirement is that young people who have not achieved a grade 4 at GCSE English and/or maths must continue to study those subjects until they achieve that grade 4 or reach age 18, as explained in section 1. Other than that stipulation, young people can choose whichever subjects they prefer from the range offered by their favoured school or college on their academic or vocational route. This freedom of choice, particularly in vocational options, can be daunting for young people who may not yet know what they want to do, which is part of the logic for colleges offering personalised study programmes that include more general skills teaching and employability support. Apprenticeships are also an option for young people under the age of 18, but since reforms in 2017, the majority of apprenticeships are undertaken by older individuals.

[34] Department for Education, 2023c

4. Teaching and learning approaches

The educational freedom granted to schools and colleges in England, subject to regulation by Ofsted, means that they are able to determine their teaching and learning approaches to a large extent. Some MATs choose to impose standardised approaches across their member schools. Other schools and colleges allow teachers more autonomy to teach in the ways they judge best. However, the Education Policy Institute's recent comparison of education systems in the UK's four nations found that in England, while patterns were variable, teachers should have more autonomy in practice than they do.[35] It may be that the school's or college's policies and practice have a large influence on teachers' autonomy and approaches to teaching and learning, resulting in variance in teacher autonomy by school or college.

A significant recent development in teaching and learning in English schools is the shift to evidence-informed practice.[36] The Education Endowment Foundation's teaching and learning toolkit[37] has a range of evidence-informed teaching and learning approaches that are now commonly adopted in English schools, including mastery, collaborative learning approaches, and metacognition. The toolkit also provides educators with concise data on the impact and cost of different approaches and interventions. In sum, the accessibility of the evidence, together with renewed government investment in this area, indicates the clear direction to schools to use reliable evidence when deciding on the best teaching and learning approaches for their context. In some cases, individual teachers can make these decisions, but often the power and discretion lie with the head teacher and senior school leaders.

[35] Education Scotland, 2008 https://education.gov.scot/media/ocvddrgh/btc3.pdf

[36] Coldwell, 2022

[37] Education Endowment Foundation, 2024 https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit

References

Coldwell, M. (2022). Evidence-informed teaching in England. In *The Emerald Handbook of Evidence-Informed Practice in Education* (pp. 59-68). Emerald Publishing Limited.

Atkins, L., & Flint, K. J. (2015). Nothing changes: perceptions of vocational education in England. *International Journal of Training Research*, 13(1), 35-48. doi:10.1080/14480220.2015.1051344

Department for Education. (2014a). 16-19 Condition of Funding. Retrieved September 2023, from: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/16-to-19-funding-maths-and-english-condition-of-funding

Department for Education. (2014b). *National Curriculum in England: Secondary Curriculum*. Retrieved September 2023, from https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-secondary-curriculum

Department for Education. (2022). *Destinations of KS4 and KS5 learners: 2020/21 Academic Year*. Retrieved September 2023, from: https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/key-stage-4-destination-measures/2020-21

Department for Education. (2023a). *Schools, pupils and their characteristics: Academic year 2022/23*. Retrieved September 2023, from: https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/school-pupils-and-their-characteristics

Department for Education. (2023b). *Level 2 and 3 Attainment age 16 to 25*. Retrieved September 2023, from: https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/level-2-and-3-attainment-by-young-people-aged-19

Department for Education. (2023c). *Secondary Accountability Measures*. UK Government. Retrieved September 2023, from: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1150803/KS4_Tech_Guide.pdf

Department for Education. (2023d) *Introduction of T-Levels*, UK Government. Retrieved September 2023, from: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/introduction-of-t-levels/introduction-of-t-levels

Department for Education. (2023e). *School workforce in England 2022*. Retrieved September 2023, from: https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/school-workforce-in-england

Department for Education. (2023f). *Further Education Workforce* 2021/22. Retrieved September 2023, from: https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/further-education-workforce/2021-22

Department for Education. (2023g). *16-19 Study Programme Guidance*. Retrieved September 2023, from: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/16-to-19-study-programmes-guide-for-providers/16-to-19-study-programmes-guidance-2022-to-2023-academic-year

Department for Levelling Up, Houses and Communities. (2022). *Levelling Up the UK: White Paper*. London: UK Government. Retrieved September 2023, from: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1052708/Levelling_up_the_UK_white_paper.pdf

Education Endowment Foundation (2024) *Teaching and Learning Toolkit*. Retrieved April 2024, from: https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/teaching-learning-toolkit

Education Policy Institute by Sibieta, L. and Jerrim, J. (2021). *A Comparison of School Institutions and Policies across the U*K. Retrieved September 2023, from: https://epi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/EPI-UK-Institutions-Comparisons-2021.pdf

Gill, M. (2022). *Reforming Public Appointments*. Institute for Government. Retrieved September 2023, from: https://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/sites/default/files/publications/reforming-public-appointments.pdf

Gill, T (2022). *Uptake and results in the Extended Project Qualification*. Cambridge University Press. Retrieved September 2023, from: https://www.cambridgeassessment.org.uk/Images/665814-uptake-and-results-in-the-extended-project-qualification.pdf

House of Commons Library. (2019). *Faith Schools in England*. London: UK Parliament. Retrieved September 2023, from: https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/SN06972/SN06972.pdf

National Foundation for Educational Research. (2020). *Teacher Autonomy: How does it relate to job satisfaction and retention*. Retrieved September 2023, from: https://www.nfer.ac.uk/media/3874/teacher_autonomy_how_does_it_relate_to_job_satisfaction_and_retention.pdf

Office for National Statistics. (2021). *Census 2021*. Retrieved September 2023, from: https://www.ons.gov.uk/

Office for National Statistics. (2022). *Ethnic Group England and Wales: Census 2021*. Retrieved September 2023, from: https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/ethnicity/bulletins/ethnicgroupenglandandwales/census2021

Ofsted. (2023). *Main findings: State-funded schools inspections and outcomes as at 31 December 2022*. Ofsted. Retrieved September 2023, from: https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/state-funded-schools-inspections-and-outcomes-as-at-31-december-2022/main-findings-state-funded-schools-inspections-and-outcomes-as-at-31-december-2022

Skills Builder. (2023) *Impact Report 2023*. Retrieved January 2024, from: https://www.skillsbuilder.org/impact

Trades Union Congress. (2022). *News: 2022 is the worst year for real wage growth in nearly half a century*. Retrieved September 2023, from: https://www.tuc.org.uk/news/2022-worst-year-real-wage-growth-nearly-half-century

Trust for London. (2023). *London's Geography and Population*. Retrieved September 2023, from: https://trustforlondon.org.uk/data/geography-population/

World Population Review. (2023). *Country ranking by GDP*. Retrieved September 2023, from: https://worldpopulationreview.com/countries/by-gdp

Sheffield Hallam University, City Campus, Howard Street, Sheffield, S1 1WB, United Kingdom
Phone: +44 (0)114 225 5555

Sheffield Hallam University
Knowledge Applied